The Progress of Land Purchase in Taranaki 1841-60

Sources - Map in Hursthouse (1849):59 and a map of The Province of Taranaki from Waitara to Oeo (1863)
B U S H  F R O N T I E R
NORTH TARANAKI 1841 - 1860

A STUDY
IN
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

A Thesis
presented to
Victoria University of Wellington
in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts
in
Geography

by
Brian G Quin
March, 1966
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First of all I want to thank my supervisor, Dr R.F. Watters, for his help. Although his patience must have been sorely tried by the length of time it took me to complete this thesis, his interest in my work was constant.

I should like to record my gratitude to the following people, all of whom were of great assistance to me during my research: Drs R.B. Fleming and W M Saunders of the Soil Bureau, Taita; Mr R.P. Hargreaves of Otago University; Mr E.O.E. Hill of Wellington; Mr John Pascoe, the National Archivist; Professor Keith Sinclair, of Auckland University; Mr P.R. Stephens, of the Department of Agriculture, Wellington; the staffs of the Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington; the Auckland Public Library; the General Assembly Library, Wellington; the Map Section of the Lands and Survey Department, New Plymouth and Wellington; the National Archives, Wellington; the New Plymouth Public Library and Taranaki Museum; the New Zealand Meteorological Service, Wellington; St Patrick's College, Wellington; and the Wellington Central Library.

Thanks are also due to Mr Ian McLuckie of the Hydro Design Division of the Ministry of Works, Wellington, who went to considerable trouble over drawing the figures; Mrs Jean Benfield, of Victoria University, for her reproductions of the same; Miss Jennifer Jupp of New Plymouth for her care and good humour in doing the typing; and Mr R.M. Mills of New Plymouth for his interest in my work.

My greatest debt is to my father and my mother.
ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations have been used in footnotes:

AJHR Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives.
GBPP Great Britain. Parliamentary Papers Relating to New Zealand.
GG-T Government Gazette for the Province of Taranaki, 1859-60.
IA1 Files of the Colonial Secretary's Correspondence: National Archives
MLP-NP1 Maori Land Purchase Department - Outwards Letter Book 1846-63: National Archives.
NZC New Zealand Company Archives: National Archives.
TH Taranaki Herald.

More detailed information about sources will be found in the bibliography.
INTRODUCTION

If it needs a justification, this account is an attempt to fill in what I consider to be a gap in the story of New Zealand's economic development. A considerable amount of research has been done on the economic development of the pastoral and gold-mining districts of New Zealand; but the story of settlement in the bush areas, particularly in the period before 1860, has been relatively neglected. The Otago and Canterbury centenaries of 1948 and 1950 provoked a spate of writing on the early development of those provinces which still continues. On the other hand the Taranaki centenary of 1941, possibly because it occurred during war-time, went by almost unmarked by any commemorative publishing. Further, although events of the first two decades of European settlement in Taranaki have been often described in New Zealand history books, any treatment of economic development has usually been scanty and usually directed towards explaining the origins of the war between the Maoris and the European settlers that broke out in 1860.

The main emphasis in the ensuing description has been given to the economy of the European community. This is simply because the quantity and quality of the material available allows the European economy to be described in more detailed fashion than the Maori economy.

I have tried to show economic development arising from an interaction between a human group and the physical
environment it occupies, but have regarded this interaction as one tempered by the aims, values and general cultural environ-
ment of the occupying group.

The thesis consists of three main sections, roughly equal in length. The first section which includes the first three shorter chapters, provides the setting; while the second and third sections, corresponding to Chapters IV and V, discuss economic developments in the 1840s and 1850s respectively.

The first chapter is largely the story of how the actions of the New Zealand Company and its founder, Edward Gibbon Wakefield, brought the settlement into being in 1841. The Company's aims in founding the settlement, and the choice of a site in New Zealand are discussed, but in view of their later importance, the main emphasis is given to the means that the Company used to attract both capital and prospective settlers, and the character of the emigrants: their motives, skills, and wealth, as well as their physical characteristics. The second chapter describes the settlement - site chose by Carrington: objectively, in terms of modern knowledge, and which is equally important, subjectively, in terms of the settlers' first impressions. This background to the events between 1841 and 1860 is completed by a brief description of the state of the Maori community in North Taranaki in 1841.

In describing and explaining the economic development of North Taranaki, Chapters IV and V should make clear the extent to which economic activity, particularly in the 1840s, was
influenced by the settlers' motives, rather than the Company's intentions; and the settlers' beliefs about their environment, rather than the reality of that environment. In each chapter, the first five sections consider the economic development of the European settler community under the headings: Farming, Manufacturing and other forms of economic activity, Transport and Communication, External Trade, and Population. The sixth section describes the development of the Maori economy, and the seventh section describes the regional economy at the end of the respective decade.

This last section of each of Chapters IV and V has a dual purpose. It is, firstly, an attempt to reconstruct the geography of North Taranaki at a particular point in time; but the description so built up inevitably becomes a commentary on the developments that have taken place in the previous decade. So this last section also sums up and concludes what has been said in the chapter.

BACKGROUND READING

The two works which have most influenced my general approach to the development of the settlers' economy have been W. Prescott Webb's "The Great Plains" and Ralph Brown's Historical Geography of the United States of America". Brown showed how early nineteenth century American belief in a Great American Desert helped delay settlement of the areas west of the Mississippi. His thesis, that the actions of settlers in occupying an area are partly determined by their beliefs about
the area, even if those beliefs are erroneous, certainly was true of the Taranaki settlement in the 1840s. Webb, in his study of successive attempts to settle the Great Plains area of the United States, stressed the fact that successful occupance did not only involve modification of the original Plains environment - by introducing the horse and building railways and shelterbelts - but also changes in the technology of the occupying group. The vast treeless areas could not be fenced before the inventions of barbed wire; the opposition of the Plains Indian was overcome only after Samuel Colt had patented his .45 revolver, and arable farming in the drier areas could only take place after irrigation and dry-farming techniques had been developed.

The modifications of culture needed to settle Taranaki successfully in the 1840s and 1850s were not of the same order as those needed to ensure the successful settlement of the Great Plains at the same time, but were nonetheless important. The prospective farmers who migrated to Taranaki and the Great Plains in the middle of the nineteenth century shared roughly similar backgrounds of experience. In both the South of England and the Eastern United States farming had developed under temperate and humid climatic conditions, in areas that

1 "Culture" is here defined to include the settlers' aims and values, technology, and economic and social organisation
had originally been forested, and in the early nineteenth century had become increasingly oriented towards providing the needs of growing urban markets. To settlers who tried, initially at least, to establish in their new homelands the mixed crop and livestock farming with which they were familiar, the challenge that the humid forested Taranaki environment offered in 1841 was less immediately evident than that provided at the same time by the semiarid and treeless Great Plains environment. But as Chapters II and IV will show, both the Company and its settlers presumed too much on their early favourable appraisals of the settlement site, and before the first decade of settlement had passed, were forced to modify considerably many of their original plans for development.

P.J. Coleman's article\(^2\) suggests the valuable idea that an important factor in the downfall of the Company system was that the settlers themselves had no intention of complying with it.

The most important influence on the development of the Maori economy in North Taranaki between 1841 and 1860, as elsewhere in New Zealand at the same time, was contact with a European economy. Professor Raymond Firth in Chapter XIII of his "Economics of the New Zealand Maori" recognises four

distinct stages in the development of the Maori economy of New Zealand between the first contacts with Europeans in the eighteenth century and the present day. I have found that his comments on the economic aspects of change in Maori culture during the nineteenth century have greatly assisted my own interpretation of the economic development of the Maori community of North Taranaki.

SOURCE MATERIAL

The need to base the findings of this thesis as much as possible on primary sources has been reinforced by the scantiness and poor quality of many of the secondary works on early Taranaki history. Wells', Seffern's and Skinner's works are useful records of events, but little more. The only plan in Wells' "History of Taranaki", which is the most comprehensive and detailed of the three, is chronological, and almost no attempt is made to link or interpret events. It is unfair to be very critical of these authors, however, as none of them were trained historians, nor were they writing for an academic readership. R.G. Wood's "From Plymouth to New Plymouth", a recent attempt to survey the early growth of the Taranaki settlement, is of little value as four of the five sources from which the author derives his ideas and much of his text are secondary works.

Dr J.O. Miller's "Early Victorian New Zealand" and Professor K. Sinclair's "The Origins of the Maori Wars" are two modern works which give some prominence to events in early
Taranaki. The growth of the Maori and the settler economies is described, but the main theme of both books is the development of racial tension in New Zealand following the beginning of extensive European settlement in the early 1840s. I believe that the preoccupation of both authors with the development of Maori-Pakeha relations has adversely affected their discussions of economic developments. In explaining the economic difficulties faced by the settlers, Miller in his account of the Cook Strait settlements between 1839 and 1852, and Sinclair in describing events in Taranaki between 1840 and 1858, attach too much importance to the disputes between Maoris and settlers over land-purchases. Sinclair says that

"(Taranaki) .... contained within a few square miles most of the problems of the colonisation of an already inhabited country," 3

but my account will show that the rate of population growth and land-clearance, and the character of economic activity in the European settlement at Taranaki between 1841 and 1860 was affected only to a minor degree by Maori opposition to sales of land.

New Zealand Company prospectuses, Directors' reports and the writings of E.G. Wakefield - particularly his "Art of Colonisation" were the basis of much of the first chapter. Among twentieth century commentaries on the activities of the

3 K Sinclair "The Origins of the Maori Wars" (1957):119
Company, Marais' "The Colonisation of New Zealand" is the most comprehensive, but sometimes the author is too willing to accept uncritically the viewpoint of the Company and its settlers in their dealings with the British and New Zealand Governments and the Maoris. Turnbull's "The New Zealand Bubble" is more in the nature of a pamphlet in comparison, but summarises some recent findings and exposes a number of weaknesses in Marais' arguments. Karl Marx's remarks on Wakefield's ideas in "Capital" are enlightening in themselves and also as they show how Wakefield's plans were viewed by a contemporary thinker.

As most of the New Plymouth settlers were relatively unlettered few of them left any written record of the reasons that prompted them to emigrate. Two collections of letters from New Plymouth settlers were published by the Company: "Latest Information from the Settlement at New Plymouth" in 1842 and "Letters from Settlers and Labouring Emigrants" in 1843. While these contain some scattered references to motives for emigration, they are more valuable as a record of the settlers' first impressions of the site chosen for the settlement, and therefore I have found them of some use in writing Chapter II. It should be noted that as these letters were edited and published by the Company, they are not necessarily a true sample of settler opinion. Engels' "The Condition of the Working Class in England in 1844" and Hobsbawm's "The Age of Revolution" give vivid accounts of the conditions that
encouraged emigration from England in the middle of the nineteenth century.

I have found that Dr. Dieffenbach's "Travels in New Zealand" is the most valuable source of information for a description of Taranaki on the eve of the first settlers' arrival. Dieffenbach was an acute observer, and although he was an employee of the Company, his opinions were more restrained and factually based than those of most of his contemporaries. Useful supplementary description is contained in Carrington's "Journal", E.J. Wakefield's "Adventure in New Zealand" and a Company publication "Information respecting the settlement of New Plymouth", published in 1841.

The outstanding authority on the Maori history of the West Coast of the North Island up to 1840 is S. Percy Smith's "History and Traditions of the West Coast."

Comments on the statistical sources for Chapters IV and V have been made in the text or in footnotes. The extracts from the diaries of early settlers, particularly that of Dr. Henry Weekes, which were published in Rutherford and Skinner's "The Establishment of the New Plymouth Settlement", contain the only record of many of the events in the settlement's first year. Easily the best record of events relating to the settlement's economic growth in the period 1842-1850 is provided by the despatches of the New Zealand Company's Resident Agent in New Plymouth to the Company's Principal Agent in Wellington. The general run of despatches contain much
interesting information, but of particular interest are the Reports that the Agents wrote at the end of each month. As well as recording any events of importance in the preceding month, the reports describe the state of business and the prospects of the current harvest, give shipping returns and passenger lists of incoming overseas vessels, and from time to time include descriptions of the appearance of various parts of the settlement and reports of censuses.

Among the British Parliamentary Papers relating to New Zealand, I found the House of Commons Paper Number 556,4 which contains the Report of the 1844 Committee investigating New Zealand affairs, a particularly valuable source of information for the "Company period" of the New Plymouth settlement.

Diaries, private correspondence and newspapers not only contain descriptions of places and events, but also show what people at the time felt about them. Source material of this type relating to the 1840s is scarce, but in the 1850s it becomes relatively abundant. The most important records are the Richmond-Atkinson Papers, a selection of which has been published by G.H. Scholefield, the voluminous correspondence of Sir Donald McLean, and the early files of the "Taranaki Herald".

Information describing the Maori community in North Taranaki between 1841 and 1860 is fragmentary, and has been derived almost entirely from passing references in source material mainly descriptive of the European community.
CHAPTER I

PRELUDE TO SETTLEMENT
A settlement is planned and a site is chosen.

The Plymouth Company of New Zealand was founded at a meeting of Devon and Cornwall gentlemen at Plymouth, England, on the 25th of January, 1840. The Company intended to colonise lands bought from the New Zealand Company of London, and adopted that Company's principles and aims.¹

The New Zealand Company had been founded on 2 May 1839, mainly as the result of the work of Edward Gibbon Wakefield, who regarded the Company as a means for putting his theories of colonisation into action. Wakefield believed that his theories contained the solution to the economic and social troubles that afflicted England in the quarter-century following Waterloo. Unemployment and poverty were common among the working classes, and the misery of many of England's people was noted by writers of the time. Wakefield however saw dangers for all classes of people. Strongly influenced by Malthusian thinking² he found evidence everywhere of excessive competition. In the trades there were too many dealers, the professions and the public service offered no opportunity, and even in the large number of single people

¹ GBPP 1840 HC/582 Evidence:Q75
² J O Miller "Early Victorian New Zealand" (1958):2
in the marriageable age groups he found grounds for his contention.³

At the root of this excessive competition, he declared, was a lack of room for capital investment. New opportunities for profitable investment would create new employment, and through this, new social and economic opportunities for all classes of men.⁴ Colonisation would open up new opportunities both for the people directly concerned and for the home country; increased trade would ensue with new markets and sources of supply being made available.⁵ This analysis allowed Wakefield to argue that colonisation, if organised on a businesslike or "systematic" basis, would not only benefit the capitalist and migrant, but also the nation at large. In seeking their own private gain, investors in colonisation would be doing their fellow-men a service.⁶

As a business proposition Wakefield could reasonably claim that his scheme was attractive. Dispersal of settlement and capital and shortage of labour had been features of earlier colonisation schemes that had failed. With his proposal to regulate the sale of land through his sufficient price⁷ Wakefield claimed that such a balance between the supply

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³ E G Wakefield "The Art of Colonization" (1849):74
⁴ E G Wakefield (1849):75
⁵ E G Wakefield (1849):92
⁶ E G Wakefield (1849):349
⁷ E G Wakefield (1849):338
of labour and capital would be maintained as to enable a colonial gentry to organise agriculture on a large scale in accordance with the best methods in England. But he realised that commercial incentives alone would not do. In the late 1830s the railway boom was attracting capital, and to a man interested in the commercial possibilities of migration, it must have seemed safer to Samuel Cunard and others by investing in trans Atlantic migration rather than in migration to recently discovered colonies on the other side of the world.

Thus in stressing the public good that would be created by colonisation Wakefield acted shrewdly. Many of the wealthier middle class had been swayed by the humanitarian ideals of the Evangelical reformers, and following the abolition of slavery in 1833 they now became interested in the task of civilising the primitive peoples of the world. When he described the benefits his colonising activities would bring to the Maori as well as to the British people, and the model society he hoped to create, Wakefield was able to overcome the opposition raised against the scheme by many Evangelicals, to the extent of interesting some of England's leading businessmen in the New Zealand Company.

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8 E G Wakefield (1849):347-49
9 K Sinclair "A History of New Zealand" (1959):60
10 E G Wakefield and J Ward "The British Colonisation of New Zealand" (1837):400; GBPP 1840 HC/582 Evidence:Q159
11 GBPP 1844 HC/556 Appendix:381
12 Miller (1958):11-12
As well as any other Company settlement New Plymouth, (or Taranaki as it was soon to become known), showed in its development the difficulties that the New Zealand Company directors found in reconciling humanitarian ideals with pursuit of profit.

Three days after the Company had been set up the "Tory" was on its way to New Zealand, carrying Colonel William Wakefield, the Chief Land Purchase Officer of the Company.13 The hastiness of the Colonel's departure was to be, unfortunately, characteristic of many of the Company's dealings. Indeed within a month of his departure the Company had issued a prospectus outlining terms of purchase for lands in the Company's "first and principal settlement"14 According to this document the Colonel had been instructed to secure lands in the central regions of New Zealand, particularly about Port Nicholson.15 The selection of Port Nicholson as the site for Wellington was dictated by the hope that this principal settlement would become the capital of New Zealand.16 Accordingly, Wakefield was not overly dismayed on viewing the hilly nature of the harbour surrounds when he arrived at Port Nicholson in September.17 The magnificence of the harbour and its central location would outweigh any lack of good agricultural land close at hand.

13 W Wakefield "Diary" 5 May 1839.
14 "Terms of Purchase for Lands in the Company's First and Principal Settlement" (1839)
15 N Z Co. First Report, 14 May 1840:10
16 N Z Gazette:6 Sep 1839
17 W Wakefield 20 Sep 1839
Having completed his land dealings at Port Nicholson, the Colonel set about extending the Company claims on either side of Cook Strait. At the Wairau River and next at Waikanae he found the Maoris unco-operative, and it was not until he had recrossed the Strait and convened a meeting of Te Atiawa Maoris at Queen Charlotte Sound that he had any real success. For a few pounds' worth of blankets, guns, tobacco, spades, pipes, razors, flints, pocket knives and soap Wakefield claimed to have extinguished the Maoris' claims to all that part of New Zealand lying between the 38th and 43rd parallels of latitude, which included Taranaki. The Maoris with whom he had made this agreement were only 150 in number, and were exiles from North Taranaki, whence they had recently fled from the threat of invasion. They had consented to the sale in the hope that the Europeans' arrival in Taranaki would help them to re-occupy their ancestral lands without fear of further invasion. Jerningham Wakefield, the son of Edward Gibbon and the Colonel's nephew, was also present at Queen Charlotte Sound and his account is significant. He vividly describes the difficulties that arose from the lack of accepted leadership among the Maoris:

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18 W Wakefield 2 Nov 1839
19 W Wakefield 2 Nov 1839
"Innumerable petty disagreements had to be put an end to, and jealousies to be appeased .... This equality of authority among so wild a rabble gave rise to a disagreeable scene during the distribution of the goods." 20

The small numbers of Maoris concerned in the agreement, their motives in treating with the Europeans, and their apparent lack of proper understanding all combined to make the validity of the whole affair very suspect. Yet when the Company's land claims were later questioned officially, this Queen Charlotte Sound agreement was made one of the main supports of the Company case, particularly in regard to Taranaki.

Later in the month the purchase party in the 'Tory' sailed north, and arrived off the Sugar Loaves, on the North Taranaki coast, on the 27th of November. The Colonel was at first dismayed at what he saw. The Cook Strait area had had stormy weather in the last few days and a heavy surf was running onto the open coast. Attempts to get a longboat through the waves had to be abandoned, and communication with the shore was made only after two Taranaki Maoris had swum out to the ship through the surf. "This dangerous and inconvenient coast", Wakefield wrote "will give a bad opinion of the place .... It is completely open to the North West ...." 21

Possibly, the knowledge that the first Company emigrant ships were already well on their way to New Zealand, together with

20 E J Wakefield "Adventure in New Zealand"(1845) I:100
21 W Wakefield 27 Nov 1839
the delays that had already taken place, impressed on him the need to buy land quickly. He had noted on the previous day the apparent levelness of the land surrounding Mt Egmont, and could recall the terms of love and praise which Maoris had used in speaking of the fertility of Taranaki land. Having received assurances from Richard Barrett, the Company interpreter and a whaler in the Taranaki area since 1829, that the wind blew off-shore most of the year, he decided that a land purchase should be made. He arranged for a future meeting of all the Maoris of the Taranaki coast north to Mokau, and having left the Company's naturalist, Dr Ernst Dieffenbach, on shore to do some local exploring, sailed northwards for Hokianga.

Early in 1840, while he was hurrying back to Wellington to receive the first Company settlers, Colonel Wakefield sent his nephew Jerningham and Dr Dorset, the Company surgeon, back to Taranaki to conclude the purchase. It did not take long to reach agreement. To the handful of Maoris who had remained along the coast after the migrations of the previous twenty years, security from invasion by the Waikatos was as powerful an inducement to allow European settlement as it had been for their relatives in Queen Charlotte Sound. Dieffenbach summed up the Company's views when he concluded his

22 W Wakefield 27 Nov 1839
23 E Dieffenbach "Travels in New Zealand" (1843) I:133; E J Wakefield (1845) I:148
description of the events:

"Thus the New Zealand Company became proprietors of the finest district in New Zealand, which offers to the colonist, besides its natural resources, the advantage of there being no natives on the land, with the exception of the small remnant of the Atiawa tribe at Ngamotu." 24

In the light of later events it is easy enough to understand the optimism of this statement, but even at the time it should have been possible to see faults in the agreements which the Company had made at Queen Charlotte Sound in November 1839 and at Taranaki in February 1840. Haste and vagueness had been features of the Company's dealings, while the Maoris had suffered from a lack of leadership and understanding, and had above all seen the agreements mainly as a means of securing for themselves peaceful re-occupation of their ancestral lands.

It was at about the same time as the Taranaki land purchase was being negotiated that the Plymouth Company of New Zealand was formed. The Company was destined to have only a short independent existence. Its bankers failed in late 1840 and early in 1841 it was merged with the New Zealand Company, henceforth being known as the West of England Board of the New Zealand Company. 25 The brevity of the Plymouth Company's independent existence and the close identification of its activities with those of the New Zealand Company 26 meant that

24 Dieffenbach (1843) I:171
25 GBPP 1844 HC/556 Evidence:Q1160-65
26 GBPP 1840 HC/582 Evidence:Q75; "The Colonisation of New Zealand from the Counties of Devon and Cornwall" (1840):6
the story of Company activities in Taranaki was substantially that of the New Zealand Company.

In June 1840 Carrington was appointed Chief Surveyor of the Plymouth Company. He sailed from London on the 13th of August with instructions to select, from lands already purchased in New Zealand by the London Company, a suitable site for the proposed settlement of New Plymouth.27 On the 19th of November, twenty-three days before Carrington's arrival in New Zealand, the "William Bryan" sailed from Plymouth with the first load of emigrants.

In Wellington Colonel Wakefield advised Carrington to explore Taranaki, Queen Charlotte Sound and Tasman Bay, and gave him the use of the "Brougham" for the purpose. Possibly because of Dr. Dieffenbach's highly favourable report on the district,28 Wakefield was now much more in favour of Taranaki as a site for settlement than he had been a year before. In a letter that he wrote to the secretary of the Plymouth Company while Carrington was still in Wellington he extolled Taranaki's climate, soil and "vast space of easily available territory," the ease of land communication with other settlements and of transporting goods to Port Nicholson and Australia.

28 N Z Gazette: 1 Aug 1840
"in small ships which can safely anchor in the lee of the islands offshore." The only disadvantage he conceded was the lack of a harbour, but to balance this he assured the secretary that the roadstead was "not unsafe for ships well found in ground tackle," that many ships had unloaded there in the past, and finally that a breakwater could easily be built with local materials. 29

On leaving Wellington early in January 1841, Carrington went directly to Taranaki. His reaction to what he saw was mixed. After noting the gradual slope of the land all round the base of Mt Egmont and its cover of heavy forest, he decided that "The country was the most magnificent I ever saw for Agriculture". 30 But later the same day, and on the next, he observed the openness of the coast, the lack of a harbour and the denseness of the vegetation close to the shore. Only the firmness of the anchorage provided by the seabottom, and the possibility of building a breakwater with material from the Sugar Loaves cheered him. 31

Three days after his arrival he journeyed up the coast in a ship's boat to the Waitara River. He noted how the country about Waitara was much more level and open than that at the Sugar Loaves, and was amazed by the apparent fertility

29 W Wakefield to Secretary, Plymouth Co: 22 Dec 1840, quoted in B Wells "History of Taranaki" (1878): 50
30 Carrington Papers I: 8 Jan 1841
31 Carrington Papers I: 8-9 Jan 1841
of the district. One of his assistants was moved to observe that "if brought into cultivation the banks of the Waitara might become the garden of the Pacific." After a brief visit to Port Hardy on D’Urville Island, and Tasman Bay, where he was impressed by the excellence of the harbours and the lack of neighbouring agricultural land, Carrington returned to Wellington where he informed Colonel Wakefield that he had chosen Taranaki as the site for New Plymouth. He believed that it was impossible to get a harbour and good land together in New Zealand, and considered that "the best harbour in the world was of no value if there was no export." Moreover, he considered that the lack of a natural harbour in Taranaki could be partly overcome by using the Waitara estuary as a haven for small craft.

Carrington returned to the Sugar Loaves with his survey party on the 12th of February. He intended, at this time, to locate the settlement on the banks of the Waitara. Having unloaded all his stores onto the mainland opposite the Sugar Loaves, which provided the only reasonably sheltered anchorage on the whole coast (see Plate 1) he proceeded to transport his

32 Carrington Papers I: 11 Jan 1841
33 Wells (1878): 55
34 Carrington Papers II "Correspondence": Carrington to Woollcombe 14 Oct 1841
35 The Papers of Sir Donald McLean File 181/1; Carrington to Liardet 15 Oct 1841
36 Carrington Papers II: Carrington to Woollcombe 4 May 1841
Plate 1: The Taranaki Coast North-East of the Sugar Loaves

Plate 2: View Southwards across North Taranaki
goods in a long boat twelve miles northeast to that river. But two narrow escapes from drowning while attempting to cross the Waitara bar quickly convinced the party that Waitara was not suitable for their purpose.

Colonel Wakefield had recommended the mainland opposite the anchorage at the Sugar Loaves as the most suitable site, but the disadvantages of this locality were quite clear to Carrington. Fresh water was difficult to find there, supplies of wood both for fires and building were distant, and the nearby sandhills were a distinct nuisance on a windy day, as was Barrett's whaling station in the same area. As well, rival land claims of a Methodist mission station, the whalers and a small Maori pa in the neighbourhood promised future difficulties. Carrington was already having reason to doubt the validity of the original Company purchase.

By the beginning of March a position had been selected east two miles of the Sugar Loaves, between the Huatoki and Henui rivers. (see Figure 4) Here, Carrington noted, an abundance of water was close at hand, and also abundant firewood and timber. The surveyors began to burn off the ferny, scrubby cover and cut pathways. Hardly had they begun when the "William Bryan" arrived offshore on the 30th of March, with 148 passengers.

37 Carrington Papers I:25 Feb 1841
38 Carrington Papers I:1 Mar 1841
39 Rutherford and Skinner (1940):xii
Very little evidence of how the Plymouth Company went about its business has survived the passage of time. The close ties between the Plymouth and London Companies noted above make it very likely that efforts in the West of England to encourage interest and participation in the local Company's project were merely extensions of the efforts of the main Company based at London.

Wakefield hoped, by means of his scheme, to determine the relationship between three commodities: land, capital and labour. Indeed, the central feature of the scheme - the "sufficient price" at which land was to be sold - had as its sole object:

"to prevent labourers from turning into capitalists too soon: the price must be sufficient for that purpose and no other."\textsuperscript{40}

While Colonel Wakefield and his party in the "Tory", and a year later Carrington, were trying to secure the first of the three commodities - land; the Company organisation in England set about getting the other two: capital and labour.

The type of difficulty that Wakefield faced in attracting support for his scheme, and how he overcame this problem by appealing to both the material and moral sensibilities of potential Company directors, have been described. It was in raising the capital needed to finance its activities that the Company's practices first clashed with its stated principles.

\textsuperscript{40} E G Wakefield (1849):347
The Company claimed, echoing Wakefield, that its system had as its aim:

'not mere emigration, but the transplanting, at once, of all the component parts of society, as it were, "in frame".'

But as it informed readers of the first number of the "New Zealand Gazette", published in London on the eve of the departure of Wellington's first settlers; economic realities forced the Company to encourage a high degree of absentee land-ownership. The Company encouraged buyers of land to emigrate to New Zealand by rebating to them most of the cost of a section. This it had to do in order to overcome the rival attractions of cheap land in Australia and America. But while the rebate might secure numbers of resident land-buyers, at the same time it would seriously reduce the Company's income, and thus its ability to supply its colonists with labourers. The cost of bringing out labourers, and other expenses, could only be covered by selling a good deal of land to absentee, who would have to pay the full price for sections. The problem of raising finance for the Company's activities thus resolved itself. How could absentee investment be attracted?

Turnbull considers that two aspects of the Company's land

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41 GBPP 1844 HC/556 Appendix:381
42 75% in the case of the NZ Company (NZ Co. First Report 14 May 1840:12), 60% in the case of the Plymouth Company (The Colonisation of New Zealand from Devon and Cornwall 1840:23)
43 NZ Gazette:6 Sep 1839
sales policy were particularly aimed at encouraging absentee purchase: the linking of town and country land-rights, and the lottery method of distributing purchased land. The price that the Company put on rural land - £1 per acre at Wellington for a 100 - acre section, and £1-10-0 per acre at New Plymouth for a 50 - acre section, was very high in comparison with rural land prices in Australia and America, where country land commonly was sold at 5/- per acre. But when, in the case of Wellington, an acre of urban land was added for the same £1 cost, the proposition became entirely different. For £101 the buyer would get a whole acre of urban land with 100 acres of rural land for a bonus. In view of the likely rapid rise in urban land values, and comparative urban land values in other colonies, the price was cheap. In this respect the terms offered for New Plymouth land were not so attractive to absentees. The £75 purchase price included only a quarter-acre town section, and the settlement was planned as an agricultural rather than as a commercial settlement, in which town-land values could not be expected to rise so quickly as in Wellington.

All original land-purchasers in the New Plymouth settlement participated in a lottery held after each group of sections

44 M Turnbull "The New Zealand Bubble" (1959):14-19
45 "Terms of Purchase" (1839)
46 GBPP 1844 HC/556 Appendix:401
47 Marais (1927):6 Turnbull (1959):10
48 GBPP 1844 HC/556 Appendix:401
49 The Colonisation of N Z from Devon and Cornwall, (1840):1
was sold. In the lottery each land-order holder drew a number which would determine his priority in choosing his land.\textsuperscript{50} Drawers of high-priority numbers, by being able to pick the very best land, were thus offered a bonus to the basic value of their urban land. Even those who drew relatively low priorities of choice in the lottery would not, in theory lose by the system, for the value of any urban land was safeguarded by the limited amount of it in each settlement.

Although these benefits applied to resident landowners as well, the absentee owner could profit from his venture without having to engage in the risks and dangers associated with active colonisation. A few figures show the importance of absentee land ownership in the early days of the New Plymouth settlement. In 1842 absentees owned 221 town sections as against 33 belonging to "bona fide" colonists, while the country sections were divided roughly equally.\textsuperscript{51} These figures clearly show the attraction urban land had for absentees. In 1844 only 67 out of 268 suburban and country sections sold were actually occupied. (see Figure 7) A small proportion of the 201 unoccupied sections belonged to owners of the occupied sections, but most of the land sold belonged to absentees.

Company ships' passenger lists for the first two years (1841-43) of the settlement's history also prove that very few "capitalists" were induced to emigrate. Of 658 passengers

\textsuperscript{50} IA1, 55/1716: Heaphy to Col Secretary 31 May 1855
classified,\(^{52}\) no fewer than 594 were "emigrants" or colonists whose passages were paid for by the Company. Of the 64 "cabin" passengers, a considerable number travelled "steerage" or "intermediate", and thus could be assumed to possess only moderate capital.\(^{53}\)

As the "emigrants" were generally families of negligible financial resources\(^{54}\) it should have been evident that a very great part of the finance needed for the settlement's development would have to come from the Company.

Propaganda had to supplement reasoned argument in attracting settlers, as well as capital, to the Company's settlements. The distance and dangers of the journey combined with almost total popular ignorance of New Zealand made the prospect of emigration to that country much less inviting than emigration to Australia or North America. Stories of Maori warfare, which caused New Zealand to be popularly referred to as the "Cannibal Islands"\(^{55}\) hardly brightened the picture. Moreover in spite of Wakefield's analysis, the hardships that accompanied the Industrial Revolution had not fallen equally on all sections of society. The farm labourers and the town artisans or

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53 N Z C 3/22:31 Mar 1843

54 C F Hursthouse "An Account of the Settlement of New Plymouth" (1849):68; NZC 105/2 31 Mar 1843

55 Miller (1958):Chapter 2
tradesmen suffered far more than any other social group in the period.\textsuperscript{56} As both farming and industry organised in larger units the independence and security of the working classes diminished. Whether their real incomes declined is still uncertain, but certainly from about 1830 the workers were increasingly conscious of their wretched state.\textsuperscript{57} Emigration opened up hope for many. Many businessmen, bemused by recurrent booms and collapses in the British economy in the period after Waterloo, shared Wakefield’s fears for the future;\textsuperscript{58} but while these fears might encourage them to invest their capital overseas, they were not usually great enough to suggest emigration.

Faced with the possibility of consumer resistance, the New Zealand Company set out to create a picture of New Zealand as an earthly paradise:

"There is, probably, no part of the world which presents a more eligible field for the exertion of British enterprise, or a more promising career of usefulness to those who labour in the cause of human improvement, than the islands of New Zealand".

Such was the opening sentence of a work written for the Company by its secretary, John Ward; first published in 1839 and brought out in a number of editions later.\textsuperscript{59} The lack

\textsuperscript{56} K Feiling "History of England" (1959):798; E J Hobsbawm "The Age of Revolution" (1962):166,203
\textsuperscript{57} F Engels "The Condition of the Working Class in England in 1844" (1892): 216-40; Hobsbawm (1962): 27
\textsuperscript{58} Hobsbawm (1962):40; Engels (1892):xi; Marais (1927):2
\textsuperscript{59} J Ward "Information relating to New Zealand" (1839):1
FIG 2. Trades and Professions of the Male European Population of New Plymouth over the age of 19 years, in June 1843.
of "minute" knowledge of New Zealand was admitted but this did not prevent the author, who had never been to New Zealand himself, from describing how the "volcanicity and fertility of the soils" reminded him "of the soil of Italy, the wines of which, such as the famous Lacryma Christi grown near Vesuvius, would without doubt be easily grown in New Zealand." This much could be excused as pious exaggeration, but statements to the effect that Mount Egmont was active; that Kauri pines grew in the South Island and that a "Haritoua" river, navigable for a hundred miles, flowed into Port Nicholson, confirmed the ignorance of the author.

In its turn, Taranaki got much the same treatment. Dr Dieffenbach, in a signed article in the "New Zealand Gazette", claimed that Taranaki's climate and soil made it particularly suited for growing tobacco and cotton; and three months later the editor of that journal was moved to declare that while 20,000 acres were being surveyed in Wellington, 300,000 could be surveyed on the plains of Taranaki. The West of England Board of the New Zealand Company informed the world that the Taranaki district was:

"extensive, level and extremely rich, and therefore calculated for agricultural pursuits."

60 Ward (1839):3
61 Ward (1839):5
62 N Z Gazette:1 Aug 1840
63 N Z Gazette:31 Oct 1840
Elsewhere in the same publication, produced before any correspondence from the first party of settlers arrived in England, it was claimed that:

"The country in that district is almost beyond description; for miles and miles square it is perfectly level."

and:

"Nothing can surpass the quality of the soil, if we are to judge from the luxuriance of the vegetation springing up everywhere."

The lack of a harbour was admitted, but:

"The riches which the territory will yield will enable a powerful settlement to provide the means of forming a harbour." 64

The campaign did not end with the dispatch of the first settlers — nor did it gain in accuracy as more reports filtered back to England. In its fifth report, issued more than a year after the first settlers had landed, the Company described Taranaki as a district

"of eminent fertility, generally level and free from timber, the plains being covered with the luxuriant ferns which attain to such an enormous size in that soil and climate."

The lack of a proper harbour was dismissed briefly.

"But a wind blowing onshore is stated to be infrequent, and to last but a short time; the anchorage is good, and your Directors have sent out several sets of moorings ...." 65

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64 "Information respecting the settlement of New Plymouth in New Zealand" (1841):9-14
65 N Z Co Fifth Report, 31 May 1842:22-23
In the seventh report it was stated that

"no obstacle now exists to the successful pursuit of agriculture, in this, one of the finest and most fertile districts within the whole colony of New Zealand." 66

Letters from emigrants were culled for favourable opinion. In a volume of letters from early emigrants, published by the Company, a certain John Shepherd was quoted as saying that the labouring class in New Plymouth were as well off as "The nob's" at home, 67 while Sarah Giddy was certain that New Plymouth was the place for labouring men. 68 The New Zealand Journal, a weekly paper published by the New Zealand Company in London, revealed that "an Amelia Thompson emigrant" had found everything "far beyond my expectation." 69 Many statements that purported to be factual were untrue, and statements of opinion were unrepresentative.

It is difficult to estimate the effect of this propaganda on the Taranaki emigrants, because few of them kept diaries or wrote letters that have survived the passage of time. There were, of course, some people who saw through these statements. Lord John Russell described the Directors of the Company as "an intolerable set of puffers." 70 But there is little doubt that many of those who came out expected better conditions than

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66 N Z Co Seventh Report, 30 May 1843:11
67 Latest Information from the Settlement at New Plymouth (1842):44
68 Latest Information (1842):44
69 N Z Journal:20 Aug 1842
70 Quoted in Marais (1927):49, note 5
they found. Dieffenbach found fault with the basic intentions of many wealthier emigrants to New Zealand. These people had come out, he considered, with the intention of making as much money in as little time as possible, and had expected to have the help of labour provided by the Company or by the Maoris, whom, they thought, would willingly work for the European for a pittance. Having done this, they would leave the colony. 71

If the man with capital too frequently assumed New Zealand to be a place where "a successful agriculture could be attained in an easy and quickly remunerating manner," 72 the labouring emigrant sometimes saw Taranaki as a place where a new start in life could be made, where true worth would triumph over birth, and where the traditional classes would no longer exist. 73

So much for the Company's propaganda, and the image of New Zealand and Taranaki apparently projected in England. The real test of the Company's migration policy was, however, the number and type of people it succeeded in taking to the colonies. Viewed in isolation, the achievement of the Plymouth Company, or West of England Board, in transporting about one thousand emigrants to Taranaki in the first two years (1841-43) may appear considerable, but it must be

71 Dieffenbach (1843) I:3-4
72 Dieffenbach (1843) I:4
73 Latest Information (1842):44
remembered that at this time more than 70,000 people were leaving the United Kingdom every year.\textsuperscript{74}

To the Company's credit, the emigrants it sent to New Plymouth were young. The population pyramid for 1843 (see Figure 3)\textsuperscript{75} shows that at that time over 90 per cent of the population was under 40 years of age. In the full vigour of youth, most of the emigrants later showed themselves to be a readily adaptable group. If a group of people of this type had been moved into an area with an established, developed economy, little criticism could have been made of their choice.

However Taranaki in the 1840s was a pioneer territory, and moreover the Company and its leaders had made definite statements on the sort of people they proposed to send out; and in the light of these two considerations it will be seen that the Company's policy was not very successful.

Farm labourers and tradesmen were readily attracted by the offer of a free passage to the colony, and a guarantee that the Company would:

"at all times give them employment in the service of the Company if from any cause they should be unable to obtain it elsewhere."\textsuperscript{76}

But men of this type, on their own, would not be ideal settlers in a virgin environment. Those of them who had some farming

\textsuperscript{74} In the period 1831-41 655,747 people emigrated from the U K and in the period 1841-51 the number rose to 1,545,543. (E L Woodward "The Age of Reform 1815-1870" 1938:580 note)
\textsuperscript{75} The irregular age-cohorts in the population pyramid are those of the census return
\textsuperscript{76} The Colonisation of N Z from Devon and Cornwall (1840) :29; Information respecting New Plymouth (1841):21
experience, the farm labourers, were men who were used to working under direction, and on established farms. The quality of their contribution to the success of the settlement would depend very much on the type of direction and leadership they received. According to the Company, this would be no problem. In the new colonies there would be no shortage of employers, if previous colonial experience proved true in New Zealand. Rather the opposite, a shortage of labourers, might be expected to occur, if colonisation was carried out unsystematically.77

As has been shown, the Company succeeded in persuading to emigrate very few men financially capable of employing labour. Moreover, as will be shown,78 most of those who were capable of employing labour were more interested in speculation than in farming or other productive activity, or chose not to employ many men. It is doubtful whether many of the men who travelled out to New Plymouth as cabin passengers had much farming experience. Most of them, as Figure 2 shows, were business or professional men. Particularly damaging to the settlement's prospects was the fact that few or none of the yeoman class of farmer came to New Plymouth.79 Men of this

77 N Z Gazette: 6 Sep 1839
78 Chapter IV
79 According to the terms of the census on which Figure 2 is based, yeoman farmers would have been grouped among the "capitalist" farmers - of whom a good number at least were, like Captain Henry King, professional or business-men. See N Z C 115/1: 19 Apr 1843
class were used to making their own decisions, and possessed a much broader experience and deeper knowledge of agriculture than farm labourers. However much this knowledge and experience may have been based on English conditions, they would have been as nearly ideal emigrants as the Company could have sought.

To sum up: two-thirds of the New Plymouth settlers (see Figure 2) were agricultural labourers and tradesmen; who as well as having very limited knowledge to apply to the New Zealand situation, were in need of leadership. The other third of the settlers were men who in some cases may have been able to provide this leadership, but usually chose not to.

As well as advocating a representative structure of classes and occupations, Wakefield insisted that emigrating groups should contain equal numbers of men and women. Further, as far as possible emigrants should be married, but without children. He believed that a high proportion of married people made a labour force more stable, and that the larger the numbers of children that had to be provided for, the greater would be the burden on the settlement’s economy. The Plymouth Company said that applicants for free passages to New Zealand should be between fifteen and thirty years of age, and married. Single women would be eligible if they

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80 E G Wakefield (1849):156  
81 E G Wakefield (1849):405
Age and Sex Pyramids for the European Populations of Taranaki in 1843 and 1858, and of New Zealand in 1858.

Sources - Statistics 1840-52: Table 13 and Statistics 1858: Table 1.
travelled with their parents or their employers. Again, the 1843 population pyramid (see Figure 3) gives a measure of the Company's success. Of the total population over the age of 14 years, which for the Company was the adult population, 60 percent were male, 40 percent female. Two-fifths of the population were under the age of 14 years. If a comparison is made between the number of people over the age of 21 - 548, and the number of those who were married - 376, it can be seen that, even without allowing for a few married people under the age of twenty-one, a third of the population over the age of 21 were single.

The population of the New Plymouth settlement in June 1843, characterised by a high proportion of adult males, a high proportion of single adults and a high proportion of children was similar in all major respects to the population of any frontier or pioneer settlement, in spite of the Company's claims to have chosen its emigrants.

In respect of its emigrants' occupations, experience, wealth, age, sex and marital status, the Company failed to transfer to Taranaki a replica of the better elements of English society "in frame". So far from being able to select its migrants, as Wakefield had so insisted should be the case,

82 Colonisation of N Z from Devon and Cornwall (1840):28
83 Actual figures:393 men, 264 women
84 Actual figures:Total population 1091, children 434
85 N Z C 3/22:23 Jun 1843, Census Return June 1843
86 E G Wakefield (1849):156,405
it is evident that the Company had to take what people were willing to come. Thus R.G. Wood's statements that the Wakefield System was successful in supplying the new colony with both land-owners and labourers, and that the emigrant selection system had never worked better, are fatuous. 87

The Company's failure to attract a properly balanced emigrant group to the settlement was only one aspect of a broader failure to carry out colonisation in a systematic fashion. In misinforming people in England of the true state of affairs in New Zealand, in its failure to secure a proper title to the site of New Plymouth, and in the haste of all its dealings, the Company hazarded the future of its colony in Taranaki even before the first settlers had arrived.

It is now necessary to consider the reality that confronted the settlers on their arrival, and how they initially reacted to it.

87 R G Wood "From Plymouth to New Plymouth" (1959): 24, 40.
Carrington decided to locate the Plymouth Company's settlement in North Taranaki because he thought that the apparent abundance of good arable land in the district was an advantage that outweighed any dangers that the coast might present to shipping.

These dangers arose from the coast's regularity and openness to the prevailing westerly winds (see Plate 1 and Figure 4) and the unnavigability of its rivers. Only one river, the Waitara, was navigable for any distance, and the bar at its entrance limited its use to very small craft.

When the "Regina" was wrecked and the "Oriental" narrowly escaped disaster in the same month (November 1841) it seemed that early fears had been justified. The bad reputation that these events gave to the roadstead was not wholly deserved, as later experience showed. Twenty-three years later the official "New Zealand Pilot" stated that accidents on the Taranaki coast had been very rare, and that in moderate weather the roadstead was quite safe. Certainly today strong onshore

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1 About two and a half miles
2 "Journal of Dr H Weekes, November 1840 to March 1842" quoted in Rutherford and Skinner (1940):57
3 G H Richards, "The New Zealand Pilot" (1864):124
winds are uncommon, but in sailing days unexpected changes in direction of even moderate and light winds were a danger on an open coast.

The settlement's position midway between Auckland and Wellington on the west coast made it a convenient port of call for ships trading between those centres. On the other hand, it made communication by land difficult. Two hundred miles separated New Plymouth from both Auckland and Wellington - two hundred miles in which steep hills, dense bush and swift rivers were common.

The dismay of the passengers of the "William Bryan" on seeing how little had been done by Carrington's party, was largely forgotten when they inspected the land on which their homes were to be built. Cutfield, the leader of the settlers, was impressed by the flatness of the nearby country and the apparent ease with which it could be put into production. Dr. Weekes, Surgeon-Superintendent, was a keen observer of nature, and his diary during his first six months in the settlement indicates how one of the more educated men in the community saw Taranaki. He noted how quickly seed sown in late autumn germinated, and remarked upon the intensity and

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4 Only 0.3% of wind gusts recorded between 1939 and 1950 were over 32 mph and in an onshore direction. Pers. comm. N.Z. Meteorological Service, 26 May 1965. Percentage Frequency of Surface Winds observed at three-hourly intervals 1939-50.

5 Latest Information (1842):18-19
brevity of rainshowers, the strength of the May sun, and the frequency of fine weather in winter. Observations of this type seemed to justify the Company's propaganda. How accurate was this very favourable picture of the Taranaki environment?

Plate 2 shows how the volcanic mass of Egmont dominates the province. During the late Tertiary period the whole western part of Taranaki was covered by a series of ash showers erupted from the mountain and the lower Pouakai and Kaitake ranges to the north. The recency of the eruptions has left a landscape only locally modified by erosion, and the character of both the surface and the streams indicates a youthful stage of development.

Early travellers to Taranaki, observing the gradual slope from the mountain to the sea, thought that large areas of gently rolling to flat land must surround Egmont's base. Closer examination proved this belief to be wrong. Consequent streams flowing in a radial pattern from the mountains to the sea (see Figure 4) have entrenched themselves in valleys twenty to sixty feet deep, with narrow floors and steep sides. The coastal area is crossed by a large number of almost parallel streams, and the intensity of local relief can be quite high, as Dieffenbach noticed in 1839. Although the

6 Rutherford and Skinner (1940):45-46
7 Carrington Papers I, 8 Jan 1841; Rutherford and Skinner (1940):40
8 Dieffenbach (1843)I:139
Sources - Map in Hursthouse (1849):59 and NZMS1 Sheets N108 (1962) and N109 (1943)

FIG 5. North Taranaki in 1841 - Soils and Rainfall
Sources - DSIR Soil Map of NZ, Sheet 6 (1954), and pers.comm. NZ Met. Service 26 May 1965.
numerous streams provided the settlers with water for both domestic use and stock, and powered small mills, they hindered the development of internal transport. The ravine-like nature of the valleys made it impossible to carry out the plan of a rectangular road network, and the confinement of flood waters to a narrow space caused many bridges to be washed away. The expense of bridging the many streams meant that most stream crossings remained unbridged.9

Within this general pattern of relief there are some important local variations. Bounded on its inland margin by the line of the 200 feet contour, there is a coastal zone of fairly low relief, and generally about 100-150 feet above sea level. (see Figure 4 and Plate 1) It has its greatest width at the Waitara River and tapers westwards towards New Plymouth. Immediately bordering the sea is a dune area commonly 500 to 800 yards in width. Inland from this region and reaching the coast west of New Plymouth is an area of higher country, more closely dissected by streams and rivers. (see Plates 2, 11 and 12). Carrington had noted the openness of the land about Waitara on his first visit,10 and this had been one reason why he originally intended to place the settlement there. The settlers in their turn were impressed by the

10 Carrington Papers I:11 Jan 1841
apparent superiority of the Waitara land to that immediately about the town-site, and almost exactly nineteen years after the "William Bryan" passengers had landed, the settlers' eagerness to gain control of the Waitara area sparked off a war. 11

In spite of the fact that the "William Bryan" arrived in autumn, and had passed through the tropics on the way, the passengers (if Weekes' comments were typical of the newcomers' reactions) were favourably impressed by Taranaki's climate. 12 Temperatures at New Plymouth were appreciably warmer at all seasons than those of South-west England (see Figure 6) and sunshine was also more frequent. 13 Although the heaviness of Taranaki's rainfall (see Figures 5 and 6) was soon noted, the brevity of the showers and their alternation with periods of bright sunshine 14 were appreciated sooner than the rainfall's possible effect on the ripening of crops.

The climate created ideal conditions for vegetation growth, the vigour and density of which was remarked by all early observers. 15 Two major zones of vegetation could be distinguished, the coastal fernland and the interior bush or forested land. (see Figure 4)

11 The first Taranaki War began in March 1860
12 Rutherford and Skinner (1940):47-50
13 New Plymouth has 2110 hours, Plymouth 1680 hours in an average year. Pers. comm. N Z Meteorological Service 26 May 1965
14 Rutherford and Skinner (1940):47-49
15 Carrington Papers I:9 Jan and 24 Feb 1841; Latest Information (1842):18-19; Dieffenbach (1843)I:143
In the fernland the cover was mainly bracken fern (aruhe) and scrub, of which common varieties were mahoe and titoki. The fern varied a great deal in height - from one to twenty feet - but usually was about the height of a man. Variety was added to the fernland landscape by the occasional ti or cabbage tree, and numerous copses of karaka, nikau or konini which occupied some of the gullies. The coastal sand dunes were only lightly clad with fern and sand grasses, chiefly pingao.\(^16\) The settlers observed the denseness of the main fernland cover, and the complete absence of grass or any other form of natural pasture. But they were cheered by the thought that the fern could easily be cleared by fire, after which the land would lie open to the plough.\(^17\)

Certainly on first sight the fernland must have seemed easier to subdue and bring into production than the bush which as the map (Figure 4) shows, came quite close to the coast near the town site. Broadleaf hardwoods, in particular tawa, puriri, kohekohe and hinau, dominated the forest, but projecting above this canopy were rimu and rata, and on swampier land Kahikatea. Ferns of many types covered the forest floor. The whole was intertwined and laced together by dense brakes

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\(^16\) Dieffenbach (1843)I:139,142; Carrington I 9 Jan 1841; N Z Spectator 26 Jul 1845; Hursthouse (1849):11,52

\(^17\) Carrington I 9 Jan 1841; Latest Information (1842): 18-19
of supplejack and bush-lawyer, and presented to the settlers a dense and almost impenetrable mass. 18 Apart from the physical challenge offered by the forest the psychological challenge was no less significant. The silence (the rarity of birds in the forest depths was remarked on by many writers) 19 of the bush combined with its denseness and darkness to create an atmosphere of utter loneliness. William Strutt, an artist, recorded his impressions on first venturing into the Taranaki forest in 1855:

"... Oh, this solemn silence, so exquisite and weird .... it seems almost overpowering ...." 20

and later:

"The awful stillness of the spot, walled in by the mighty forest and shut out from all human intercourse beyond one's immediate circle, began to feel oppressive and tell on me .... the sense of desolation was strong and almost intolerable." 21

When he claimed that the soil at Waitara would "not require manure for these next forty years" 22 Alex Aubrey was doubtless carried away with enthusiasm for the moment, but in general, settler opinion in the early 1840s seemed to agree with what Company propaganda had said about the fertility of

18 Dieffenbach (1843)I:142-43; McLean Papers File 123; W Carrington to McLean 16 Jul 1847; Scholefield (1960)I:453, C W Richmond to T Richmond 24 Mar 1859
19 Dieffenbach (1843)I:143; Rutherford and Skinner (1940):78
21 Mackaness (1958)II:11
22 "Letters from Settlers" (1843):169
Taranaki soils. 23 The modern view, that North Taranaki soils are of only medium fertility, is thus in marked contrast with the earlier view. 24

Yellow-brown loams form the soil of more than nine-tenths of North Taranaki's area (see Figure 5). Physically these soils are an ideal medium for grass or crop growth. Their high content of organic matter makes them light and friable, and this, coupled with their crumbly texture leads to good drainage and makes them easily workable. Chemically however, the soils were not so fertile. Before cultivation occurred, the soils were well provided with nitrogen, calcium and magnesium, but were deficient in potassium. The amount of phosphate in the soil was high, but much of this was fixed by the high level of organic matter and was therefore unavailable for plant growth. 25

Early settlers noticed that coastal soils covered by fern and scrub were black or dark brown, while inland under a forest cover the soils were brown. A controversy over the relative merits of these two types of soils took place. 26 Modern opinion is that although the fertility of fernland soils may locally have been reduced by previous Maori cultivation, the

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23 IA1, 42/1308:1 Jul 1842; GBPP 1844 HC/556, Evidence Q1246
26 Chapter IV
colour difference represents no difference in soil fertility. The colour difference may be the effect of some colouring agent in the original vegetation, or may be a reflection of rainfall differences between the two areas (see Figure 5). 27

But as the settlers were convinced that the difference in topsoil colour was significant, and as this belief affected their evaluation of the fernland and bushland zones and through this the location of their farms, the areas of black and brown topsoils have been distinguished on the map.

The early settlers over-estimated the fertility of Taranaki soils because they were unfamiliar with New Zealand conditions. Any previous Maori cultivation with the Ko or digging-stick would not have turned the soil to any depth, and so in 1841-42 the soils were for practical purposes virgin to the plough. They had never been opened up and turned before, and so contained a considerable natural reserve of mineral fertility. And as recent research has shown, this natural fertility reserve must have been considerably boosted for three or four years at least by the ash deposit formed by burning off the scrub and the fern. 28 The settlers failed to realise that much of the soil fertility they observed was only ephemeral, an initial bonus, as it were. They looked at the

27 Pers. comm. Dr W M Saunders, Soil Bureau, DSIR, July 1965
28 R B Miller "Biological and Chemical Changes following scrub burning on a New Zealand hill soil" N Z Journal of Science V,3,Sep 1962:259-68
New Zealand environment through the eyes of European experience. In Europe thin-soiled upland areas were usually bare of vegetation while the rich soils of the clay vales were heavily forested. Surely, therefore, Taranaki's luxuriant vegetation growth was evidence of a rich soil. The abundance of the first harvests seemed to confirm this belief. But even this abundance was only relative to what the settlers had known before. Harvests from virgin soils easily impressed farmers who had previously worked on land which had been cultivated for centuries, and who, ignorant of the power of artificial fertilisers to augment a soil's yield, had only recently, if at all, abandoned fallowing as a means of maintaining soil fertility.

The tendency shown here, to apply European values to a New Zealand situation, typified all the evaluations of the Taranaki environment made by its first settlers. Early observers of Taranaki could not overcome the problems posed by the limited nature of their own experience and the contrasts to that experience offered by the Taranaki environment.

29 The publication of Liebig's "Chemistry in its application to Agriculture and Physiology" (1840) led to the first British inquiries into the relation between plant growth and soil chemistry, (Woodward 1938:547) In 1859 W I Grayling, a Taranaki settler, published 18 newspaper articles on the subject of "Agricultural Chemistry." The articles indicate that little was known of the matter in Taranaki. (TH:25 Jun to 29 Oct 1859). A C Burgess says that little artificial fertiliser was used in New Zealand before 1900. (NZ Journal of Agriculture, April 1958:380)

30 A Birnie "An Economic History of the British Isles" (1946):255-56
CHAPTER III

THE MAORI COMMUNITY IN 1841

When the Company's agents made a land-purchase agreement with forty-seven Taranaki Maoris at the Sugar Loaves in February 1840, they clearly considered that the sparsity of its Maori population was one of the area's great advantages. From this belief sprang a series of misunderstandings that were the source of so much bitterness between Maori and Pakeha in the next twenty years. The Company claimed that in buying the ownership rights of the few Maoris living on the Taranaki coast in 1840, they extinguished all Maori right to the land. The Maoris retorted that those who had signed the Sugar Loaves agreement were only a tiny fraction of the true owners of the land, and thus the agreement had no force.¹

Colonel Wakefield and his party had the misfortune to arrive in New Zealand at a time when Maori life was in a state of great turbulence and uncertainty. Nowhere was this unsettled state of Maori affairs more evident than on the west coast of the North Island, where following the arrival of European traders and the musket in the Waikato area about 1820, a great series of tribal wars, invasions and migrations had begun. The story of these events is told in great detail

¹ GBPP 1846 HC/203:33-41
elsewhere, but the main points relevant to North Taranaki can be briefly described.

The North Taranaki tribes of Ngati-Tama and Ngati Mutunga had helped Te Rauparaha, chief of the Ngati-Toa, to gain a great victory over the Waikato tribes at Motunui in 1822. Te Rauparaha and his tribe continued south to settle at Kapiti, while the defeated Waikatos returned northwards, planning their revenge on the Taranaki tribes. It was not long before they acquired muskets and, fearing the worst, many Taranaki Maoris followed Te Rauparaha south to the Cook Strait region about 1824. The expected invasion from the north took place in 1832, and the greatly reduced Taranaki population was easily overcome. Some died in battle or committed suicide, but most of the Taranaki people were captured. These were either killed and eaten, or enslaved and taken back to the Waikato area. Only a few escaped. Most of these eventually found their way southwards, where they joined their relatives. Small groups remained hidden in the depths of the forest stretching round Egmont's base, or gathered in the protection of Barrett's whaling base at the Sugar Loaves, or Nga Motu as the islands were known to the Maori. Here they remained, living in constant fear of invasion from the north. Ihaia te Kiri-

2 S P Smith "History and Traditions of the Maoris of the West Coast of the North Island" (1910):321-80 and 459-97
3 Set up in 1828 or 1829 (Smith 1910:444)
kumara, who escaped from the pa at Pukerangiora, the scene of the Waikatos' greatest victory in 1832, described the state of the North Taranaki coast in 1834 thus:

"All was quite deserted - the land, the sea, the streams, the lakes, the forests, the food the property, the works - the dead and the sick were deserted, the landmarks were deserted" 4

The land seen by those on board the "Tory" five years later was only temporarily deserted. Like all Maoris the Taranaki people had a deep and abiding love for their ancestral lands, and this feeling persisted in spite of the previous twenty years' disasters. The small remnant at Ngamotu in 1839 made their regard for the land quite obvious, and expressed their determination to remain and struggle on. 5

The Queen Charlotte Sound exiles had already stated their wish to return, 6 and in 1844 Wiremu Kingi, leader of the Atiawa exiles at Waikanae, opposed the proposed surrender of Waitara to the pakeha thus:

"This also is the determination of our people, Waitara shall not be given up .... Friend Governor, do you not love your land - England - the land of your fathers, as we also love our land at Waitara?" 7

The strength of Maori feeling for their lands 8 was under-

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4 Wells (1878):164
5 Dieffenbach (1843)I:138; E J Wakefield (1845)I:147
6 W Wakefield:2 Nov 1839
7 AJHR 1861, E 1:19 Kingi to Fitzroy 8 Jun 1844
8 R Firth "Economics of the New Zealand Maori (1959):368-373
estimated by the Company in 1839-40, and by the settlers in later years.

North Taranaki offered the Maori many advantages. For centuries before 1820 the coastal peoples had lived secure from invasion. Thirty-five miles north of Ngamotu the rugged bushclad Western Uplands came right to the coast at Paraninihi, or White Cliffs. The only passage here was by the narrow beach at the foot of the cliffs, which could be traversed only at low tide. Few paths penetrated the great forest which lay to the south. The exposed nature of the coast made sea-access difficult. The lightness of the soil and the mildness of the climate made the area ideal for cultivating kumara and taro. The forest provided timber for building, and natural vegetable products for food and clothing. The coast was famed for the abundance of its flax, from which could be made clothing, ropes and baskets. The ocean and the streams were rich in fish, the fishing grounds off Ngamotu being particularly favoured, while the mussel reefs found between Pukearuhe and Mokau in the north were a fruitful source of quarrels. Finally, the steep sided valleys and coastal cliffs provided abundant pa sites.

Dieffenbach found about twenty Maoris living at Ngamotu

9 Smith (1910):3
10 Smith (1910):127
11 Smith (1910)3-5
in 1839. In a journey to Mokau in January 1840 he met not a single person. Fear of invasion had had a marked effect on the living habits of the Ngamotu people. They had, to a certain extent, abandoned their mainland homes and spent much of their time on the larger islands of the Sugar Loaves, where they had erected rough shelters and dug food pits.

Their agriculture reflected the people's insecurity. Fernland cultivation no longer existed. Instead, small parties would wander inland and would select a lonely spot in the forest to clear. Carrington noticed that they seldom planted twice in the same ground, saying that the ground was no good if used again immediately. Once a site was chosen, all the trees and shrubs on the site would be cut down, with the exception of the Karaka tree, which was preserved for its fruit. Once the debris had dried, it was burnt and carelessly cleared away. With a pointed stick (Ko) the earth was loosened and the seed inserted. Both early and modern authorities seem to agree that it was this continual burning and cultivation of the bush which had formed the fernland. Dieffenbach found the forest margins broken up by small areas of open land bearing evidence of past cultivation. As well as their traditional crops the Ngamotu people grew potatoes, water melons, pumpkins

12 Dieffenbach (1843) I:138-40, 168
13 Dieffenbach (1843) I:164
14 Carrington Papers II: to Secretary N Z Co 22 Sep 1841
15 Dieffenbach (1843) I:142; N Z Grasslands Association (1951):57
and cabbages - crops which had been introduced to the area through the whaling station and the occasional trader. In 1841 the total area cultivated in the 32,000 acres surveyed by Carrington was only ten to fifteen acres. The Maori presence in Taranaki was hardly imposing.

16 Dieffenbach (1843) I: 144
17 GBPP 1844 HC/556 Evidence Q1226
CHAPTER IV
THE FORTIES
Economic Development 1841-1850

(A) The European Community

I. FARMING

It is evident that New Zealand Company initiative directed through its subsidiary, the Plymouth Company, was solely responsible for the foundation of the New Plymouth settlement in 1841. Important as they were in bringing the settlement into existence, the Company's plans had little effect on its subsequent social and economic growth. The settlement was designed to be agricultural rather than commercial, and the Company's plan for agricultural development proved to be particularly irrelevant to the Taranaki situation.

The settlement soon felt the effect of the Company's encouragement of absentee ownership, and its failure to ensure that the emigrants included a reasonable number of capitalists genuinely interested in colonising the new territory. The Resident Agent of the Company in the settlement noted a shortage of private capital as early as November 1841.¹ By the middle of 1842 bona fide colonists were criticising the activities of resident and absentee speculators and the effects of the Company's system of allocating land by means of a

¹ NZC 3/21:28 Nov and 29 Dec 1841
lottery. Captain King, the Resident Magistrate, complained that few of the small number of capitalists in the settlement "were inclined to spend any of their means on improvement. Speculation is more relied on than steady progression."² The lottery system gave many speculators good farm land or land favourably situated for commercial development, while genuine colonists often got inferior land. Those of the latter group who were not prepared to accept the land allotted them had to pay highly inflated prices to the speculators in order to secure good land. During the settlement's first year good rural sections were bringing £120 to £160 each, and suburban land £12 to £15 an acre.³ The colonists who could not afford these prices often had to farm land distant from the settlement's centre, while good land that the absentees could not sell lay idle. Thus the lottery system caused unnecessary dispersal of the settlement (see Figure 7) and so increased many settlers' costs of access and transport.⁴

The labourers soon made it known that their role in the young economy could not be taken for granted. In July 1841 they struck for higher wages - unsuccessfully, as the Company was the only employer.⁵ Later that year and early in 1842, labourers and tradesmen with funds saved from Company wages

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2 IA1, 42/1308:1 Jul 1842
3 NZC 105/1:1 Jun 1842; Letters from Settlers (1843):175; Rutherford and Skinner (1940):112
4 NZ Journal:17 Sep 1842; Nelson Examiner:18 Feb 1843, quoted in Marais (1927):138
5 Rutherford and Skinner (1940:53,95
were eager to buy land-rights from speculators in three to five acre lots. In their reluctance to accept their allotted place in the Company design, the working men of New Plymouth shared the spirit of the Wellington working men who, led by S D Parnell, gained the right to an eight hour working day in 1840.

Throughout the fifteen-month period that elapsed between the arrival of the "William Bryan" and the beginning of large-scale land clearance, the settlement's employment burden was borne almost entirely by the Company. The surveys having been completed and the land allocated in April and June, from about the beginning of July 1842 previously unemployed labourers and tradesmen were engaged in clearing the land either on their own small holdings, or on the land of larger owners.

The Company was only temporarily relieved though. The "Blenheim" and the "Essex" arrived in November 1842 and January 1843 with about 80 more men and their families, and

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6 NZC 105/1:1 Jun 1842, Letters from Settlers (1843): 175; Wells (1878):89
7 Up to July 1842, when there were no more than 230 men in the settlement, the Resident Agent had spent £5560 on wages for labour. At an average weekly wage of £1 per man this would have employed 100 to 120 men continuously from March 1841. See NZC 3/21:28 Nov and 29 Dec 1841, 29 Jul 1842; IA1, 42/1308:1 Jul 1842; Rutherford and Skinner (1940):235-44
8 NZC 3/21:8 Jul 1842; Letter from a settler to T Woollcombe, Secretary of the West of England Board:28 Sep 1842, quoted in Wells (1978):89
at the end of the harvest season in February unemployment was once again common. The situation could not be seen as a passing phase. It was clear that as long as only a minority of the community owned land, many workers would remain unemployed. According to the Resident Agent, there were only three people "of any wealth" aboard the "Blenheim" and the "Essex", and they were "not prepared to employ labour largely." In the previous year it had been noted that there were few "capitalist land-owners" in the settlement able or willing to employ labour. Apart from the fact that many of the landowners were far from wealthy men, the high costs of clearing land - £16 to £20 an acre in late 1842 - must have deterred them from employing labour. In June 1843 the 34 "capitalist" farmers in the community (see Figure 2) employed among them only 15 labourers.

Faced with the possibility of having to support unemployed men for an indefinite period, Colonel Wakefield, who visited New Plymouth in March, was left little choice. The Company was in financial trouble in England. It had been able to

9 NZC 105/2:28 Feb 1843; Rutherford and Skinner 1940):244-47
10 NZC 105/2:31 Mar 1843
11 IA1, 42/1308:1 Jul 1842
12 NZC 3/22:22 Aug 1843, Census Return June 1843, Table 11
13 NZC 3/22:23 Jun 1843, Census Return/1843 Table 5
capture public interest and sell land for only a short time, but as unemployment continued its expenditure continued to mount. Since early 1842 the Secretary had been pressing Colonel Wakefield to cut back spending, particularly in employing labourers, as much as possible.

The Colonel decided that as the Company and the local landowners would not employ the men, they would have to employ themselves. 67 of the unemployed men accepted his offer of a quarter-acre town section rent-free for two years, with the option of purchase at the end of that time. To discourage the rest from relying too much on the Company, wages were reduced, issues of stores and rations were discontinued, and men still employed were given work at a considerable distance from their homes.

By continuing to cut down the wages of its own employees and subsidising wages paid by land-owners, the Company rid itself of the unemployment problem at New Plymouth by the end of the year. The process had been speeded by the Company's

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14 In June 1839 the 110,000 acres of original sections at Wellington had sold in a month. In June 1840, when the 66,000 acres of New Plymouth's original sections went on the market, sales were very slow. Four years later, on 5 April 1844, only 14,000 acres had been sold. Much the same happened when Nelson land was sold in 1841. GBPP 1844 HC/556 Appendix:397; Marais (1927):53-57
15 NZC 102/8-10:24 Feb, 30 Apr, 30 Jul, 30 Sep, 14 Nov 1842
17 NZC 105/2:Mar - Aug 1843
18 NZC 105/2:31 Aug 1843
19 NZC 105/2:30 Nov 1843
abandonment of all colonising activity in early 1843, which meant that immigration into the settlement virtually ended with the arrival of the "Essex". Faced with the possibility of a decline in land values after the rapid increases in 1841-42, some absentee owners were prompted to subdivide their properties for sale or lease to residents. Some of the resident owners left the settlement, for places as far away as Adelaide. By the middle of 1843 nearly half the settlement's householders lived on rural land, away from the town-site, and late in 1844 small-holders dominated the farming scene. In 1845 the scarcity and resulting high cost of labour was a recurring problem for local farmers.

The pattern of small-farming, which had prevailed at the start in spite of the Company's actions and later because of them; once established, tended to perpetuate itself.

The external stimuli of Company finance and Company-sponsored immigration which had accounted for so much of earlier economic growth no longer existed, and with no possibility of bank or government loans and government spending in

20 NZC 102/11:26 Jan 1843
21 NZC 3/22:14 Nov 1843
22 John Newland - Journal:10 Apr 1845
23 NZC 105/2:30 Jun 1843
24 Farm-size, in this thesis, will be determined by acreage cleared and cultivated rather than by acreage owned. In November 1844, of the 29 settlers who owned land outside the proposed Fitzroy Block, only two had more than 25 acres cultivated. GBPP 1846 HC/203:138
25 NZC 105/4:31 Mar, 30 Jun, 31 Dec 1845
the settlement negligible the resources needed for expansion had to come from within the community.

The small scale of farm operation itself limited the rate at which the capital needed to finance future expansion could be saved. Again, the small land-owner did not find it worthwhile to employ labour, even if he could afford to. So labourers who were not interested in becoming land-owners found it more and more difficult to get year-round employment, and from 1844 onwards there was a steady flow of labourers away from the community. As the available labour supply decreased, the cost of harvesting and clearing land increased. By early 1848 farmers were having to pay 7/- a day to labourers in contrast to the 3/6 that had been the daily wage in mid-1843. In a settlement where all farmland had to be cleared from fern and bush the availability and cost of labour were important controls on the rate of farm expansion.

Internal difficulties slowed economic growth, but were reinforced in effect by difficulties arising out of the settlement's relations with the outside world. Both external access

26 Hursthouse (1849):73-75; Rutherford and Skinner (1940):86, Miller (1958):118
27 Newland:8 Aug 1844, 2 Jan 1845; NZC 3/26:21 Nov 1847; McLean Papers File 123: Medland to McLean 3 Dec 1847; File 124: Medland to McLean 7 Jan 1849
28 NZC 3/27:9 Mar 1848
29 NZC 3/22:22 Aug 1843, Census Return June 1843 Table 20
and trade development posed problems that will be dealt with in later sections of this chapter.

The effects of fragmentation of land ownership could be clearly seen by 1846. Of the 72 farms over five acres in area, only three exceeded fifty acres, and the median farm was about ten acres in area (see Figure 10). As well as these, there were more than 120 holdings of up to five acres.30

During the period from 1841 to 1843, Company road-building, surveying, wage-payments and immigration stimulated a fairly rapid growth in the area farmed (see Figure 11). In 1843-44 growth continued, at a slightly slower rate. Immigration had stopped, but as former unemployed labourers took up land on their own account, or were given employment under the Company's wage subsidies, the area of land cleared and cultivated still grew.31 Between 1845 and 1848 the growth in the farmed area was very slow. Shortages of capital and labour, and the cost of clearing land, which had slowed up the rate of individual farm growth before 1845, were now affecting the whole community. After 1848 there was some improvement in the rate of land-clearance, but in 1850 less than 3000 acres or five square miles had been cleared and cultivated, or about two acres for every person in the settlement.

The distribution of the small area of farmland was

30 McLean Papers; File 127:Census Return 31 Dec 1846
31 NZC 3/22:30 Sep and 31 Oct 1843
determined by the settlers' appraisals of soil and vegetation patterns in the district, the difficulties of transporting goods within the settled area, and Governor Fitzroy's decision in November 1844 to invalidate the original Company land-purchase.

The considerable controversy over the relative merits of bush or forest land and fern land was resolved, in the 1840s anyway, in favour of the fernland. It was generally agreed that forest soils were better, but that this advantage was outweighed by the greater cost of clearing the forest. Estimates of comparative clearing costs showed bushland to be two or three times as expensive to clear as fernland. Most settlers preferred to farm fernland when it was available, and little attempt was made to tackle the bush until after 1848 (see Figure 8), when the growth of pastoral farming and the availability of cheaper Maori labour persuaded settlers to re-examine the problem of bush clearance.

At least two methods of clearing fern were practised. The fern could be fired while still standing, and then the

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32 NZ Journal: 6 Aug, 3 Sep 1842, and 20 Dec 1845; GBPP 1844 HC/556: Evidence 2291 and 4368
33 NZ Journal: 20 Dec 1845; Hursthouse (1849): 100
34 The NZ Journal, a source sympathetic to the Company, claimed that bushland could be cleared for £8 to £12 per acre, and fernland for £2 to £5 per acre; but added that these were estimates of the minimum cost to clear such land. Opinion as to what constituted "cleared land" varied considerably. Some considered land to be cleared after initial slashing and burning; while others said that land was not "cleared" until all traces of original cover had been removed and the land ploughed. NZ Journal: 17 Feb 1844 and 30 Jan 1847
FIG 7. Distribution of Land, Occupied and Unoccupied, Purchased from the NZ Company in Taranaki in 1844.
Source: Map in GBPP 1846 HC/203:133

FIG 8. Distribution of Land Occupied by Settlers in Taranaki in 1848.
Source: Map in Hursthouse (1849):59.
remaining stalks could be slashed, raked up and burnt. Otherwise the fern could be first scythed down, left to dry and then burnt. A man using this method could clear one-half to three-quarters of an acre a day. After this first clearance the experts recommended that the land should be repeatedly harrowed or deep ploughed to bring the fern-roots to the surface, where they could be collected and burnt in their turn; but many of the settlers could not afford to delay bringing land into production in this way, and so in the early days fern fronds growing with the crops were a problem.

As the development of transport within the settlement is the subject of a later separate section, only a passing reference can be made here. As early as the middle of 1842, before the main clearance of suburban and rural land had begun, it was reported that the lack of bridges and the existence of bogs "from a few yards to a hundred feet in width "where roads crossed the numerous swamps and valley-bottoms, created real difficulties for the transport of building and fencing materials and agricultural produce. The farmer who chose to live more than two or three miles from the town-site could

35 NZC 3/27:15 Apr 1848
36 Hursthouse (1849):93-94
37 NZ Journal:13 Nov 1841
38 Hursthouse (1849):93-94
39 IA1, 42/1308:1 Jul 1842; McLean Papers File 425: Wilson to McLean 19 Feb 1849; Rutherford and Skinner (1940):57,106
40 IA1, 42/1308:1 Jul 1842
easily find himself isolated in winter; and so it is not really surprising that in late 1844 only 29 farmers occupied land more than a mile east of the Waiwakaiho River. 41

Governor Fitzroy’s decision to invalidate Commissioner Spain’s award of 60,000 acres to the Company seemed disastrous to the settlement’s prospects at the time, as it reduced the validly purchased area to 3500 acres (see Figure 1) surrounding the town-site. Although the settlement’s outer limits were constricted, the decision hardly cramped the settlers. Only about a quarter of the settlement’s cultivated land lay outside the proposed boundaries of the block in November 1844. 970 acres were occupied outside the Fitzroy Block (see Figure 7) but of this only 215 acres were farmed. 42 In June 1844 there were only 644 acres of cultivated land inside the block boundaries 43 - just over one-sixth of its area; while four years later, when settlement had once again spread beyond the bounds of the block following further land purchases, the total farmed area was still less than half the area of the block. 44

In early 1842, 68 out of the 71 acres cleared were growing crops. 45 Although pastoral farming was gaining ground

41 GBPP 1846 HC/203:138
42 GBPP 1846 HC/203:138
43 NZ Spectator:4 Oct 1845
44 Statistics 1840-52:Tables 31 and 32
45 Statistics 1840-52:Table 32
on arable farming in the last four years of the decade, in 1850 there was still more land in crop than in sown pasture (see Figure 11A). In the first few years the Company's intention that the settlement should be agricultural coincided with the settlers' interest. The settlers' need to produce as much as possible of their own food at a time when food imports were not to be relied on gave arable farming its first impetus. In the later 1840s, when the settlement was producing most of its own food requirements, the continuing need of other New Zealand settlements to import food encouraged Taranaki farmers to keep much of their land under the plough. On the other hand, the general shortage of capital limited the expansion of pastoral farming in an area where pasture establishment was expensive, and the cost of a worthwhile herd of cattle or flock of sheep was well beyond the ordinary farmer's means.46

In 1846 crops occupied the bulk of the land on farms of all sizes (see Figure 10) but especially on the smaller farms. On these farms the owner and his family could provide the relatively intensive labour requirements of arable farming but not the capital needed to diversify into pastoral farming. The area of pasture was insignificant on holdings of under ten acres - a total for all farms of four acres. Although pasture was more important on the larger farms, only one farm over 25

46 Hursthouse (1849):112
acres in area had more than half its land in pasture. 47

Throughout the 1840s more than four-fifths of the crop-land was devoted to grain-growing (see Figure 11B). Preparation of the seedbed was usually negligible: following clearing the seed was commonly broadcast onto the soil without any deep-ploughing. At most the soil might be lightly harrowed or chipped with a mattock to give the seed a better chance of germinating. 48 If any of the settlers had heard of rotational farming, they did not practise it to any great extent. The land was cropped repeatedly, season after season, particularly with wheat. 49 Manure was rarely applied; the comment being made by one observer that the collecting, carting and spreading of manure was thought to be too much trouble, and summer fallowing was the only recognition of the demands this type of farming made on the soil. 50 In the period 1848-50 an average of 350 acres was fallowed each year - compared with an average cropped area of 1300 acres. 51

If soil husbandry was primitive, methods of crop management were hardly any better. There were few threshing machines before 1850, 52 no seed-drills, and although mowing

47 McLean Papers File 127:Census Return 31 Dec 1846
48 C F Hursthouse "New Zealand - The Emigration Field of 1851" (1851):87
49 NZC 105/10:31 Jul and 13 Aug 1850; Hursthouse (1851): 87
50 Hursthouse (1849):95:22 Sep 1852
52 NZC 3/27:6 May 1848
was coming into use the traditional Devonshire bagging-hook was still the main harvest implement.\textsuperscript{53} Fencing was incomplete. The typical wooden post and two, three or four rail fence (see Plate 13) was a good cattle fence when it was built. But as the materials had to be brought from the forest-land, sometimes a distance of several miles, fence-building in the fern-land was not cheap. So, at the risk of stock damage to growing crops it was often neglected.\textsuperscript{54}

The effects of this "system" of farming, which the Colonial Surgeon, Dr Wilson, described as "execrable",\textsuperscript{55} and Hursthouse, a former resident, as "slovenly"\textsuperscript{56} were obvious from about 1848 onwards. Well before this time the fertility added to the soil by fern and scrub burning had been removed by repeated cropping or leaching. Failures in the wheat crop, in particular, became common, although all grain crops seem to have suffered to some extent.\textsuperscript{57} Soil exhaustion could be seen in the stunted appearance of crops early as 1848.\textsuperscript{58}

Wilson was certain that the problem of soil fertility could be cured only by applying lime.\textsuperscript{59} Hursthouse had

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{53} Hursthouse (1849):109-11
  \item \textsuperscript{54} McLean Papers File 425:Petition to Colonial Secretary, June 1850
  \item \textsuperscript{55} McLean Papers File 425:Wilson to McLean 16 Sep 1850
  \item \textsuperscript{56} Hursthouse (1851):87
  \item \textsuperscript{57} NZC 105/8:30 Sep 1849; NZC 105/9:31 Jan 1850; NZC 105/10:31 Oct 1850
  \item \textsuperscript{58} Hursthouse (1849):150
  \item \textsuperscript{59} GBPP 1850 HC/1280:111
\end{itemize}
recommended using natural manure\textsuperscript{60} and others again said that the seed used in sowing should be changed more frequently.\textsuperscript{61} The solutions offered were various, but every observer seemed to agree that the failures "resulted from a system of cultivation that would not be sanctioned by \textit{farmers}".\textsuperscript{62}

Modern opinion is that although natural potash and phosphate deficiencies were of some importance, the main reason for poor yields was a loss of soil structure. Brought about by continuous cropping, this would cause compaction, water-logging and poor soil aeration, particularly in a situation where, as in Taranaki, deep-ploughing was rarely practised.\textsuperscript{63} The same continuous cropping would also have brought about a nitrogen deficiency in the soil.\textsuperscript{64}

In the first season or two the need to produce crops as soon as possible, and in later years the high cost of labour and imported farm equipment\textsuperscript{65} partly explained the low standards of farming. But more than anything else, Company propaganda and lack of farming experience, even under English conditions, made it harder for the settlers to see the need for better farming practices. When it proved possible to

\textsuperscript{60} Hursthouse (1849):95
\textsuperscript{61} NZC 105/10:31 Oct 1850
\textsuperscript{62} NZC 105/10:6 Nov 1850
\textsuperscript{63} 22 Sep 1852
\textsuperscript{64} Pers.comm. DSIR Crop Research Division:1 Oct 1965
\textsuperscript{65} McLean Papers File 123:Aubrey to McLean 19 Dec 1846; Hursthouse (1849):112
get what were, by English standards, fantastic crop yields—forty to sixty bushels of wheat per acre were claimed\textsuperscript{66}—for so little trouble and expense, the settlers were convinced of the truth of the claims made in propaganda. Having decided that the soil was, indeed, inexhaustible, they so dealt with it, and overworked it.

The decline in soil fertility did not have a marked effect on crop yields until the land had been occupied seven or eight years. But crop yields had suffered from other causes much earlier.

Wheat was easily the most important single crop in every season from 1843-44 until the end of the decade, usually taking up about two-thirds of the cropped area (see Figure 11B). Attacks of smut decreased yields as early as the 1843-44 season,\textsuperscript{67} and this fungoid disease again caused trouble in 1844-45, 1845-46 and 1848-49.\textsuperscript{68} The settlers correctly blamed the dampness of the summers for the frequency of these outbreaks. From November to January New Plymouth receives twice as much rain as does Plymouth at the same season—May to July (see Figure 6).

As wheat-growers had their problems with smut barley-growers had to contend with caterpillars, or army-worms.

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{66} NZC 105/3:31 Jan 1844; NZ Journal: 24 Feb 1849
\textsuperscript{67} NZC 105/2:31 Dec 1843
\textsuperscript{68} NZC 105/5:31 Jan 1846; Wells (1878): 147
\end{flushleft}
Infestation was bad in the summers of 1843-44, 1845-46 and 1848-49.\(^{69}\) Although barley was a much less important crop than wheat after 1844 (see Figure 11B) it had the second largest acreage of any grain crop until 1848, when its place was taken by oats. The settlers' background seems to account for the early preference given to barley. Devon and Cornwall labourers traditionally preferred barley bread,\(^{70}\) and in England oats had not been found a profitable crop to cultivate.\(^{71}\) By 1848 farmers were finding barley too risky a crop, while oats, which seemed to be less liable to damage by caterpillars, were bringing good prices.\(^{72}\)

As a writer on the Irish Famine (1845-49) observed:

"The potato .... enabled great quantities of food to be produced at trifling cost from a small plot of ground".\(^{73}\)

At the time of the settlement's first harvest in 1842, 50 out of the 71 acres of cleared land were growing potatoes,\(^{74}\) and although in the following years it was relatively less important (see Figure 11B), it continued to be the settlement's basic food crop. In 1846, although potatoes occupied only one-eighth of the cropped area on farms over twenty acres in

\(^{69}\) NZC 105/3:31 Jan 1844; NZ Journal:30 Jan 1847; NZC 105/7:30 Nov 1848
\(^{70}\) NZC 105/2:31 Dec 1843
\(^{71}\) Hursthouse (1849):103
\(^{72}\) Hursthouse (1849):103
\(^{73}\) C Woodham-Smith "The Great Hunger" (1962):35
\(^{74}\) Statistics 1840-52:Table 32
size, on "garden-plots" under two acres in area, they accounted for a third of the crop acreage.75 Possibly the continuing importance of this crop led a disgruntled observer of Taranaki farming to compare it to the Irish "lazy-bed" system of potato-growing.76 In some circles, certainly, the potato was not held in very high esteem.77 But to the ordinary farmer it had the supreme advantage of being a crop whose yield could be dependend on.78

Although oats and potatoes continued to steadily expand in acreage, after 1845-46 declining crop yields set in due to soil exhaustion and plant disease. Rising costs of labour and farm requisites also served to encourage the wealthier land-owners to turn from arable to pastoral farming.79 From the late 1840s the acreage under crop grew very slowly, and the total farmed area grew only as quickly as the area under sown pasture (see Figure 11A).

The difficulties facing arable farming in the later 1840s were apparent enough, but there was no dramatic swing to pastoral farming in the settlement's first decade. To the expense of buying stock80 was added the difficulty of bringing them into the settlement. The state of shipping services was

75 McLean Papers File 127:Census Return 31 Dec 1846
76 Hursthouse (1851):87
77 Scholefield (1960):241 C W Richmond to J Chamberlain 16 Nov 1856
78 Hursthouse (1849):103
79 McLean Papers File 123:Aubrey to McLean 19 Dec 1846; NZ Journal 30 Jan 1847
80 In Wellington, in the 1840s, the price of sheep varied between £1 and £1.10.0. each. NZ Spectator: Market Reports, 1840-49
such that it became common for cattle to be driven overland from Wellington, 250 miles away. 81

The main difficulty faced by livestock farmers was the complete absence of the natural pasture found so abundantly in east coast districts of New Zealand at the same time. After 1845 former cropland began to be sown in grass, and already established pasture was extended by using cattle to break down and browse the fern, 82 but the pasture area could not grow very quickly in this way. Up to 1849 at least, the high cost of labour slowed the rate of clearing fernland and bush.

This early shortage of grass affected cattle less than sheep. Cattle were allowed to run loose in the bush in summer, and seemed "to do well on it." In winter turnips and carrots helped solve the feed problem. 83 As cattle were a valuable source of meat, milk and tractive power, their numbers steadily grew (see Figure 11A) and the freedom of movement allowed them by their owners became a nuisance to crop-growers. 84

Sheep had first been imported into the settlement in 1842 when Captain King, the settlements' largest land-owner, 85

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81 NZC 105/2:30 Jun 1843; McLean Papers File 123: Medland to McLean 3 Dec 1847; NZC 105/7:30 Sep 1848
82 Hursthouse (1851):95
83 McLean Papers File 123: Aubrey to McLean 19 Dec 1846. See also NZ Journal:30 Jan 1847
84 McLean Papers File 425:Petition to Colonial Secretary, June 1850
85 In 1846 he had 110 acres cleared and cultivated. McLean Papers File 127; Census Return 31 Dec 1846
brought back a flock of Merino sheep from Sydney, and Messrs Flight and Devenish imported some Southdowns. More sheep were imported in 1843, but unlike cattle, sheep could not thrive on the natural feed available in Taranaki, and by the following year sheep numbers had fallen by more than half (see Figure 11A). After 1844 sheep became more numerous as the pasture area grew.

The variety of production on the typical farm reflected the community's need to produce as much of its own food as possible:

"Almost everyone has a dwelling and garden or field of his own, raising his flour, potatoes, poultry and pork." 88

In 1846 nearly every farm grew wheat and one or two other grains, potatoes and turnips. Pigs, which had little trouble finding feed, were found on three-quarters of the holdings over two acres in area. Cattle and sheep were of minor importance. There were only 363 cattle and 511 sheep in the whole settlement, and of these Captain King owned 125 of the cattle and 389 of the sheep. The other 122 sheep were shared by four owners and the 238 cattle were divided among 53 owners. Three quarters of those recorded as owning cultivated land

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86 NZC 105/1:30 Aug 1842
87 NZC 105/2:30 Jun 1843
88 NZ Journal:30 Jan 1847
FIG 9A. Growth of the European Populations of Taranaki and New Zealand 1841-59
Source - Statistics

FIG 9B. Net Movement of the European Populations of Taranaki and New Zealand 1841-59, expressed as a Percentage of the Total Population.
Sources - See p 80 note 151 and p 147 note 143.
owned no animals other than pigs. The custom of running many of the settlement's animals in the bush rather than on the cleared and cultivated land contributed to the deterioration of crop-land soils. Animal dung, a valuable natural manure, was largely wasted.

II INDUSTRY, COMMERCE AND OTHER SOURCES OF INCOME.

Farming accounted for virtually all the settlement's primary production. Hopes of a timber industry had been doomed by the lack of a harbour, the unnavigability of the rivers and the poor quality of the roads. The timber was there for the taking, but there was no way of getting it to a market. Efforts had been made to get English flax production organised commercially and to smelt the abundant iron-sands on the beaches. The flax industry did not get past the discussion stage, but Perry's unsuccessful attempt to smelt the iron-sands in 1848 was the first of many similar ventures in Taranaki. The small shore-whaling base at Ngamotu carried on until 1849 when it was abandoned.

So secondary industry was almost solely concerned with processing the area's farm production. Thus linked to farming, manufacturing had found its growth limited by the same factors as had limited the growth of farm production - in particular,
capital shortage and difficulties in obtaining markets. By 1847 the settlement boasted three flour mills, all water-powered, one of which was the largest in New Zealand, according to Hursthouse.\(^9\)\(^4\) As well, there were three malt-houses and breweries, and one tannery. Hursthouse's claim was most likely correct, but did not mean that the flour-mill concerned was very big. By present-day standards factory production was small: there could not have been much more than 600 tons of flour produced in any year,\(^9\)\(^5\) and in 1848 the three breweries between them produced less than 400 hogsheads of ale.\(^9\)\(^6\)

In a community relatively isolated from outside markets and sources of supply, local self-sufficiency had become the main aim of production. In Taranaki as in other parts of New Zealand, fluctuations of business and trade prosperity had little importance for the small farmer in the 1840s. He had little use for money, which was often in short supply anyway;\(^9\)\(^7\) he produced most of his needs for himself, and barter of goods and services provided the rest more frequently than money-

\(^9\)\(^4\) NZC 105/8:3 Mar 1849 - Census Return 31 Dec 1847; Hursthouse (1851):68
\(^9\)\(^5\) The decade's largest wheat-crop of 914 acres in 1848 (Statistics 1840-52 Table 32) must have yielded less than 30,000 bushels according to acreage - yield figures in the 1848 Government Blue Book. An 1845 report (NZ Spectator 4 Oct 1845) inferred that 40 to 50 bushels of Taranaki wheat would yield a ton of flour
\(^9\)\(^6\) NZC 105/8:3 Mar 1849-Census Return 31 Dec 1848
\(^9\)\(^7\) NZC 3/27:6 May 1848
exchange. The same difficulty of external access limited the growth of what Jerningham Wakefield described as "the commerce of a shipping town." In these circumstances it is not surprising that commercial enterprise in the settlement was almost negligible. No accurate record of the town's business premises seems to have been kept from the 1840s, but there were three or four taverns or hotels, and a small number of retail shops and wholesale merchants concentrated around the Huatoki Bridge where the first clearings on the town-site had been made in 1841.

For lack of accurate information it is impossible to describe exactly/relative importance of different types of economic activity. Certainly it can be said that farming was easily the most important. In 1843 it was observed that ".... there is scarcely any person .... who is not in some way employed upon the land." Three years later the census recorded that of the 226 households in the community, no less than 199 owned areas of crops or pasture beyond the limits of a domestic garden. Only a minority of these land-owners described themselves as farmers, and the fact that many of the larger land-owners continued to regard themselves as professional or business men indicates that they were farmers.

98 W Fox "The Six Colonies of New Zealand" (1851):21; Scholefield (1960):104, J C Richmond to M Richmond 31 Aug 1851
99 E J Wakefield (1845) II:350
100 Wells (1878):89 and 147; F B Butler "Early Days - Taranaki" (1942):97
101 NZC 3/22:30 Nov 1843
through necessity as much as choice. On the other hand, the two or three acre plot owned by the typical ex-labourer or ex-tradesman could not have needed its owner's full-time attention. Up till 1843 most of these small owners had been employed by the Company, on roadmaking or surveying, and the cessation of Company spending must have reduced their opportunities for casual employment. Some most likely supplemented their incomes by seasonal work for the larger landowners, or practised their former trades on a part-time basis. So Figure 2, although it gives a good idea of the settlement's social background, over-simplifies the economic role of each occupational group. In the small community there was little opportunity for a man to specialise in a chosen trade or profession, and this must have been partly responsible for the departure of considerable numbers of miners and tradesmen from New Plymouth in the middle and later 1840s.

III TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATION

Difficulties of internal and external communication at once reflected and helped bring about the settlement's low rate of economic growth in the 1840s. High costs of transport reduced the incomes of the settlers, who were accordingly

102 McLean Papers File 127: Census Return 31 Dec 1846
103 NZC 105/1-2: 1841-43
104 NZC 3/22: 23 Jun 1843 – Census Return June 1843
Note on Table 5; and 30 Nov 1843
105 Newland: 8 Aug 1844; NZC 105/8: 8 May 1849
less able to spend money on the needed improvements in land and sea communication.

The settlers became aware of their isolation from the outside world soon after their arrival. By the middle of July 1841, most of the stores brought out by the first emigrant party had been exhausted, and only the timely arrival of a coastal trading-schooner allowed some replenishment of stocks. But by the end of August all the flour had gone, and only a few potatoes and peas, with some salt-meat, remained in the food store. The next emigrant ship, the "Amelia Thompson" brought enough food in September to relieve the situation, but also more settlers, so that in December and January food was once again in short supply. Although the "William Bryan" had had little trouble in discharging passengers and cargo, the "Amelia Thompson" arrived at a time when the weather was very unsettled, and as sudden changes in weather conditions repeatedly forced the captain to take his ship out to sea, fully six weeks elapsed before the last of the ship's cargo was unloaded.106

The scarcity of coastal shipping and the difficulties that vessels encountered in approaching the port and unloading cargo made the settlers acutely aware of "the disadvantages we labour under in not having a harbour."107

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106 Rutherford and Skinner (1940):52-59
107 Rutherford and Skinner (1940):56
"Regina" and the "Oriental's" near escape hardly improved matters, and by the end of November 1841, when not a single trading vessel had arrived in five months, the settlers were convinced that ships were afraid to come to Taranaki. 108

With sea access uncertain, land access made difficult by miles of mountains and bush, and facing repeated threats of starvation, many of the settlers felt that the Company had let them down badly. The small group of resident "capitalist" land-owners who, more than anyone else in the settlement stood to profit from future trade development, held a protest meeting in January, 1842. In a petition to the Secretary of the New Zealand Company they pointed out that they had paid the "unpreceendently high prices" demanded for land in the settlement because the Plymouth Company's propaganda had insisted that a harbour would be the first consideration in the choice of the settlement's site. They claimed that dangers of the Taranaki coast discouraged vessels from approaching the shore, and those few that did charged high freight-rates. So the petitioners asked the Company to provide a boat harbour at the mouth of the Huatoki River. Unless this was done:

".... this fine settlement .... must rapidly decline, as for the want of a harbour it affords no inducement for capitalists to proceed here, or for present settlers to remain ...."109

The twenty men who signed this petition apparently did

108 Rutherford and Skinner (1940):57
109 Rutherford and Skinner (1940):177-81
not know that coastal shipping was uncommon anywhere south of Auckland in the early 1840s, and that the depopulation of Taranaki in the 1830s and the ending of the flax trade had removed any encouragement that ships had needed to come there. The harbour's shortcomings were obvious, and so it became the scapegoat for the settlement's difficulties. Although Taranaki people continued to be very touchy about their port's reputation which understandably did not stand very high in other settlements, there seems to be no evidence that the port's reputation was so bad as to discourage captains from coming to New Plymouth. After all, the Taranaki coast presented problems of navigation that were hardly unique in New Zealand at the time. That the shipping service was poor is true, but it was more a national problem than a purely local one.

In 1848, 37 vessels of a gross tonnage of 2,202 tons entered and sailed from Port Eliot, as the New Plymouth roadstead was called. This meant that on an average, three vessels of about 60 tons measurement arrived and departed each month. These figures included only one ship from overseas, of about 400 tons. The typical coastal vessel was a schooner of only 20 to 50 tons. The skipper of a ship this size charged high rates for carrying cargo - and was forced to.
His ship was usually uninsured\textsuperscript{115} - insurance companies considered a small vessel on the dangerous New Zealand coast to be too high a risk\textsuperscript{116} - and its cargo capacity was small.\textsuperscript{117}

Being often at the mercy of winds and waves, ships of this size could not keep to a regular timetable.\textsuperscript{118} This meant that export produce could not always be sent in prime condition, or when the markets were most favourable; and that once export markets had been established, it was hard to keep them supplied.\textsuperscript{119}

On their arrival at the port, ships would usually anchor in a position about a mile north-east of the Sugar Loaves, and two miles out from the landing place at the mouth of the Huatoki River.\textsuperscript{120} Moorings sent out on the "Blenheim" in 1842 were used for several years but by 1847 they had broken away, no doubt through the wearing of the anchor-chain on the rocky bottom,\textsuperscript{121} and they were not replaced. Communication between ship and shore was carried on by two surfboats capable of carrying five tons of cargo each\textsuperscript{122} (see Plate 4). Boating-service

\begin{footnotes}
\item[115] TH:6 Aug 1859
\item[116] Rutherford and Skinner (1940):179
\item[117] The "Carbon", an 18 ton vessel which regularly traded between Wellington and New Plymouth in the middle 1840s, arrived in Wellington from New Plymouth on 2 July 1846 with 56 bags of flour, 160 bags of wheat and 5 hogsheads of pork. Three weeks later, her cargo was 277 bushels of wheat, 1 keg of butter, 3 tons of flour and 1 bag of barley. NZ Spectator:July 1846
\item[118] NZC 3/27:6 May 1848; GBPP 1860 HC/2719:58
\item[119] NZC 105/4:30 Nov 1845
\item[120] Map of "The Settlement of New Plymouth, 1848", in Hursthouse (1849):facing p.59
\item[121] GBPP 1849 HC/1120:106
\item[122] NZC 105/10:13 Aug 1850
\end{footnotes}
charges, which included the wages of 6 to 8 oarsmen for a return journey of four miles, must have significantly affected the costs of importing and exporting.

The obvious difficulties and dangers of travelling by land meant that practically all passenger and goods traffic between New Plymouth and other North Island settlements in the 1840s went by ship. Attempts were made to improve land communication. In 1842-43 the Company used Maori labour to clear a bridle-track through the forest to the east of Mt Egmont. Although the track cut about twenty miles off the distance of a journey to Wellington around the coast, after 1843 it proved to be too expensive to maintain and was allowed to revert to the bush. This inland and more direct route between New Plymouth and the south was not used again until 1866, when General Chute led his armed force along it on his journey from Wanganui during the Hauhau campaign. The coastal route between New Plymouth and Wellington, which ran for much of the way through fairly level and open country, was frequently used for cattle droving, and after 1846 for a mail delivery service set up by Governor Grey. The nature of the country to the north of the settlement made overland travel to Auckland considerably more difficult than overland travel to Wellington; and apart from the mail carriers,

124 NZC 105/6:31 Jan 1847
who were usually local Maoris, few people travelled on this route.

In a planned settlement, it was important that roading development precede rather than follow farming development. The New Zealand Company and their branch company at Plymouth apparently realised this. Although Carrington had decided to locate the town-site near the Sugar Loaves, he, and the rest of the settlers, continued to think that Taranaki’s best farmland lay in the Waitara River area, about ten miles to the north-east. So that this land might be made available for settlement as soon as possible, in 1841 and 1842 all the Company-employed labour not needed to help with the survey-work was engaged in forming a road from the town-site to Waitara. 125

The census of June 1843 more or less coincided with the ending of all Company activity in the settlement. What had been achieved in two years? The length of road completed or in progress was 24 miles - of unsurfaced clay. There were no bridges. 126

Even before the end of 1841 Colonel Wakefield had begun to impress the New Plymouth Agent with the need to restrict

125 NZC 3/21:24 Mar 1842
126 NZC 3/22:22 Aug 1843 - Census Return June 1843, Table 11
Company expenditure,\textsuperscript{127} and these demands continued throughout 1842. After the completion of the Waitara - Mangaoraka survey in early 1842, roading absorbed most of the Company’s spending in New Plymouth and when most of the settlement’s labour force was taken up in private land-clearing in August and September 1842, the Company quietly abandoned its roading programme.\textsuperscript{128} Men had been set to roading-building again in early 1843, but after Wakefield’s visit in March the Company did little more. The Waitara road (see Figure 14) had been the main achievement.

Captain King, the Resident Magistrate, reported in 1842 that the "face and formation" of the country had impeded road development. The fern cover was easily cleared, but a "considerable portion is intersected by steep hollows and ravines," at the bottom of which were swampy areas or streams which had to be either filled in or bridged.\textsuperscript{129}

Frequent floods and a rectangular survey plan which had been determined more by the ideals of Company directors in England than the realities of the Taranaki situation (see Figure 7), made the task of bridging the district's myriad streams more difficult. Both the Henui and Waiwakaiho Rivers

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{127} NZC 3/21:29 Dec 1841
\item \textsuperscript{128} Wells (1878):89
\item \textsuperscript{129} IA1, 42/1308:1 Jul 1842
\end{itemize}
had been bridged in 1842, but both bridges were washed away in the winter of 1843.

The Company and the settlers' achievement in two years was not very impressive, but between 1843 and 1848 the system of roads and bridges was not even maintained, let alone extended. The natural difficulties remained the same, but the community's ability to overcome them was greatly reduced. Both capital and labour were scarce in the settlement and resident landowners found their burden of transport costs increased by the dispersal of settlement arising from absentee ownership of much of the land. By concentrating the settlement, the Fitzroy decision of late 1844 removed many of the access problems caused by absenteeism, but at the same time threw away the results of much of earlier road-building activity.

The bridge over the Waiwakaiho had been replaced, but the second bridge fared little better than the first, being washed away in 1847. A third attempt to bridge the river was not made for another twelve years. By 1848 the settlement's means of communication were in a sad state. "All the bridges are either down, or rapidly going, and the roads everywhere

130 IA1, 42/1308:1 Jul 1842; Wells (1878):89
131 Newland:24 Jun 1843
132 Newland:19 Jun 1847
FIG 10A. Comparison of Sizes of Settlers' Farms in Taranaki in 1846 and 1852

FIG 10B. Comparison of Land Use and Farm Size in Taranaki in 1846 and 1852

are requiring repair.\textsuperscript{133} The unsurfaced roads deteriorated badly under winter rains, and it is hardly surprising that "small strong bullock-carts, locally made" were commonly used for carrying passengers as well as goods.\textsuperscript{134}

Following the 1847-48 land purchases some effort was made to extend the roading pattern. In 1848 the first road leading directly inland from the Fitzroy Block - to Mangorei (see Figure 14) was formed, but it was apparently only a crude track cut into the forest.\textsuperscript{135}

IV TRADE

The trade statistics that were officially recorded up to 1850 were far from complete,\textsuperscript{136} and so any statements made about trade must be fairly general or subject to some qualification.

The description of farming and manufacturing emphasised that productive activity in the community was directed towards satisfying needs of a local rather than an external market.

\textsuperscript{133} NZC 3/27:2 Jan 1848
\textsuperscript{134} Hursthouse (1849):110
\textsuperscript{135} NZC 105/9:9 Feb 1850; Wells (1878):147
\textsuperscript{136} In the period 1840-1852 Government Blue Books published only the total value of overseas imports and exports for each New Zealand port, and a summary of the origin and destination of that trade. No record of the nature of the goods traded overseas was published and no official notice was taken of coastal trade. New Plymouth had no local newspaper at the time, but the shipping columns of Auckland and Wellington newspapers gave some description of the cargoes traded between their ports and New Plymouth. A list of goods exported from New Plymouth in 1848 is given in NZC 105/8:3 Mar 1849, Census Return 31
The few trade statistics that are available confirm this judgment by showing that for the average farmer anyway, sales of produce beyond the community could not have greatly affected his prosperity. In 1848 it seems that the settlement's total exports could not have exceeded £4000 in value, or about £3.10.0 for every person in the settlement (see Figure 13).

When the "Carbon" took six tons of flour to Wellington in late May, 1845, New Plymouth became the first of the Wakefield settlements to export agricultural produce. Up to 1845 a few shipments of whalebone and whale-oil did almost nothing to counter the drain in the settlers' capital caused by the constant need to import. In 1843 £4500 had been spent on flour imports alone.

Between 1845 and 1850 "New Plymouth's export trade was a coastal trade. In 1848 two shipments of produce to Sydney - 90 tons of potatoes, and 7 tons of whale oil and whalebone - were worth £363, but other overseas exports recorded during

Continued -

136 Dec 1848. This return has been used in constructing Figure 13. The goods were valued according to prices quoted in the 1848 Blue Book (Average prices of Principal Field Crops) and in the Produce Market reports of Wellington and Auckland newspapers in 1848. A complete return of New Plymouth's export trade in 1850 - goods and values - is given in GBPP 1854 HC/1779:6
137 Newland:25 May 1845
138 NZ Spectator:26 Jul 1845
139 NZC 105/3:31 Jul 1844
140 NZC 105/8:3 Mar 1849 - Census Return, 31 Dec 1848
the decade were worth only £24.\footnote{141} Both Wellington and Auckland newspapers published the manifests of coastal ships arriving in their ports, and these show that there was a steadily increasing volume of exports of farm produce to these centres from New Plymouth. The 1848 Census Return for the New Plymouth settlement includes a list of produce exported coastwise during the year.\footnote{142} Only the quantities of the various items are stated, but a check on wholesale produce market prices in Wellington and Auckland in 1848 newspapers shows that these exports must have been worth £3,000 to £3,500.

As the 1848 values show (see Figure 13), agricultural produce dominated the settlement's exports. Nearly every shipment of produce from New Plymouth in the late 1840s included flour, and in 1848 it seems to have been worth a good two-thirds of the total value of exports.\footnote{143} In comparison other items were almost insignificant, taken separately, but were extremely diverse: barley, beer, bran, butter, eggs, hams, maize, mill-stones, oats, onions, pork, potatoes, pigs, ship's biscuit, whale-oil, wheat and wool.

Newspaper shipping records indicate that Wellington received the bulk of New Plymouth's exports in the 1840s. Between June 1845 and December 1847 the "New Zealander"

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{141}{Statistics 1840-52: Table 44}
\footnote{142}{NZC 105/8: 3 Mar 1849 Census Return, 31 Dec 1848}
\footnote{143}{With 1848 flour prices varying between £14 and £20 a ton, the 196 tons of flour exported has been valued at £2700}
\end{footnotes}
recorded only four vessels arriving at Onehunga with produce from New Plymouth, but in 1846 alone the "New Zealand Spectator" showed that 14 shiploads of New Plymouth produce had been brought to Wellington. The market for New Plymouth produce in Auckland was limited by the expense of having to haul all goods six miles overland from Onehunga to Auckland.\footnote{144}

In the late 1840s New Plymouth's ability to produce a surplus of grain-crops and vegetables was a current advantage, but as long as it was unmatched by an ability to produce a surplus of anything else, it was a potential source of weakness. At this time both Auckland and Wellington had to import food, but as those settlements steadily increased their crop production through the decade,\footnote{145} the prices offered for imported produce eased.\footnote{146} As early as 1846 New Plymouth observers considered that grain prices were not high enough to sufficiently repay the cost of preparing the ground for crops.\footnote{147}

It is fairly certain that most of New Plymouth's imports must have come coastally, rather than directly from overseas. The main evidence for this is the fact that after 1843 overseas

\footnote{144 NZC 105/6:30 Jun 1847}
\footnote{145 NZC 3/9:24 Nov 1848}
\footnote{146 Wheat, which cost 10/- a bushel in both Auckland and Wellington in 1842, and 8/- in 1843; declined to 6/- in both towns by 1847, and in Auckland to 4/- in 1849. Flour, which sold commonly at £35 to £40 a ton in Wellington in the early 1840s, was bringing only £14 to £15 in 1849. Statistics 1840-52, Table 56; NZ Spectator, Produce Market Reports 1840-49}
\footnote{147 McLean Papers File 123: Aubrey to McLean 19 Dec 1846; NZ Journal:30 Jan 1847}
shipping arrivals at New Plymouth were a rarity. In 1848 and 1849 only 3 vessels entered the port directly from overseas, while 36 coastal arrivals were recorded in 1848 alone. With the exception of 1848, in every year up to 1850 nearly all the settlement's direct imports came from Great Britain. The balance came from Australia, usually Sydney.

Judging by the scanty descriptions of cargoes given in the newspapers of the time, it seems that both overseas and coastal imports were mainly British in origin - manufactures such as clothing and hardware; alcoholic liquor, sugar, tea and tobacco being commonly listed. Livestock also, of course, accounted for a considerable proportion of export spending.

V POPULATION

Between 1841 and 1850 New Plymouth's population went through three well-defined phases of growth (see Figure 9).

148 NZC 105/7-8:1848-49
149 NZC 105/8:3 Mar 1849 Census Return 31 Dec 1848
150 Statistics 1840-52:Table 44
151 No record of population movement to and from New Plymouth or New Zealand was published in official statistics in the 1840s. In Figure 9 the net movement of population in any one year of this period has been calculated by comparing the natural increase (surplus of births over deaths) with the actual increase or decrease of the population. Note referring to the value for 1846 in Figure 9 (a) Net migration for both New Plymouth and New Zealand has been calculated on the basis of an estimated natural increase, as figures of births and deaths for this year are unavailable.
There was a rapid increase in the first two years, but between 1843 and 1848 the population remained almost stationary, only moving from 1091 to 1116. In 1849-50 the population edged up to just over 1400.\textsuperscript{152} That New Zealand’s population went through the same phases of initial rapid growth, relative stagnation and renewed growth at approximately the same time-intervals emphasises the fact that the New Plymouth settlement’s problems of growth were shared by the whole country.

All the four main European settlements in New Zealand experienced a boom immediately following their founding. When Auckland became New Zealand’s capital in 1840, the future promise of government spending encouraged immigration to that town, land-clearing and cultivation, and rapid speculative rises in land-values. What Government spending did for Auckland, New Zealand Company spending did for the Cook Strait settlements of Wellington, New Plymouth and Nelson. The depression in the capital that followed the Government’s financial difficulties in 1842-43 showed that the Company settlers were not entirely wrong in regarding Auckland as purely the creature of the Government.\textsuperscript{153} Unfortunately the southern settlements’ dependence on the Company became only too evident when the Company suspended its colonising activities early in 1843. The Company’s free passages and

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{152} Statistics 1840-52:Table 1
\item \textsuperscript{153} NZ Journal:10 Oct 1840; NZ Gazette:28 Aug 1841
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
guarantees of employment for artisans and labourers had been the main incentives that decided these people to come to New Zealand rather than elsewhere, and when these incentives ended, so did emigration to the Company settlements.

Variations in the net flow of migration show that 1844 was the worst year of the depression, taking the country as a whole. In that year the net emigration from the country at least equalled the net immigration in the previous year (see Figure 9). Although Wellington's population growth rate received a marked check after 1842, the ending of New Zealand Company colonization affected New Plymouth much more. In the settlement's almost purely agricultural economy, employment opportunities for people uninterested in becoming landowners were much more limited than at Auckland or Wellington where business and manufacturing activity was important. New Plymouth's immigration and emigration balanced each other in 1844, but from 1845 the numbers of people leaving the community, some for overseas but mostly to Auckland and Wellington, exceeded the numbers arriving. During this period the population was maintained only by the surplus of births over deaths.

Not until 1849 did immigration again supplement New

154 Statistics 1840-52, Table 1
155 NZC 105/8:8 May 1849
Plymouth's population. Other settlements had benefited from increased immigration from about 1847 (see Figure 9), but settlers were not encouraged to come to New Plymouth until new land purchases in 1847-48 gave some hope of room for future expansion.

During the period from 1844 to 1848 persons departing from the settlement exceeded persons arriving by about 260, or almost a quarter of the settlement's 1844 population. In spite of this loss the population in 1848 was only 39 less than in 1844. The rate of natural increase was so high as to be termed "very extraordinary" by Dr Wilson in his 1849 report; and by modern standards, it certainly was. In the seven years between 1843 and 1850 for which figures are available, births numbered 433 and deaths only 62. In terms of the mean population total for the years covered - 1170, the crude birth and death rates per thousand of population were 52 and 7 respectively.

The population's ability to maintain its numbers in the

156 In 1848 10 people entered, but 80 left the settlement. McLean Papers File 124: Medland to McLean 7 Jan 1849 (Letter accompanying 1848 census return)
157 Actual figures 1844: 1155, 1848: 1116
158 NZ Government Gazette;30 Apr 1850
159 Statistics 1840-52:Table 22. No return for 1846
159a There is a possibility that, owing to the conditions under which statistics were collected at the time, that some deaths were not registered; but I do not consider that in such a small community the proportion of unregistered deaths would have been great enough to seriously affect the ratio of births to deaths
face of such a rate of emigration arose mainly from its youthfulness. A low death rate was to be expected where in 1843 92% of the population was under 40 years of age (see Figure 3). The healthiness of the population is shown by the fact that adult deaths were more often the result of accidents or intemperance than disease or old age. The youth of the married women contributed to the high birth rate. In 1843 at least 80% of the married women were under 40 years of age.

In only five years the maintenance of the high birth rate brought about a large increase in the already high proportion of children in the population. In 1843 39.7% of the population had been under 14 years of age, but by 1848 the proportion of children had risen to 48.3%.

At the end of Chapter One it was noted that the adult immigrant population was strongly masculine. By the end of 1848 the population had developed for almost six years without any significant addition by further immigration. Consequently the early high masculinity was considerably reduced. In 1843 there had been 149 men to every 100 women; in 1848 the ratio was 117 to 100. To this extent New Plymouth had begun to lose its early frontier character and had begun to assume

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161 There were 188 married couples, and only 38 women over 40. Census Return Jun 1843, Table 3
162 NZC 105/8:3 Mar 1849 Census Return 31 Dec 1848
163 NZC 105/8:3 Mar 1849. Census Return 31 Dec 1848
the features of a more mature community.

(B) The Maori Community.

Between 1841 and 1848 hundreds of Maoris returned to their ancestral North Taranaki lands. Some came from the north, where the recently Christianised Waikatos freed the slaves they had taken in the wars of the early 1830s. From the Horowhenua and Marlborough Sounds districts came many others, attracted home by the promise of protection provided with the beginnings of European settlement.\(^{164}\) The last large group to return had been a party of more than 500 Te Atiawa which Wiremu Kingi had led back from Waikanae in 1848.\(^{165}\) Kingi’s people settled mainly at Waitara,\(^{166}\) and in so doing, followed many of the earlier arrivals. A census of the Maori population within the boundaries of Commissioner Spain’s award, taken just over a year before Kingi’s return from Waikanae, showed that of a total Maori population of 729; 220 lived in the Waitara - Taniwha district, 305 in the Puketapu district, and 204 in the district between the Waiwakaiho River and the Sugar Loaves\(^{167}\) (these places are shown in Figure 14).

The Maori population of North Taranaki was remarkable in comparison with the European population in its proportions

\(^{164}\) NZC 105/2:31 Jul 1843
\(^{165}\) NZC 3/28:28 Feb 1849
\(^{166}\) Newland:10 Nov 1848
\(^{167}\) McLean Papers File 127: Return of Native Population 30 Oct 1847
of the sexes and its age-distribution. The 1847 census recorded that among the 579 adults there were 343 men and 236 women; while among the 1848 migrants from Waikanae to Taranaki there were 273 men and 195 women. The proportions of males to females were almost identical, being 145 males to 100 females in the 1847 census and 140 to 100 in 1848. In a footnote to the 1847 return, the census-taker stated that "the females were scarcely ever returned by the Waikatos," but this explanation cannot apply to the group which returned from Waikanae, for they had not been enslaved. Ten years later, the first national census of Maori population showed that this disproportion of the sexes, although more marked in Taranaki than in many other places, was found over the whole country. The 1857 census showed that of a total Maori adult population of 44,841; 25,514 were males, who thus outnumbered the females in a ratio of 132:100. Fenton's only comment on this unbalance was that the effects of infanticide on the female population most likely balanced the effects of warfare on the male population. Dieffenbach attached more importance to other factors. He found that

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168 Census taken at Ohau, Horowhenua, in April 1848 NZC 3/27:12 May 1848
169 Statistics 1857:Table 2
170 F D Fenton "Observations on the State of the Aboriginal Inhabitants of New Zealand" (1859):29
FIG 11A. Growth of Numbers of Livestock and of Acreage of Farmland Owned by Settlers in Taranaki 1843-58

FIG 11B. Growth in Acreage of Individual Crops in Taranaki 1843-58
Source - Statistics.
women were burdened with all the heavy work - of cultivation and of carrying goods, and that this, along with early intercourse with the other sex, frequent abortions and the custom of nursing infants for a long time, brought about "the early decay of their youth and beauty." 171 Firth makes it clear that in classical times the burden of labour was fairly shared between the sexes. 171a It is likely, though, that when slaves were liberated following the conversion of the Maoris to Christianity, the women of the tribe, rather than the men, had to do the extra work.

While in the late 1840s the European population of Taranaki was almost equally divided between adults and children, in the Maori population adults outnumbered children by about four to one. Again, an explanation must be mainly speculative. The Reverend J Reimenschneider, a Lutheran missionary in the Warea district during the 1840s and 1850s, said that in his own area mortality was particularly high among the children. 172 On the basis of observations made in villages in the Lower Waikato area Fenton claimed that the Maori birth-rate was less than half that of the European population. 173 Dieffenbach had earlier noted that the typical Maori family was small; and believed that the main reasons were female infertility, induced by sexual intercourse from

171 Dieffenbach (1843) II:12  
171a Firth (1959):210  
172 Fenton (1859):2  
173 Fenton (1859):24
an early age; and a high proportion of still-births, brought about by the hard work that women had to undertake, even during advanced pregnancy. 174

Most of the Maoris had had some contact with Europeans during their period of exile, and by the time they returned to Taranaki they had generally began to imitate European habits of food, drink and dress. More important evidence of acculturation was the degree to which Maoris had adopted European farming practices, and had become more sophisticated in their economic relations with the Europeans.

In 1848 the Maoris within the boundaries of Spain's award had approximately 450 acres of crop land, and owned 30 cattle, 12 horses, and "numerous pigs." 175 European farmers at the time had about 1200 acres in crop (see Figure 11A), or almost three times the Maori total, but in relation to their population the Europeans had barely twice as much cropland as the Maoris. 176 In December 1848 there were 1.1 acres of cropland for each 1,116 Europeans and 0.6 acres for each of roughly 750 Maoris. Possibly because their own tradition was purely arable, the Maoris had not gone in for sheep farming, and crops

174 Dieffenbach (1843) II:12-16. See also W Fox (1851):53-55
175 NZC 105/8:3 Mar 1849 Census Return 31 Dec 1848
176 Wiremu Kingi's party did not return to Waitara until the middle of November, 1848 and therefore do not enter this calculation
occupied all their cleared land. Wheat and potatoes were the crops most favoured by the Maoris, being estimated to occupy three-quarters of their land, while the remaining quarter was devoted to maize, onions, taro, kumeras and melons.\footnote{177} In 1848 wheat and potatoes took up 80 per cent of European farmers' cropland.

The potatoes Maoris grew themselves were their basic food, but they had become a "large consumer" of flour, and were very fond of tea and sugar. They were "inveterate smokers" and although one writer claimed that they disliked spirits, were partial to wine or beer.\footnote{178} The Taranaki tribe, whose lands lay to the southwest of the settlement, had built three small grist mills in an effort to provide their own flour,\footnote{179} but most of the Maoris living close to the European settlers found it more convenient to secure their new needs in food drink and clothing through trade with the Europeans.

In the early 1840s the Maoris had provided the Europeans with a good deal of their food needs,\footnote{180} but later, as the Europeans began to export crop-produce themselves, pigs became an important Maori article of sale, along with the earlier firewood, potatoes, wheat, maize and melons.\footnote{181} Although there is a record of a coastal vessel loading Maori produce in the Waitara River as early as 1843,\footnote{182} it is likely that

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\begin{itemize}
\item \footnote{177}{Hursthouse (1849):28}
\item \footnote{178}{Hursthouse (1849):28}
\item \footnote{179}{NZ Spectator:20 Jan 1847; Hursthouse (1849):31}
\item \footnote{180}{IA1, 42/1308:1 Jul 1842}
\item \footnote{181}{Hursthouse (1849):29}
\item \footnote{182}{Carrington Papers I:23 Aug 1843}
\end{itemize}
while the area of Maori cultivation remained small, as it did for most of the decade, any surplus Maori produce was traded with the local settlers rather than exported directly to Auckland or Wellington. The first settlers to land were surprised at the keeness of the Maoris' business sense.\(^{183}\)

Although the use of money and the range of goods traded were relatively new to them, the traditional custom of gift exchange had developed in the Maoris some concept "of equivalent, of profit, and of bargaining."\(^{183a}\)

It did not take the Maoris long to realise the ephemeral value of blankets, prints, calico and tobacco, which at one stage they had sought keenly. In 1847 and 1848 the money that Maoris received for land sold to the Government was mainly spent on:

".... useful agricultural implements, horned cattle, horses, and such other articles as were most likely to tend to their improvement."\(^{184}\)

Whenever it was possible, the Maoris preferred to be paid in cattle rather than money, for they knew that cattle were a form of wealth that "would not decay."\(^{185}\)

The Maori could supplement his income by working for the European settlers, or the Government. In the early years

\(^{183}\) NZ Journal: 3 Sep 1842; Rutherford and Skinner (1940): 69-70
\(^{183a}\) Firth (1959): 431
\(^{184}\) MLP-NP1, McLean to Eyre 13 Feb 1849. See also MLP-NP1, McLean to Colonial Secretary 18 Jun 1847
\(^{185}\) NZC 3/27: 15 Apr 1848
Maoris provided a good deal of the labour needed on public works such as road making, scrub and forest clearing and house building.\footnote{186} After 1844 economic depression and contraction of the settled area reduced the amount of employment offered to Maoris, even though they were still found very useful at harvest time.\footnote{187} It was difficult to get the Maoris to work regular hours, but they were "capital axemen" and were quick to learn any manual skill.\footnote{188}

About 1848, when the shortage of European labour had become acute, Maori labour was keenly sought by farmers, because the Maori was prepared to work for much lower rates than the European. The return of more than 500 Maoris in one party, from Waikanae, was regarded as providential by European observers. Although they had left Waikanae in April, the Maoris did not reach Waitara until mid-November, 1848.\footnote{189} By this time the crop-planting season had passed, and an unusually large number of Maoris were available to help bring in the 1849 grain harvest. As many as 50 to 100 were commonly seen working in one field, and in contrast to the £7/- a day that European labourers had successfully demanded in February 1848,\footnote{190}
the Maoris were generally happy with 2/- to 2/6 a day.\textsuperscript{191} The land-owners were over-joyed, as it now seemed that the "age of ruinous prices for reaping (was) past for ever."\textsuperscript{192}

The material benefits of trading with and working for Europeans went mainly to the Maoris who lived closest to the Europeans. The Atiawa, who had emigrated to the Cook Strait area in the 1820s had lived for more than twenty years in close contact with whalers and traders and, in later years, with the missionaries and the Port Nicholson settlers. Evidence of the wealth they had accumulated during their absence were the 50 ton schooner, 5 boats, 44 canoes and 21 horses owned by Kingi's party in 1848.\textsuperscript{193} A year earlier it was evident that the Ngamotu hapu of the Atiawa tribe, who lived in the Waiwakaiho - Sugar Loaves area close to the centre of the New Plymouth settlement, were more prosperous than other hapu further removed from the settlement. All three hapu had "large" or "considerable" areas of wheat and potato crops, but while the Ngamotu were able to "avail themselves of the facility afforded them by having (their wheat) ground at European mills" and owned 23 head of cattle, and 7 horses; the Puketapu and Manukorihi hapu to the east of the settlement between them owned only 7 cattle and 5 horses.\textsuperscript{194}

\textsuperscript{191} NZC 105/7:31 Jan 1849
\textsuperscript{192} McLean Papers File 425:Wilson to McLean 5 Feb 1849. See also 19 Feb 1849
\textsuperscript{193} NZC 3/27:12 May 1848
\textsuperscript{194} McLean Papers File 127:Return of Native population 30 Oct 1847
A third way in which the Maori could make some money was by land-sales. The 1847 Census of Maori population noted that the Ngamotu people had used money received for land payments in 1844 and 1847 (respectively, the Fitzroy Block and the Grey Block - see Figure 1) to buy most of their stock. No evidence has been found to confirm or deny this assertion, but it is possible that, envying the wealth of the Ngamotu people and observing how much of it had been obtained, the Taranaki tribe could be persuaded to sell in 1847, the 12,000 acre Omata block and the 4,000 acre Tataraimaka block.195

A few settlers moved onto the newly bought land almost immediately (see Figure 8) but although it was reported to be very fertile, the fact that a good deal of the Omata Block and all of the Grey Block were forested,196 deterred many others. Most of the settlers still looked for the day when they could re-occupy the fertile, open Mangaoraka and Waitara areas which they had been forced to abandon in 1844. The purchase of the small Bell Block in March 1848 seemed at the time to have

"practically broken the neck of the once formidable opposition, and laid the foundation for the acquisition of land on a larger scale,"197

but as the purchase was disputed by a section of the Puketapu

195 McLean Papers File 126:Cooper to Colonial Secretary 29 Apr 1854
196 McLean Papers File 123:Carrington to McLean 16 Jul 1847, and Harris to McLean 9 Aug 1847
197 NZC 105/7:15 Apr 1848
hapu whose land surrounded the block, it could not soon be opened up to settlement. Wiremu Kingi's return was a blow to the settlers. In 1844 he had led the Maori opposition to Commissioner Spain's confirmation of the New Zealand Company purchase in Taranaki. In the intervening years his opposition to European purchase of his home district, Waitara, had not diminished, and his return immensely strengthened the cause of those Maoris who opposed further sales of land to the Government.

(C) North Taranaki in 1850 - Retrospect and Prospect.

After nine years the settlement still existed. This in itself was no mean tribute to the settlers who had stayed on in spite of the Company's failure, Fitzroy's decision and the depression of the middle 1840s. In this first decade, changes in the settlers' appraisals and expectations of their physical environment were greater than the changes the settlers wrought on that environment.

The notions so vigorously fostered in Company propaganda, that people of all classes would find in New Zealand a secure, comfortable life and easily attainable riches, were among those most speedily rejected as worthless. For the labourers and tradesmen of the New Plymouth community - the "free emigrants" whose welfare the Company had particularly guaranteed - hunger and unemployment were the common experience until late 1843,
and thereafter improvement came only slowly. The "capitalists" had fared little better. Some had made short-term profits in speculation, but those who were interested in becoming colonists in the true sense found the costs of land development far greater than they could afford.

Early appraisals of Taranaki, dictated mainly by the Wakefield theory and English experience, had been in terms of agricultural occupance. By 1848 declining yields had forced farmers to doubt earlier beliefs that linked soil fertility and luxuriance of vegetative cover. Many must have come to agree with Hursthouse that:

"... the peculiar adaptation of this district for agriculture (arose) less from any extreme fertility of the soil than from the genial nature of the climate, the extent of level land ... the ease with which the soil can be worked at all seasons ..." 199

Of course, even before doubts about the soil's fertility had become widespread, it was evident that arable farming was losing its early attraction, and that farmers were showing more interest in pastoral farming.

With only 2850 acres under cultivation in 1850,200 the settlement's achievement in clearing land had not been great. Most of the farmland was in the relatively open coastal strip,

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199 Hursthouse (1849):91
200 There were another 420 acres cleared but uncultivated, and fallowed. GBPP 1854 HC/1779:4-5 (New Plymouth Census Returns Dec 1850)
within two or three miles of the sea, while the densely forested interior remained almost untouched (see Figure 8). In this coastal belt considerable stretches of fern and scrub had been cleared only between the Waiwakaiho River and the Sugar Loaves, which were about four miles apart. Here, largely in the area of the former Fitzroy Block were found three-quarters of the settlement's cultivated land. North of the Waiwakaiho, where Katatore's so-called Fitzroy Pole had symbolised Maori determination to prevent further European advance towards Waitara since 1849, only 300 acres had been cleared. Directly inland from the town-site, 180 acres of cleared land in the Mangorei district represented one of the first attempts to clear forested land. So recently had settlers moved into this area that more than one-third of the cleared land had yet to be cultivated. But the frontier of settlement was advancing most quickly to the south-west. Settlers had started moving into the then newly purchased Omata district from May 1848 and by 1850 had cleared 640 acres, roughly one-fifth of the settlement's total. In sympathy with the interest in expansion into these areas, the Government was surveying road lines into the interior of the Grey and

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201 NZC 3/28:12 Nov 1849
202 NZC 105/10:13 Aug 1850
203 GBPP 1854 HC/1779:4-5
Omata blocks. Yet further down the coast Messrs King and Cutfield were reported to be running about 200 cattle on the open coastal country of the Tataraimaka Block.

Even in the so-called town site, the area of about 550 acres which had been occupied since 1841, land clearance was far from complete. Dr Wilson in his first annual report noted that as most of the settlers were farmers, the growth of the town had not kept pace with the growth of population. Beyond a small cluster of stores and other commercial buildings around the Huatoki Bridge, the "town" resembled an "irregularly planted series of small planlessly devised hamlets and the uncombined acre-allotment cottage dottings of an indefinite district."

It was impossible to tell where the town ended and the country began. Patches of uncleared fern, on absentee-owned or unsold land, could be found even within 200 yards of the Huatoki Bridge. The Company Resident Agent believed that if the town sections that had been sold could be concentrated into a smaller area, the settlement would benefit from the reclassification of the remaining town land as cheaper suburban or rural land.

It is likely that the town in 1850 looked much the same as in 1844 (see Plate 3). The raupo or cob (clay walls,
Plate 3: New Plymouth in 1844 - Edwin Harris

Plate 4: The Beach and Landing-place at New Plymouth - William Strutt 1855
thatched roof) houses which had been common in the first years of the settlement had largely been replaced by houses built of sawn timber, but the open, rural appearance remained.

Detailed figures for 1850 are not available, but the typical farm-unit must have been little bigger than in 1846. The total of cleared land represented only two acres for each person.

The area in sown pasture, which had been growing quickly since 1847, by now almost equalled the area under crop, which had grown only slowly since 1846 (see Figure 11A). There were significant contrasts in the distribution of these two types of land use. In the longer-settled coastal area between the Wawakaiho River and the Sugar Loaves 48% of all cultivated land was in sown pasture, while in the newly occupied Omata area, where the soil fertility had not yet been depleted as in the Fitzroy Block, only 24% of cultivated land use in sown pasture.

The problems which had increasingly beset crop-growing in the later 1840s were evident in the appearance of the crop-land in 1850. Dr Wilson reported that:

"... it begins to be experienced here, on those farms where a niggardly, imperfect and

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209 NZC 3/22:23 Jun 1843 Table 8; Wells (1878):89
210 GBPP 1850 HC/1280:114
211 Actual figures; Fitzroy Block - Pasture 901ac
Crops 979ac, Omata Block - Pasture 114ac crops 365ac. GBPP 1854 HC/1779:4-5
greedy system of agriculture has been pursued, exhausting the free humus by successive crops of wheat, etc., that the vegetation becomes stunted or sickly, or dies away in patches, giving the fields so affected that sorry, scabbed aspect which farmers of ordinary agricultural knowledge would be greatly ashamed of."212

The 1850-51 season saw a greater failure of the wheat crop than the previous season, but wheat was still maintaining its importance in relation to the other grains (see Figure 11B). The wheat which had failed was replaced by potatoes, and so the area planted in potatoes was 50% larger than in any previous season.213

Sheep and cattle were distributed within the settlement in rough accordance with the distribution of sown pasture. Cattle numbers had topped 1000 for the first time, and sheep, whose numbers had more than doubled since 1847, totalled almost 2000. (see Figure 11A).

A fourth small brewery and malthouse was the only addition to the settlement's manufactories in 1850. The breweries, the three flour mills and the tannery214 were all linked to the dominant farming economy.

During the year 234 people entered the settlement and only 55 left. So 1850, with a net immigration of 179, stood in marked contrast to the years up to 1848 when the numbers of

212 GBPP 1850 HC/1280:111
213 NZC 105/10:6 Nov 1850
214 GBPP 1854 HC/1779:5
people leaving had continuously exceeded those arriving. Even among other New Zealand settlements New Plymouth appeared to be favoured. Although Auckland supplied only 15 immigrants in exchange for the 29 it attracted away, New Plymouth gained 52 new inhabitants from the rest of the country and yielded only 14.215

Impressive as this influx of settlers may have been in comparison with the experience of earlier years, it had been too recent to have much effect on the structure of the population. The extreme youth of the population reflected the continuing high birthrate and the years in which adults had more frequently left the community than come to it. In 1850 33.2% of the population were under 7 years of age, and another 14.3% were between 7 and 14 years of age.

82.6% of the population of 1412 still lived within the boundaries of the Fitzroy Block. The Omata Block claimed three-quarters of the remainder, and this confirmed the trend already shown in the distribution of cleared land.216

It should have been clear to any observer in 1850, that in the foreseeable future, just as in the past, the settlement's economy and prosperity would be based on farm production. The past nine years had witnessed unsuccessful attempts to set up extractive industries based on the district's iron-sands,
timber and off-shore whaling resources. Early hopes for commercial development had been frustrated by the absence of a harbour and the settlement's distance and relative isolation from more important centres.

The outlook for farming could only be described as uncertain. The settlement's crops continued to supply almost all its exports - Flour alone accounting for almost 70% in 1850\(^217\) - and almost every vessel left New Plymouth laden with produce.\(^{218}\) But in spite of Hursthouse's claims that New Plymouth had "an excellent home market in Auckland and Wellington" and that "the imports of these towns are even now larger than this settlement can supply",\(^{219}\) prices remained low. In late 1849 flour was retailing in New Plymouth for only £9 or £10 a ton,\(^{220}\) and in 1850 the average value of exported flour was £11 a ton.\(^{221}\) Declining soil fertility in much of the established crop land and continued destruction of both wheat and barley crops by caterpillars\(^{222}\) made yields very difficult to predict; a situation not likely to improve as cultivation continued in the future.

Fears for the future of agriculture were not balanced by hopes for the future of pastoralism. In other parts of New

\(^{217}\) GBPP 1854 HC/1779:6
\(^{218}\) NZC 105/9:4 May 1850
\(^{219}\) Hursthouse (1851):99
\(^{220}\) GBPP 1850 HC/1280:111
\(^{221}\) GBPP 1854 HC/1779:6
\(^{222}\) NZC 105/9:2 Jan 1850
Zealand there were large areas of open, natural grassland where sheep could be run at almost no cost. In Taranaki the open areas of scrub and fern were limited in extent and lay mainly outside the purchased area (see Figure 1). Pasture land had to be cleared and sown in grass, and unless Waitara-Mangaoraka could be purchased, it was clear, in 1850, that pasture could only expand into forested areas. As long as the settlers had had to rely on their own labour resources the task of clearing the bush had seemed impossibly expensive in relation to likely rewards. Even the influx of labourers in 1849-50 had made little difference to costs, for labourers all too rapidly became independent farmers, and so took themselves out of the labour market. When Maori assistance had become available in late 1848 many farmers had reconsidered the problem of bush clearance. In 1850 bush land was being cleared in several places, and practically all the farmers in the settlement were depending on Maori labour for ordinary farm work. But although the Maoris worked hard, and kept wages down, a number of Europeans saw their employment as a necessary evil. In a petition to the Company demanding a greater supply of English labourers, they said that wages paid to Maoris were paid "to the sellers, not the buyers of land"

223 NZC 105/9:11 Jul 1850
224 NZC 105/7:31 Dec 1848
225 NZC 105/9:4 May 1850
226 NZC 105/9:11 Jul 1850
and that money received by the Maori in this way rendered him "more independent of the sale of land and less willing therefore to dispose of it on reasonable terms." The frustrated petitioners may well have been correct in their summing up of the Maori attitude, but as the next chapter will show, the rapid development of Maori farming and trade was very soon to make the Maoris economically independent of the settlers. Late in 1850 it was noted that many land-order holders were refusing to take up bush land "to any extent", and were reserving their choices until more open land became available.

The findings of the 1847 census of Maori population within the bounds of Spain's 1844 award, and the 1848 census of the migration from Waikanae show that the Maori population of North Taranaki in 1850 must have been at least 1200 and possibly 1600, or roughly the same as the European population. As most of the Waikanae people settled at Waitara, which already in 1847 had a third of the recorded population, it is likely that in 1850 almost half of the Maori population of North Taranaki was living at or near Waitara.

In the 1840s the Maori economy of North Taranaki passed through the earlier part of the second phase of transformation.

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227 NZC 3/28:20 Jun 1849
228 NZC 105/10:12 Nov 1850
229 McLean Papers File 127:Return of Native Population 30 Oct 1847
230 NZC 3/27:12 May 1848
recognised by Firth: the enthusiastic adoption of European culture forms. 231

As early as 1841 the settlers had noticed the interest which the few Maoris remaining in Taranaki showed in European religion and education, clothing, tools and crops. The process of acculturation had been accelerated during the decade by the return of Taranaki Maoris from the Waikato and Cook Strait area, where European contact had been more extensive than in Taranaki. It is obvious that the material culture of the Maori had become extensively Europeanised by 1850, but it is more difficult to estimate the amount of change in the organisation of the Maori economy that was brought about by European contact between 1841 and 1850. Before the settlers' arrival the tribal organisation of Taranaki Maoris had been extensively damaged by wars and migrations. 232 The Maori tradition of organising work on a communal basis was still observed; 233 but on the other hand, by working for and trading with Europeans the Maoris had become familiar with the use of money, and cash transactions began to take the place of the more traditional gift-exchange.

Maori agriculture had grown steadily as the people had returned to their tribal lands, but the Maoris had continued to derive a good proportion of their income from working for

\[\text{\footnotesize\cite{231} Firth (1959):445-55, } \text{\footnotesize\cite{232} E J Wakefield (1845):I:100; } \text{\footnotesize\cite{233} Sinclair (1957):126, } \text{\footnotesize\cite{233} NZC 105/7:3 Feb 1849}\]
Europeans. In 1850 the Maori and European economies of North Taranaki were interdependent. The Maori desire for European goods was balanced by the settlers' need of Maori labour.
CHAPTER V

THE FIFTIES
Economic Development 1851-1860.

(A) The European Community

I FARMING

The improved rate of land clearance achieved in the late 1840s was maintained into the next decade. Progress was continuous until 1856 (see Figure 11A) but the area of farmed land grew most rapidly between 1850 and 1853, when it more than doubled - from 2800 acres to 6100 acres.¹

In the early 1850s land clearance was stimulated by a rate of immigration comparable to that of New Zealand as a whole (see Figure 9), the availability of relatively cheap Maori labour,² and from 1851, the price-boom brought about by the Victorian gold-discoveries of that year.³ Although settlers moved into the bush in greater numbers than before,⁴ most of the land development took place in the easily cleared coastal fernlands of the Tataraimaka, Omata, Fitzroy and Bell Blocks.⁵

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¹ Statistics 1840-52: Tables 31 and 32; Statistics 1853-56: Table 52
² McLean Papers File 425: Wilson to McLean - letter undated, early 1851; McLean to Col. Secretary 20 Feb 1854, quoted in Wells (1878): 152
³ Wells (1878): 150; Scholefield (1960) I: 99, J C Richmond to C W Richmond 30 Jun 1851
⁴ G B Earp "New Zealand - Its Emigration and Goldfields" (1853): 176; Scholefield (1960) I: 132, J M Richmond 8 Nov 1853
⁵ McLean Papers File 126: Halse to McLean 5 Nov 1851 and Cooper to McLean 29 Apr 1854; Wells (1878): 152
For a number of reasons it is likely that after 1852 farm expansion costs rose considerably. To begin with, the relatively cheaply cleared fern land was now becoming scarce and expensive to buy; and expansion into bushland was the only alternative. As the Maoris were now farming their own lands extensively, the settlers found that the supply of Maori labour fluctuated considerably, while European labour continued to be scarce and dear. But between 1853 and 1855 further rises in the value of crop produce exported to Australia matched the rising costs of land clearance, and so the attack on the bush continued.

The strength of the Australian market in 1853, 1854 and 1855 more than compensated Taranaki farmers for the decline in the New Zealand market for their produce; but when Australia farm production caught up with the Australian demand late in 1855 "an extraordinary state of stagnation" ensued in Taranaki as export income fell steeply.

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6 TH:4 Aug 1852  
7 McLean Papers File 425:Wilson to McLean 31 Jul 1851  
8 Scholefield (1960)I:137 J M Richmond to M Taylor 4 Dec 1853  
10 GBPP 1860 HC/2719:73  
11 Statistics of New Plymouth (1857):1  
12 Scholefield (1960)I:241, C W Richmond to J Chamberlain 16 Nov 1856. See also TH 20 Sep 1856, 18 Apr and 22 Aug 1857  
13 Overseas exports were valued at £20,980 in 1855, but only £3,720 in 1856 (Statistics 1853-56:Table 23) Coastal exports increased slightly from £4500 in 1855 (own estimate) to £6300 in 1856 (Statistics of New Plymouth - 1857 Table 10A)
Between 1856 and 1860 land clearance progressed only irregularly. In 1857 the farmed area actually decreased a little, although there was a recovery in 1858 (see Figure 11A). Sales of Crown land to settlers came almost to a standstill - only 1400 acres being sold in 1857 and 1858. In the latter year 31,000 of the 43,000 acres so far bought by settlers or absenteees remained uncleared, while a further 20,000 acres were still held by the Crown. Fully four-fifths of the land purchased from the Maoris lay untouched.

This considerable area of land did not remain in a wild state because it was of poor quality, unable to be farmed; or because fear of Maori attack prevented the settlers from going far inland. In 1858 the New Plymouth Provincial Council described the unused land as "beautiful and fertile". From 1854 to 1859, when the Atiawas were intermittently feuding over land sales, the settlers were less concerned for their own safety than for that of the badly-outnumbered Maoris who were in favour of selling land. The warring parties were careful not to trespass on European property, and as the increase in

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14 AJHR 1860, C - 2
15 "Petition to the General Assembly, relative to the Present Condition of the Native Inhabitants of the Province of New Plymouth", AJHR 1858, G - 3; Statistics 1858:Table 75
16 The name of the province was changed to "Taranaki" on 1 Jan 1859
17 AJHR 1858, G - 3
18 Wells (1878):158-63
19 TH:23 May 1857. Maoris favouring land-sales were outnumbered by five to one (TH:19 Jul 1856)
20 TH:18 Jul 1855; Wells (1878):160
the number of names on the Jury Roll showed, settlers con-
tinued to take up land in the Bell Block, which was on the
north-eastern margin of the purchased area (see Figure 1)
and right on the fringe of the fighting area. The main
reason for the relatively slow growth of the farmed area in
Taranaki after 1856 was the settlers' belief that in a time
of falling prices, the returns from clearing bushland would
be meagre. Secondary reasons were the Maoris' stubborn
refusal to sell more land to the Government, and the better
economic opportunities that other provinces offered to Euro-
pean settlers.

In the late 1840s settlers had recognised that sheep farm-
ing was likely to be more profitable than arable farming.
The high prices offered for crop produce in the early 1850s
had been paralleled by growing labour costs, and so the swing
to sheep farming had continued. But sheep farming required
larger areas of land than arable farming, and thus, more settlers
became interested in sheep, the demand for land grew. Of
course, to reduce clearing costs, the land had to be as open
as possible. It is evident that throughout the 1850s when
the settlers talked of land shortages, they meant shortages
of open or fern land. Bushland had ceased to count. In
early 1851, when the first roads into the forested areas of the

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21 Men in the Bell Block district eligible for jury
service numbered 36 in 1856-57, 48 in 1858-59 and
54 in 1860-61; Mar 1856, Feb 1858, Feb 1860)
Omata and Grey blocks were still being built, Henry Halse could say, in his fortnightly police report to McLean, that:

"Land is greatly needed, and unless a purchase can be shortly effected this settlement will rapidly decline ...". 22

Two years later a newspaper correspondent expressed the same view more forcefully. He averred that Governor Grey should be

"haunted night and day .... his midnight dreams should be of that one thing requisite - "Taranaki wants more land." ' 23

The only considerable areas of open country in the province lay outside the purchased area: about Waitara - Mangaroaka to the northeast of the settlement, and on the Waimate Plains in South Taranaki. The Ngati-Ruanui tribe steadfastly refused to sell any part of the Waimate Plains, 24 and the Atiawa resistance to land-sales, led by Wiremu Kingi and Katatore, provided the Native Lands Purchasing Department with few opportunities to buy land north-east of New Plymouth.

The Hua and Waiwakaiho blocks were purchased in 1853 and 1854, but though they equalled in area all the lands previously sold by the Maoris in North Taranaki (see Figure 1), 25 they were

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22 McLean Papers File 236:Halse to McLean:9 Mar 1851. See also TH:4 and 11 Aug 1852
23 TH:16 Feb 1853
25 Area of Hua and Waiwakaiho Blocks -31,000 acres. Area of land purchased 1845-48 -30,740 acres. McLean Papers File 126:Cooper to Col. Secretary 29 Apr 1854
of little immediate value to either the Maoris or the settlers, as they were about nine-tenths covered in bush. The growth of Maori resistance to land-sales was shown by the terms under which these blocks were purchased. The average price paid for North Taranaki Maori land between 1845 and 1848 had been one shilling and threepence per acre. In 1853-54 the Government had to pay three shillings and ninepence per acre for what was, on the whole, poorer land; and as well had to reserve large parts of the best land in the blocks for Maoris. The defeat of Ihaia te Kirikumara and his supporters in 1859 ended any chance the settlers had of peacefully securing any more good Atiawa land in the near future.

The 1856-57 depression greatly reduced the profitability of arable farming, at a time when there was virtually no accessible open country left in the purchased area.

In the face of Maori determination not to sell any more open land in Taranaki, some farmers, like W B Messenger, stayed on, hoping "for better times", but from the middle of the 1850s a growing number of settlers were attracted to leave the province by the prospect of better opportunities in

26 Only 3000 of the 31,000 acres were fernland:26 Feb 1859
27 McLean Papers File 126:Cooper to Col. Secretary 29 Apr 1854
28 MLP-NP1:Parris to McLean, June 1861 - no date; Wells (1878):155
30 "TH:26 Feb and 19 Mar 1859"
31 Messenger:19 Sep 1857
other parts of New Zealand or Australia. 32

Although the relatively open fernland continued to absorb most of the farming effort in the 1850s, settlers were forced to tackle the bush to a much greater extent than in the 1840s. Many bush sections had been sold to speculators or absentees; so sometimes the "bona fide" settlers had to buy sections some miles into the dense bush. 33

**BUSH CLEARING**

Pressed by the need to get his land into production as quickly as possible, the bush-farmer could not afford to delay sowing crops or grass until the land was completely cleared of its original cover. Jane Maria Richmond amusingly informed her relations in England that:

"The extreme roughness of all farming operations here would quite horrify a good English farmer .... he would as soon think of sowing seed in the middle of a shack of sticks, as of sowing it in our clearing." 34

The bush was usually felled in spring (August to October), so that it could lie drying for two or three months before it was burnt in late summer (February - March). First of all the underbrush and creepers were cut down with a slasher or

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32 McLean Papers, File 430:Wilson to McLean 14 Aug 1857; AJHR 1858, G - 3. A fuller account of population movement will be given in the Section "Population".

33 MacKaness (1958)II:3. See also GBPP 1860 HC/2719:73, Nugent to Cul. Secretary 25 Jan 1855

34 Scholefield (1960)I:131, J M Richmond - general letter 24 Sep 1853. See also Earp (1853):176
billhook, and then all the trees up to about three feet in trunk diameter were felled with axe or crosscut saw. It was a common practice to lop off the branches of the fallen trees, so that the timber would lie more compactly, and thus burn better when the time came (see Plate 5). The largest trees were left standing. In typical Taranaki bush country it took a man about a fortnight to fell an acre. A Maori received about £2 for a fortnight's labour in 1853 and 1854, but a European twice that.

The fallen material was fired on a day when the wind was blowing strongly.

"The clearing becomes one vast sheet of flame - a very picture of hell, the burning wood, as though in agony, hissing and roaring like distant thunder. The great pines and ratas left standing or on the edge of the clearing becoming ignited, whirl round in the current caused by the fire and appear to be wrestling and battling with the fiery element in a hopeless struggle. The scene is indescribably terrific ...." (see Plate 6).

After a long dry spell, fires could easily get out of control, and menace settlers' homes.

In cleaning up, any half-consumed branches or smaller trunks were chopped up, piled together and burnt. Commonly,
Plate 5: Clearing the Bush - William Strutt 1857

Plate 6: Burning the Bush - William Strutt 1857
within a month or six weeks of the first burn, grass seed or the first crops were sown among the stumps and larger trunks, which were left to rot where they stood. After three or four years the smaller stumps could be torn out with a pair of bullocks and a stump chain.\textsuperscript{39}

In 1851, for the first time, the area of land in the settlement in sown pasture exceeded the area in crop. During the next seven years\textsuperscript{40} the sown pasture area increased five and a half times; while the area in crop first decreased and then barely recovered to its original extent. As in the 1840s the extension of pasture was accompanied by the growth of sheep and cattle numbers, (see Figure 11A) and also by a growth in the number and proportion of farms over 50 acres in area. But although these bigger holdings had large proportions of pasture (see Figure 10) and of sheep numbers compared to the smaller farms,\textsuperscript{41} the increase in pasture acreage did not mean that many owners were specialising in pastoral farming.

An analysis of the situation in 1852, the only year in the

\textsuperscript{39} Earp (1853):176; G Chapman "Chapman's N Z Almanac for 1864" (1864):98; Scholefield (1960)I:157; H A Atkinson to Mrs Coster 10 Nov 1854

\textsuperscript{40} Figures for 1859 are not available

\textsuperscript{41} In 1852 19 out of 28, or two thirds, of the farms over 50 acres in area ran sheep. Together they had 4130 sheep - 77\% of the province's total. Sheep were found on only 29 out of the other 218 land holdings, totalling 1270 sheep ("List of Owners and Valuations on sections within the Settlement of New Plymouth, at 31 Dec 1852")
decade for which an adequate return is available, 42 shows that a mixed crop and livestock economy was common among farms of all sizes, and that specialisation in either crops or livestock was rare. Among the 28 farms over 50 acres in area there was only one entirely grassed; and of the 33 farms between 5 and 10 acres only four had all their land in crops.

Further, although in contrast with the situation in 1846, the area of pasture exceeded that of crops on farms over 10 acres in size (see Figure 10), its money value to the farmer was not proportionally important. In spite of the growth of the pasture area, the value of arable produce was greater than that of pastoral produce certainly until the 1856 depression, and quite likely until the end of the decade. 43 The typical farmer with less than 50 acres of cleared land must have continued to get most of his income from crops rather than livestock.

42 Valuation Return:31 Dec 1852
43 In 1853, 1855 and 1858, arable produce accounted for respectively, 70%, 80% and 50% of the total value of exports (see Figure 13). In 1856, when arable produce values were generally depressed, it is likely that, acre for acre, crops yielded at least four or five times the gross value of pasture. In that year, a typical acre of wheat would have been worth £10 if sold as grain, and £15 as flour, an acre of potatoes about £20; an acre of oats £10 to £12. On the other hand an acre of pasture might yield in gross income £3 worth of beef, of £2 worth of sheep, or 10/- to 15/- worth of wool. (Product values based on provision prices in Statistics 1853-56 Table 53 and in Auckland, Wellington and New Plymouth newspapers in 1856; on crop yields per acre in "Statistics of New Plymouth (1857) and on stock carrying capacities estimated from Valuation Return:31 Dec 1852")
44 See Page 116
Production costs and unpredictable or declining yields had made arable farming less attractive to the settlers after 1846-47, and continued to do so after 1850. But not all crops were equally affected, and between 1851 and 1858 individual crops varied considerably in importance (see Figure 11B). Wheat continued to occupy a greater area than any other crop, although it became less important than in the 1840s. It attained its greatest acreage in 1851, but a series of crop failures brought about by smut and wet weather caused many settlers to lose interest in it, so that by 1853 the crop had declined by more than one-half. Thereafter, a declining export market both for grain and flour discouraged any great revival of interest in wheat (see Figure 13), and the crop which in 1848 and 1849 had accounted for 70% of the total arable area now fairly consistently occupied about 40% of it. Army worm attacks had cut into barley acreage in the late 1840s and the crop remained of minor importance through the 1850s. Oats alone among the grains remained reasonably free from disease and caterpillar attacks, and between 1853 and 1855 high prices brought its acreage very close to that of wheat. The crop most affected by the demand of the Sydney and Melbourne markets between 1853 and 1855 was the potato. Up to

44 In 1852 218 out of 246 land holdings were of this size (Valuation Return 31 Dec 1852)
45 11 Aug 1852 TH.
46 Hursthouse (1849):103
47 Statistics of New Plymouth (1857):1
1852 it had usually sold at £3 to £4 a ton, \textsuperscript{48} but in 1854 and 1855 it reached £10 a ton. \textsuperscript{49} Farmers expected the demand to continue, and in 1856 planted more than twice the previous acreage. \textsuperscript{50} That year, of course, the bottom fell out of the market, and in 1857 planting decreased; but in the following year a slight increase in demand prompted more widespread planting, and the editor of the "Herald" cautioned his farmer readers

"against depending too much on potatoes, which may prove as heretofore an uncertain crop as regards value." \textsuperscript{51}

The editor had good reason for concern. Potatoes were a crop grown on nearly all farms, but were particularly important to the numerous small farmers. \textsuperscript{52} In 1852, while potatoes were grown on one quarter of the cropland of the typical 5 to 10 acre farm, they were grown on only one tenth of the cropped area of farms of over 50 acres. \textsuperscript{53} Accordingly, the high potato prices between 1853 and 1855 had mainly benefited the small farmer who did not have much else to sell on the cash market, and in 1856 the small farmer was most hard hit by the crash in potato prices. \textsuperscript{54}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{48} Statistics 1840-52: Table 56
\item \textsuperscript{49} Scholefield (1960)I: C W Richmond to T Richmond 8 Aug 1854; Statistics 1853-56: Table 23
\item \textsuperscript{50} Statistics of New Plymouth (1857): 1
\item \textsuperscript{51} 20 Nov 1858 TH.
\item \textsuperscript{52} In 1852, 143 out of 246 holdings were under 10 acres in area. (Valuation Return: 31 Dec 1852)
\item \textsuperscript{53} Valuation Return: 31 Dec 1852
\item \textsuperscript{54} McLean Papers File 425: Wilson to McLean 28 Jul 1856; Scholefield (1960)I: 199, C W Richmond to J Atkinson 27 Feb 1856
\end{itemize}
The most interesting feature of trends in sheep numbers is the contrast between the growth rates before and after 1855 (see Figure 11A). In the early 1850s rapid growth of the number of sheep was associated with growth in pasture area, as in the later 1840s. Interesting evidence of the interest in sheep farming at this time is provided by Henry Halse in a letter to McLean. He reported that there was almost no sale for single 50-acre sections of land, because people wanted land in larger units.

After 1855 the association between increase of sheep numbers and pasture area becomes more tenuous. The area of pasture continued to expand, although more slowly than earlier, but sheep numbers remained almost stationary; even dropping a little in 1856 and 1857. Two reasons can be suggested for this development. Imperfect clearing of the original cover and poor techniques of sowing and management of pasture kept carrying capacities low throughout the 1840s and 1850s, but about deterioration from this level apparently took place after 1855. At the same time, as will be shown shortly, Taranaki sheep farmers began to find it more profitable to raise cattle.

In the 1840s regenerating bracken fern had been a problem for the farmer, and most likely continued to be so, although no

55 McLean Papers File 236:Halse to McLean 9 Feb 1852
56 In 1852 few farms carried more than two sheep per acre of pasture. (Valuation Return: 31 Dec 1852)
particular note seems to have been made of it in the 1850s. But from 1855 onwards weeds introduced by the settlers, particularly Scotch thistle, added to the difficulties of increasing production. In 1855 C W Richmond, in his capacity as Provincial Secretary, warned a settler that the land which he leased from the Province was "in so foul a state from the growth of Scotch thistle as to constitute a breach of his covenant for good husbandry." Just over a month later the Provincial Government made an "Ordinance to prevent the spread of Scotch Thistle." Occupiers allowing Scotch thistle to flower on their land could be fined up to £5 for each offence. In late 1857 the Scotch thistle was reported to be spreading rapidly over the cleared land in the province, and early in 1859 the editor of the Taranaki Herald commented that:

"The difficulty of bringing raw land into cultivation, sufficiently great in itself, is yearly being much increased by the spread of the Scotch thistle." 60

A weed problem was bound to develop in the settlement sooner or later, as pastures and soils deteriorated in the absence of fertiliser application; but after 1855 economic depression may have brought about a lowering of standards of farm management, which would have encouraged weed-spread.

58 GG - NP:12 Jan 1856
59 14 Nov 1857 TH.
60 2 Apr 1859 TH.
Plate 7: A Raupo Whare in Taranaki about 1870

Plate 8: Cleared Bush to the North of Mt Egmont about 1880
As in the 1840s, cattle numbers increased steadily. Deteriorating pastures provided few problems for the cattle farmer. During the winter the Richmonds supplemented their income by taking in other farmers' cattle and running them in their own uncleared bush land. For this service they charged a shilling a week per head. C.W. Richmond considered that the bush feed kept the cattle "in fine order." Between 1855 and 1858, while the number of sheep hardly increased, cattle doubled in number (see Figure 11A). Exports of fat cattle (to Auckland in particular) had developed since 1856, encouraged to some extent by the advent of coastal steamships and faster passages, and even though Jane Atkinson wryly remarked that "Virtue may be its own reward, but cheesemaking is not," interest in dairy farming was beginning. The potato-growing small farmer, as well as the larger owner of land, had become a cattle raiser since the late 1840s, and the timing of the rapid rise in the number of cattle suggests that interest in beef and dairy farming developed as the potato and grain markets became uncertain.

II INDUSTRY, COMMERCE AND OTHER SOURCES OF INCOME.

The 1850s saw further attempts to diversify the settle-
ment's economic base, but they were unsuccessful, and farming continued to be the settlement's only significant industry. After the failures to establish timber, flax and iron industries in the 1840s, interest in these matters lapsed for sometime. During the later 1850s the generally depressed condition of the district moved the Provincial Government to encourage renewed investigation into the province's mineral resources. In July, 1857, the Provincial Government announced that it would pay £1,000 to whoever could first produce:

"one hundred tons of merchantable wrought or cast iron; to be manufactured in New Plymouth from the Iron Sands of the Province." 66

The rush to the Collingwood gold field was in full swing at this time, and naturally enough, the Provincial Government decided that Taranaki could benefit by a similar rush. So a reward was proposed, for the discovery of gold within the boundaries of the Province of New Plymouth. This offer seems to have been made with some caution, for the reward was only £100. 67

The gold reward was never claimed, but in 1858 a Captain Morshead was granted a lease, for developmental purposes, over a section of the coastal ironsands. Captain Morshead had some local backing, but after he had made an unsuccessful journey to England to try to obtain additional

66 GG - NP:29 Jul 1857
67 GG - NP:29 Aug 1857
finance, the project lapsed. 68

Early in 1859 a meeting was convened in New Plymouth to consider forming a company to prepare New Zealand flax for British manufacture. 69 In spite of editorial encouragement in the "Taranaki Herald" 70 nothing came of this plan either.

Secondary industry developed most rapidly between 1850 and 1853, when peaks of immigration and land development coincided to provide the manufacturer with growing markets and supplies of raw materials. During this period there were added to the 3 breweries, 3 flour mills and 1 tannery that existed in 1850: 1 flour mill (waterpowered, like the others) 2 candle-works; 1 cooperage; 2 lime-kilns - for making building lime; 1 steam powered saw-mill, and 1 boat-yard. In 1854 a ship-yard was erected for the construction of the "Taranaki", a schooner of 100 tons, the first ship to be built in the settlement, but it was dismantled after the "Taranaki" was launched in the same year. 71 Another saw-mill was erected on the Grey Block in 1859; reputedly at a cost of £1,000, 72 but this seems to have been the only important addition to the province's industrial capacity between 1855 and 1860.

68 Wells (1878):289
69 TH:8 Jan 1859
70 TH:15 Jan and 2 Jul 1859
71 TH:4 Jul 1855; Statistics of New Plymouth (1857):Table 11
72 Scholefield (1960)I:486, H Ronalda to E Ronalda 28 Aug 1859
The products of this secondary industry were mainly sold locally, and therefore the typical factory or mill was very small. Only the flour mills exported a significant portion of their production for any length of time. The wheat acreage declined in the early 1850s, and as the population grew, the exportable surplus was less each year. In comparison with the 237 tons exported in 1850, which seems to have been the high point, 128 tons were exported in 1853, 52 tons in 1855, 31 tons in 1856 and none in 1858. Other Taranaki industries exported only small amounts of produce, if at all, and at irregular intervals. For example 217 casks of locally brewed beer were exported to Australia in 1853, and 10 casks were exported coastally, but the breweries' produce was apparently sold entirely in Taranaki in other years.73

Between 1850 and 1855 growth of population and production of goods, increasing shipping activity and the trade boom presented seemingly favourable conditions for an expansion of business and commercial activity within the settlement. Business activity did increase, but was still not very great. Eighteen retailers, auctioneers and merchants advertised their businesses in New Plymouth's only newspaper in June 1853.

73 Overseas exports from Statistics 1853-58, coastal exports calculated from files of the Taranaki Herald 1853-58
1856, but as most of these men were also land-owners it seems that their businesses must have been maintained on only a part-time basis. The shops, judging by the goods mentioned in the advertisements, were something like the modern country general store—selling hardware, clothing, farm needs, books, furniture, toilet requisites, tobacco, blankets and imported food and drink such as sugar, tea, wine and ale. Other commercial establishments were four hotels and the New Plymouth Savings Bank, which had been founded in 1850. The agencies for two inter-colonial shipping lines and one insurance company were advertised. There were two solicitors, but the surgeon in the Colonial Hospital at the Henui had to act as dentist. Soon the "Herald" would have a rival in the "Taranaki News", but both papers were only weeklies.

Even in the relative prosperity that prevailed in the early 1850s, the settlement's economy could not support a great range of business and professional activity. Basically, the market for goods and services in the community had not changed since the 1840s. The proportion of householders not owning any cultivated land beyond the bounds of

74 TH: Jun 1856
75 Valuation Return: 31 Dec 1852
76 Founded 14 May 1857. The "Herald" dated from 4 Aug 1852. Both papers still exist
a domestic garden had risen slightly since 1846, but in 1852 three out of four householders could still call themselves farmers, if the term's meaning could be stretched so as to include the owner of only an acre or two of land?77 The small-holding and a highly mixed farming economy were still dominant. The external market was not great. Even between 1853 and 1855, when export income was highest, the annual value of exports did not exceed £10 or £12 for each person in the settlement,78 and in other years in the decade per capita income from exports did not exceed £6 or £7. So the Taranaki community was still one in which the potential buyers of goods were outnumbered by the potential sellers, each of whom had much the same range of goods to offer. In the early 1850s produce prices in Taranaki climbed rapidly to a "famine" level according to one observer,79 but this situation reflected external rather than internal conditions. The boom in the market for agricultural produce in Australia following the 1851 Victorian gold discoveries had been such that farmers all over

77 In 1846 199 out of 226 householders (88%) owned cultivated land (McLean Papers File 127: Census Return 31 Dec 1846). In 1852 the proportion was 246 out of 328 (Valuation Report: 31 Dec 1852)

78 Total exports from New Plymouth in the years 1853, 1854 and 1855 were about £60,000 in value. Overseas exports £43,000 (Statistics 1853-56), Coastal exports £17,000 (writer's estimate). At this time the mean population was 2150

New Zealand had rushed to get their produce across the Tasman, and so a corresponding shortage had been experienced in New Zealand. 80 Potato and grain prices in particular remained high in Taranaki until late 1855, 81 but the advantage that could be gained by any farmers who had produce to market locally was restricted. Because there was no trading bank in the settlement, imports often had to be paid for in specie, and as had been the case in the 1840s, currency was often in short supply. 82

In these conditions, the small farmer, who had little surplus produce to convert into cash anyway, found barter of goods and services the most convenient means of exchange. 83 Very little local agricultural produce was sold to the non-farming section of the population through the local shops. 84 Generally the few office or factory-workers in New Plymouth bartered directly with the farmers for items such as vegetables, fruit, butter, eggs and milk.

Trade within the settlement was of particularly small importance to the bush farmer. William Strutt, with the

80 Scholefield (1960) I: 154, C W Richmond to T Richmond, 8 Aug 1854
81 Scholefield (1960) I: 178, C W Richmond to T Richmond, 27 Aug 1855
82 Messenger: 31 Dec 1856
83 The "London Mart" a New Plymouth general store, ended its advertisements thus: "Salt Butter in keg, Potatoes and Oats taken in payment." (TH: 20 Jun 1855)
84 Scholefield (1960) I: 280 H Ronalds to E Ronalds 30 Jun 1857
sensitive temperament of the artist, had found that the silence and darkness of the bush, even in daytime, was a very real barrier cutting him off from his fellow-men. Other settlers, more pragmatically minded, found that the poor quality of the roads, particularly in winter, often prevented them from getting to town on the few occasions they felt able to leave their work. One or two visits to town a month was the common custom, and those visits might as likely be for social as for business reasons.

The Richmonds and Atkinsons, who were farming in bush country about six miles south of the town from 1851 onward, seemed to find life in the bush satisfying, even if not always financially rewarding. Soon after his arrival on his first bush section James Richmond told his mother that:

"There can be no doubt of the ease of life here. Henry and I could maintain ourselves with no difficulty and very moderate toil on our little bit of land. We can grow corn enough to make our bread and pay for butcher's meat, keep our cow and feed a beast or two to pay for clothing ...."

Six years later, his sister, Jane Atkinson, could inform a friend that:

"Having no rent, and our garden beginning to produce, our household expenses are a mere trifle. I can't make out that we spend nine shillings a

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85 TH: 8 Nov 1856; Scholefield (1960)I: 273, J M Atkinson to E Richmond 14 Jun 1857
86 Messenger: July to December, 1856; Mackaness (1958) II: 8
week in living, but a great deal of our business is done by barter ...." 89

However, the Richmonds and Atkinsons were people of some substance. 90 For many farmers in the Taranaki settlement conditions were fairly grim after 1855. Produce was difficult to sell, and if a market could be found it was not very good. 91 Levels of savings reflected the depressed condition of the community. In 1858 and 1859 the total sums deposited with the New Plymouth Savings Bank were £625 and £470 respectively, 92 or less than 5/- per head of population.

Socially as well as economically the settlers were very independent of the world that lay more than two or three miles from their farms. Once or twice a week, if the weather and the state of the roads permitted, a settler's wife would pay a friendly call on a neighbour, or be visited in her turn. Sometimes the men might come too, but not usually. 93 In the summer, a picnic or at any season a dance, attended by most of the people within four of five miles might be the most exciting event in a month or more,

89 Scholefield (1960)I:325 J M Atkinson to M Taylor 15 Nov 1857
90 In 1855 they owned, altogether, 1,070 acres of bushland. Scholefield (1960)I:165, J M Atkinson to M Taylor 13 Jun 1855
91 Messenger:31 Dec 1856, 19 Sep 1857
92 H E Carey "New Plymouth Savings Bank Centenary 1850-1950" (1950):31
93 Messenger:July to December, 1856 and July to December 1858
even to the sophisticated Richmond family. In the matters of religious observance and education the settlers either provided for their own families and neighbours or went without. All the early diaries make it clear that Sunday was set aside for rest, reading, and social visits, even if the family did not or could not attend church. In 1856 there were five churches or chapels in the town area and another six in the country, but in the "outlying districts" divine service was performed in the home. In the province as a whole only a minority of children received more than a Sunday school education, and few children in the bush had any formal education.

The town of New Plymouth was a regional centre in only a very limited sense. It was the port for the settlement, but the small extent of commercial and industrial activity in the town has been described. The Provincial Council met there, and the town was also the seat of the regional

95 In particular: Carrington (1840-45); G Jupp "The Diary of a Taranaki Pioneer" I (1853-54) and Messenger (1856-60)
96 Statistics of New Plymouth (1857) Table 25
97 In 1856 there were 214 pupils at the ten day-schools in the province, while at the same time there were 521 children from 7 to 13 years old, and therefore eligible to attend school. Eight Sunday schools, which at this time instructed children in the "three R's" as well as religion, shared 310 pupils. (Statistics of New Plymouth, 1857: Tables 14 and 24)
98 TH:8 Nov 1856
administration of the national Government in Auckland. But Government did not affect the average person nearly as much as today. Apart from its control over land sales and police the Provincial Government exercised few functions that would not be exercised by a modern county council. People from the country districts were attracted to town in large numbers only on some important social occasion such as the Taranaki Races, which were held every year on Anniversary Day, the 31st March, or a dinner tendered to some visiting personage such as the Governor or a member of his Ministry.

There was little opportunity for occupational specialisation in a community where the weekly and even monthly round of social and economic activity was normally confined within a two or three mile radius of the settler's clearing. So the Census Report for the year ending 31 March, 1857, classified people's occupations into broad economic divisions rather than into separate professions or trades.

The census confirms what land-ownership figures have already indicated; that farming was the main economic activity in Taranaki. The limited opportunities for business and commercial activity in a pioneer community are clearly shown: commerce, the professions and public service
absorbed only 16% of the labour-force, as against 84% in farming, manufacturing and the trades (see Figure 12). The labour force was overwhelmingly male - the 12 women employed in manufacturing and trades making up only 1½% of the total number of workers. This proportion, low by today's standards, was partly the result of the Victorian belief that a woman's place was in the home. Moreover the demands made on the pioneer homemaker were certainly great, reflecting the physically arduous nature of many of the jobs that needed to be done.

The typical settler, farming only a small clearing, could supplement his income in a variety of ways. The man still engaged in bringing his land into production could do various tasks for an established farmer: shearing and washing sheep; threshing grass-seed, which had become a crop grown by many bush-farmers on a small-scale in the middle 1850s; clearing and cultivating land; building sheds; and repairing fences. Sawn timber was bringing £1 per hundred feet in 1854, and two men could pitsaw 200 feet in a day. Between 1855 and the outbreak of war in 1860 the growing numbers of British troops in Taranaki

102 Scholefield (1960)I:130, J M Richmond 2 Sep 1853. The large size of the typical family will be noted in the section on Population below

103 Jupp: June - July 1853; Messenger:1857; Scholefield (1960)I:408, Agreement between H.A. Atkinson and S and H Cran, 18 Jun 1858

104 Scholefield (1960)I:147, J M Richmond to M Taylor, 24 Jun 1854
FIG 12. Occupational Structure of the European Population of Taranaki in 1857
had to be supplied, and Harry Atkinson, later to be Premier of New Zealand, gained contracts for supplying firewood to the troops, and palisading for the garrison stockade on Marsland Hill (see Plate 13). Atkinson must have built up quite a business, for his sister-in-law expected him to make £400 a year on the firewood contract alone.105

In a growing settlement there was always a need for road improvements, and road building was usually done by small farmers and labourers who organised themselves into groups and contracted to do the work for the Provincial Government.106

III TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATION.

During the 1850s sea communication between the settlement and the outside world improved a great deal. The improvement was not steadily maintained, and the settlers still complained, sometimes with reason, of what seemed to them unwarranted delays in shipping arrivals.107 But in 1858-59 ships were not only calling at New Plymouth in far larger numbers than at any time in the 1840s,108 but were larger, faster and kept more regular schedules. In the 1840s there had been frequent complaints that the poor

106 Scholefield (1960)I:154, C W Richmond to T Richmond 8 Aug 1854; Messenger:1857
108 In 1858 five to eight vessels called at New Plymouth each month (TH:1858) while in the late... Continued P.133
coastal shipping service had hindered efforts to develop export markets for Taranaki produce; but after 1851 the blame for difficulties faced by Taranaki exporters was directed elsewhere.

The small sailing coaster typical of the 1840s continued to be the most commonly seen ship, not only at New-Plymouth, but at all New Zealand ports. The renewal of immigration into New Zealand in 1847-48 and the rapid extension of farmland had created increasing quantities of exports and imports to carry coastwise as well as overseas, and it was this circumstance which induced half-a-dozen enterprising New Plymouth businessmen to build the "Taranaki" in 1854.\(^{109}\)

Nonetheless, improvements in New Zealand shipping services in the 1850s were mainly due to two relatively new factors: an increased volume of overseas shipping, and the use of steam-ships. From 1851 ships bringing immigrants from England were joined in greater numbers each year by ships engaged in the trans-Tasman trade between Australia and New Zealand.\(^{110}\) This Australian trade, which had mainly developed following the 1851 Victoria gold-rush,
reached a peak in 1855, when of 24 ships leaving New Plymouth directly for overseas destinations, 21 went to Australia.\textsuperscript{111} The 1856-57 depression in the market for New Plymouth produce in Australia showed itself in shipping movements. Only 7 ships left New Plymouth for Australia in 1856, and 12 in 1857. An improvement in trading conditions helped bring the number of trans-Tasman departures from the port to 20 in 1858 and 19 in 1859.\textsuperscript{112} In 1856 and 1857, when direct overseas departures were few, New Plymouth merchants wanting to export produce to Australia had sometimes been forced to export via Onehunga or Wellington.\textsuperscript{113} To ensure that the province's produce would continue to have direct access to the valuable Australian markets, the Provincial Council in 1858 offered to subsidise/suitable vessel to carry trade between New Plymouth and Sydney.\textsuperscript{114} Thomas Dixon's brig, the "Kate Kearney" won the contract, which provided that the 85 ton vessel must make at least eight trips a year between the two ports, leaving the whole of her cargo-capacity available for the use of New Plymouth importers and exporters, for a subsidy of £600 per annum.\textsuperscript{115}

\begin{footnotes}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Statistics of New Plymouth (1857) Tables 7 and 8
\item Statistics (1856-59)
\item TH:24 Oct 1857
\item GG - NP:3 Jun 1858
\item GG - NP:25 Aug 1858
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotes}
The prospect of steam communication between the various ports of New Zealand became the subject of increasing interest after 1850. In Taranaki it was popularly believed that the entry of steamships into coastal trade would remove at once most of the difficulties of access that the settlement had suffered in the 1840s. As their movements were independent of the force and direction of winds, steamships could quite safely anchor in the exposed roadstead, and also could maintain faster and more regular schedules than sailing vessels. The firm of Willis and Gann of London provided the first steam-ship to take up a regular New Zealand coastal service. The ship "Nelson" of 330 tons, left Nelson, its headquarters, on its maiden voyage on 19 May 1854, and until late 1855 when mounting expenses forced the company to withdraw the ship, it sailed regularly between Canterbury, Wellington, Nelson, New Plymouth and Onehunga. In 1855 the "Zingari" of 148 tons, was the next to enter the trade. By 1858-59 the Intercolonial Royal Mail Steam Packet Company's "Lord Worsley" "Lord Ashley" and "Airedale" the Wellington Steam Company's "Wonga Wonga" and the "White Swan" were all

116 TH:21 Dec 1853 and 12 Apr 1854
117 TH:21 May 1854; R Allan "The History of Port Nelson" (1954):26-27
118 TH:8 Aug 1855
engaged in the trans-Tasman and coastal trades, and were frequent callers at New Plymouth. The contrast that these ships provided at the time in both cargo-carrying capacity and speed to the coastal schooners must have been impressive. The Lord Ashley, Lord Worsley and Airedale all displaced 250 to 300 tons, and could sail from Onehunga to New Plymouth in $13\frac{1}{2}$ hours, or across the Tasman in five to six days.

The continued need to use surfboats in loading or unloading ships anchored in the New Plymouth roadstead denied the Taranaki settlers of some of the advantages that the improved shipping service gave to ports equipped with wharves and other normal loading facilities. The boats were well designed for handling general cargo, and were well looked after; but were often not used to best advantage. The only two men in the port service permanently employed by the Provincial Government were the beach-master-pilot and the coxswain who was in charge of the boats. When they were needed, the boats were manned, not by a regular crew of experienced men, but by any "idlers and labourers seeking a job" and who were paid according to the number of hours worked. Although on occasion a

\[\begin{array}{ll}
119 & TH:1858-59 \\
120 & TH:26 Feb and 18 Jun 1859
\end{array}\]
good rate of cargo handling could be achieved,\textsuperscript{121} the official "New Zealand Pilot" remarked that time was lost in assembling boat crews, and that the service was inefficient.\textsuperscript{122} The growing export of fat cattle from New Plymouth to Onehunga demonstrated the need for better shipping arrangements. Cattle could not be carried in the cargo boats, but had to be towed behind a boat, four at a time. The editor of the "Herald" observed that the losses of cattle through drowning made it imperative that a punt be provided.\textsuperscript{123} Not surprisingly in the circumstances, Carrington's 1841 proposal that a breakwater be built at the Sugar Loaves continued to attract some interest.\textsuperscript{124}

The difficulties of travel by land to both Auckland and Wellington were reduced only slightly in the 1850s, and ships continued to carry nearly all passenger and cargo traffic. Mails were carried between Auckland and New Plymouth fortnightly and between Wellington and New Plymouth every week, but especially on the northern route floods and difficulties with the Maori tribes frequently caused delays. In good conditions the mail travelled from New Plymouth to Auckland in six or seven days,\textsuperscript{125} and in December 1858 Decimus Atkinson,

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{121} Captain W R Elliott of the barque "Eclipse" said, with evident approval, that his ship's 60 tons of cargo had been unloaded in a day (TH:6 Aug 1859).
\item \textsuperscript{122} Richards (1864):124
\item \textsuperscript{123} TH:17 Sep 1859
\item \textsuperscript{124} I R Cooper "The NZ Settler's Guide" (1857):79; Scholefield (1960)I:155 C W Richmond to T Richmond 8 Aug 1854
\item \textsuperscript{125} AJHR 1860 D-3
\end{itemize}
one of a group of New Plymouth settlers who had contracted to carry the southern mail, rode from Wellington to Tataraimaka, a distance of 230 miles by the modern highway, in three days.

From Auckland to Mokau, about 60 miles north of New Plymouth, the traveller could use a bridle-track, although the swampy areas of the Waikato Valley were a problem. Between Mokau and Urenui, a distance of 30 to 40 miles, lay the most difficult part of the route. Here, where the bush clad ranges came right to the sea, the track ran mainly along the beach. The descent to the beach at White Cliffs or Paraninihi was very precipitous and in an effort to overcome this obstacle to the passage of stock a tunnel was built here in 1859.

South of New Plymouth, the cart-track built by the settlers to their farms at Tataraimaka had been extended by the Maoris to Otumatua, in the vicinity of present-day Opunake, and about 40 miles from New Plymouth. From there to Porirua, travellers to Wellington had to make their own way across the open fern country; fording the numerous rivers, some of which were "so bad, that horses unaccustomed to them, for a long time

126 About 15 miles south-west of New Plymouth (see Figure 14)
129 Scholefield (1960)I:505 J C Richmond to C W Richmond 22 Dec 1859
cannot be induced to try them."\textsuperscript{130}

Within the settlement the extension of roads into the bush areas during the 1850s (see Figure 14) did little to break down the isolation of many settlers. The gangs who contracted to build the roads were paid according to the distance rather than the quality of the construction,\textsuperscript{131} and the typical "road" was merely a cleared track through the fern or bush; without any specially prepared surface or grading.\textsuperscript{132} After the Provincial Government had been established special roading rates were levied,\textsuperscript{133} but any improvements did not last long. In summer the roads were dusty and hard, and the Atkinsons could gallop the six miles from Hurworth to the centre of town in under half an hour;\textsuperscript{134} but in winter the same road was a "river of mud," and was likely to remain so for five months.\textsuperscript{135} In 1859, the road from New Plymouth to Omata was described as:

"impassable, being for miles blocked up with mud, in some parts of which the cartwheels sink to the axle. This would not be so bad if it were not for pits and holes, and other obstacles

\textsuperscript{130} TH:9 Apr 1859
\textsuperscript{131} In 1854 the gangs were paid 5/- per chain for felling timber along the surveyed line, and 2/- per chain for clearing a cart-width track through the fallen timber. Scholefield (1960)I:154, C W Richmond to T Richmond 8 Aug 1854
\textsuperscript{132} Scholefield (1960)I:256, J M Atkinson to M Taylor 25 Jan 1857. Devon Street was not gravelled until 1858 (Butler (1942):44)
\textsuperscript{133} Scholefield (1960)I:209, J M Atkinson 4 Jun 1856
\textsuperscript{134} Scholefield (1960)I:452, C W Richmond to J S Atkinson 23 Mar 1859
\textsuperscript{135} Scholefield (1960)I:273, J M Atkinson to E Richmond 14 Jun 1857
such as stumps of trees, rocks and stones blocking up the way." 136

The Waiwakaiho was bridged for the third time in 1859, but most other rivers and streams still had to be forded.

IV TRADE 138

The main trend in the composition of Taranaki's exports between 1851 and 1860 was the growth in importance of livestock produce. Exports of primary products like wool, butter and meat continued to grow in volume through the 1850s, but their importance in value was obscured until 1856 by the remarkably inflated prices obtained for grains and potatoes during the boom in the Australian market.

In Figure 13, the three years in which exports are shown mark different stages in the development of the province's export trade in the 1850s.

137 TH:25 Jun 1859
138 Information on coastal trade up to August 1852, when the Taranaki Herald began publication, is negligible. Up to the end of 1852 information on overseas trade is restricted to the total values of imports and exports, and a summary of ports of origin and destination of goods. This information is found in the Blue Books of Statistics 1841 to 1852. In 1853 and after, much more information is available. Overseas trade is summed up in the tables of Exports and Imports in Statistics of New Zealand 1853-59. Coastal trade: the quantities and destination of exports have been calculated from the Shipping Intelligence column of the "Taranaki Herald" 1852-1859, and the values of the exports have been calculated from (a) Produce Market reports in Wellington and Auckland newspapers 1853-59 and (b) tables of Provision Prices in Statistics of New Zealand 1853-59. A complete return of coastal trade in 1856 is given in Statistics of New Plymouth (1857)Table 10A. As in the 1840s, information on coastal imports is negligible.
Up to 1855 arable produce continued to provide nearly all the province's export income. (see Figure 13) Steadily rising prices for both grain and flour enabled wheat to hold its place as the single most valuable export until 1853. In that year the average ton of exported flour brought £30 in comparison with £11 in 1850. Potatoes had doubled in value to £6 a ton in the same time and were the second most important export, just below flour in value. Wool began making a significant contribution to export income in the early 1850s and the 131 bales exported to Auckland in 1853 were worth about one-eighth of the total exports for that year, but small quantities of butter and pork were the only other items of livestock origin exported.

In 1854 and 1855 grain and flour prices continued their steady rise, but potatoes in 1855 were selling at the hitherto unheard of price of £10 to £11 a ton. 1500 tons, more than double the previous year's quantity, were exported to Sydney and Melbourne in 1855, and the £15,200 they earned alone surpassed the total value of the province's overseas exports in 1854. Potatoes accounted for 60% of the province's record export income in 1855, with grains and flour providing about half the rest. The quantity of flour exported, 52 tons, was less than a quarter of the 1850 figure, but as it was now bringing £35 a ton in Australia and £40 to £45 in Wellington it was still the third most important single export. In addition to the steadily growing contributions of butter and wool, £1000 worth of sheep were exported.
The crash of the potato market in 1856 led to hundreds of tons remaining in the province unsold, and the few hundred tons that were sold brought in only £1200. Falling quantities of grain and flour exports were now matched by falling prices for these products - flour had slipped back to £30 in Wellington - and in the space of a year total export income fell by 60%. The only relief was afforded by rising exports of livestock, which brought in almost half the year's income.

In the later 1850s the values of many items of arable produce improved a little on the disastrous values of 1856 but the growing area of pasture and numbers of livestock were having an inevitable effect on export income. By 1858 potatoes had risen to £5 a ton, from the £2 to £3 offered in 1856, and had again become the single most valuable export; but their total value was not much greater than that of wool, and altogether pastoral produce was now providing just over half the value of exports.

Prior to 1853 all but an insignificant part of Taranaki's exports had been sent coastwise. During this time Taranaki producers had little incentive to ship overseas. Until 1851 the markets in Auckland and Wellington absorbed all the produce that Taranaki could send, and until 1852 the number of overseas vessels calling at New Plymouth was very small. After 1852

139 GG-NP:28 Aug 1856
conditions changed rapidly, and so did the direction of Taranaki's trade. Though Wellington continued to import food produce until the end of the decade, Auckland began exporting grain and flour in 1852\(^{140}\) and thus began to compete with Taranaki. The major factors of course were the rapid increase in the number of overseas ships making calls at New Plymouth and other overseas ports after 1851, and the demand for arable produce in Australia between 1851 and 1855. For two and a half years after the departure of the "Camilla" for Melbourne in April, 1853 exports of potatoes and grains to Australia provided most of Taranaki's export earnings. From 1854 the province's wool went directly to Australia. Before, it had been exported coastwise to either Onehunga or Wellington for re-shipment to Australia. In 1856 and 1857 wool and potatoes at a very low price, were the only items marketable in Australia, and so the value of overseas exports temporarily fell below the value of coastal exports. Some recovery took place in 1858, when not only did potato exports to Australia improve, but also butter was exported in quantity.

In contrast to the violent fluctuations in the value of overseas exports, the value of coastal exports remained fairly steady. Flour was the most important coastal export until 1855, being worth 80% of coastal exports in 1853 and about 35% in 1855. Nearly all the flour went to Wellington. After 1855 fat stock came to be the most valuable commodity exported coastally. In 1856 sheep, horses and cattle earned £4600 out
of total coastal exports of £6400. The fat stock trade was mainly directed to Onehunga, and was associated with the increasing use of steamships. These vessels provided the prospective exporter with the increased regularity of timetable and reduced time of passage that he needed in order to get his stock to the Auckland market in prime condition. 141

While the writer has found it possible to build up a picture of New Plymouth's coastal export trade from the "Shipping Intelligence" columns of the "Taranaki Herald" and the produce market sections of Auckland and Wellington newspapers, he has found it impossible to do the same for the coastal import trade. Usually, the cargoes that coastal vessels brought to New Plymouth from Onehunga or Wellington were merely listed as so many boxes, cases, sacks, bags and packages, without any mention of the contents. It is clear, though, from the few cargoes which were fully described, that the coastal import trade to New Plymouth was essentially a reimport trade. That is to say, the goods in question were actually imports from overseas which had been directed through Onehunga or Wellington, and thus were similar in nature to the goods directly imported. Moreover, it is fairly certain that from 1853 onwards nearly all New Plymouth's imports came directly from overseas, and thus were officially recorded in "Statistics".

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141 Article in "New Zealander" 15 Jun 1859 quoted in TH:18 Jun 1859
The main reason for this belief is the correlation, between 1850 and 1853, of a steep rise in the value of overseas imports, particularly from Australia, with an equally great increase in the number of overseas ships visiting New Plymouth; while in comparison, any gain in the Taranaki settlers' purchasing power in the period would have been negligible. Now that merchants in New Plymouth had the chance to import directly, it was likely that they would do so, in order to save the transshipment delays and extra handling charges involved in importing goods indirectly.

Between 1850 and 1853 the value of Taranaki's overseas imports rose from £4465 to £30,000; of which the Australian share rose from £382 to £11,300. Between 1853 and 1859 the level of overseas importing remained fairly steady in comparison with the level of exporting, varying between £25,000 and £35,000 in value each year. Throughout this period about 60% of the imports were from Great Britain and 40% from Australia, a marked contrast with the situation in the 1840s, when commonly 80 to 100% of New Plymouth's overseas imports had come from Great Britain. If a reliable estimate of the total value of imports each year could be made, it might be possible to infer variations in purchasing power, and levels of income in the settlement from the varying values of imports; but with the information available any such inferences would be purely speculative. However, an examination of the variety of items imported from overseas illuminates to some extent the particular nature of the community's needs and interests.
Between 1853 and 1855, when land development was still going ahead fairly strongly, imports of capital goods such as livestock, agricultural implements, plants, seeds and the like were annually worth £5,000 to £6,000, or about one-fifth of the total value of imports. After 1855 the value of these imports dropped to between £1,000 and £1,500, as the rate of land development fell off. Consumer goods made up the great bulk of imports. Items that were usually worth more than £500 per year were alcoholic liquor - usually about £5,000 and the leading single item in spite of the fact that the settlement had its own breweries, apparel (boots and shoes), cotton goods, drapery, haberdashery, hardware and cutlery, house fittings, iron, ironmongery, saddlery and harness, working trousers and shirts, soap, sugar, tea, tobacco and woollens. Alcohol apart, the list contains almost nothing that could today be termed a luxury item.

142 Spirits accounted for most of the value of imported liquor. The correspondence of the Inspector of Police at New Plymouth between 1846 and 1856 shows that drunkenness was a major problem in the settlement, even policemen being occasionally found drunk on duty. (McLean Papers Files 123-126: 1846-56) In the depression year of 1856 the newly-formed Total Abstinence Society protested to the editor of the "Herald" about the extent of drinking. They said that a community which could afford to spend at least £8,000 on liquor in a year could not complain of a want of money (TH:25 Oct 1856).
Up till 1855 the province's population continued growing at the accelerated rate of 10 to 15% per year achieved in 1849-50. Between 1856 and 1860, as in the middle 1840s, the population increased much more slowly (see Figure 9).

In the earlier period the province's population grew along with that of the whole country. Although the limited amount of open land available deterred prospective sheep farmers, grains and potatoes were bringing good prices; and so Taranaki's reputation as the "Garden of New Zealand" and the promise of at least modest prosperity offered by bush farming continued to attract settlers. As the migration figures show, the fall in potato and wheat prices in 1856 had an immediate effect

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Figures of immigration and emigration for most provinces were published in Statistics from 1853, but New Plymouth figures did not appear until 1855. Up till 1855, therefore, net population movement as shown in Figure 9 has been calculated by comparing the natural increase with the actual increase or decrease of the population. Notes referring to the values for 1854 and 1855 in Figure 9.

(b) The year 1854 was noted by mistake.
(c) The official figure of New Plymouth's population in 1855 has been changed. Figures of births and deaths immigration and emigration for New Plymouth in 1855 and 1856 do not balance the recorded population growth in that time:

1854 population of 2094 plus 1855 net immigration (90) plus natural increase (82) yields an 1855 population of 2266,

but 1856 population of 2488 minus 1856 natural increase (108) plus net emigration (6) yield an 1855 population of 2386. On the basis of these calculations the 1855 population figure has been changed from the official estimate of 2113 to 2326.

on the pattern of population movement to and from the province. The numbers of people entering the province dropped, and the numbers of those leaving rose, to the extent that in the four-year period 1856-59 the number of emigrants slightly exceeded the number of immigrants.\footnote{145}

This reversal of the migration pattern that had existed up to 1855 was in distinct contrast to the experience of the rest of the country. In 1858 and 1859, when the movement of population away from Taranaki was greatest, the country as a whole was receiving larger numbers of immigrants than ever before.\footnote{146} While disillusioned small farmers were leaving Taranaki, the main flood of immigrants from Britain was turned towards those provinces where there was abundant open land - tussock land which could readily provide sheep pasture or be easily cleared for crops. In these two years Canterbury and Otago, which were the provinces offering the greatest extent of open land, absorbed more than half the country's net gains in population from migration.\footnote{147} In a small way, Taranaki contributed to this movement, for almost three-quarters of the

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\begin{tabular}{ll}
\textbf{145} & Actual figures - Immigrants 472, Emigrants 498 (Statistics 1856-59) \\
\textbf{146} & Immigrants into all provinces except Taranaki in 1858 and 1859 totalled 33,200. Emigrants totalled 17,100. (Statistics 1858-59) \\
\textbf{147} & For the country as a whole immigrants exceeded emigrants by 16,000 in 1858-59. In Canterbury and Otago the figure was 8,800. (Statistics 1858-59) \\
\end{tabular}
people who left the province between 1856 and 1859 went to other parts of New Zealand rather than overseas. 148

As in the 1840s the rate of natural increase of the settlement's population remained high, and after 1855 the high birth rate was alone responsible for continued growth. In this latter period the crude birth and death rates per thousand of population were 47 and 6 respectively. 149

The high ratio of births to deaths was a function of an adult population that continued to be youthful and healthy, and the customary large families of the time. After almost 18 years of settlement the census of December 1858 recorded that 84% of the provincial population were under the age of 40 years. 150 The Colonial Surgeon, in his report for the same year commented that of the 15 deaths that had occurred in a population of over 2,500 6 had been of infants under eight months of age, 2 had been from "old age and general decay" 1 from an accident and 1 from delirium tremens. 151 In discussing the problems of feeding the families which had been forced to abandon their farms and assemble in the town after the outbreak of fighting in 1860, the Superintendent of the Province noted that 79 out of the 177 families on rations had between

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148 Actual figures were 359 to other parts of N.Z. 139 overseas (Statistics 1856-59)
149 During the four years 1856-59 births totalled 495 and deaths 64. The mean population was 2,620. (Statistics 1856-59)
150 Statistics 1858
151 TH:29 Jan 1859
four and ten children. 152

Between 1850 and 1859 natural increase contributed 60% of the growth in Taranaki's population, but only 20% of the growth in New Zealand's population. As a result, by 1858 the age and sex structure of the populations of Taranaki and New Zealand had developed significant differences. These differences are shown in the age pyramids in Figure 3. 153

As a high birth-rate and large families were common throughout New Zealand at the time, both pyramids are broadly based. But while the Taranaki pyramid tapers fairly steadily upward through the older age groups, as could be expected of a population built up largely by natural increase, the New Zealand pyramid shows a marked excess in the 21 to 40 years age group. It is this feature of the New Zealand pyramid which particularly shows the continuing importance of immigration in adding to the country's population, for the adult immigrants were typically young.

The differing histories of the two populations can also be seen in the balance of the sexes. Eleven years of immi-

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152 GG-T:31 Mar 1860
153 In the 1858 census the age cohorts used to classify the population under 21 years of age differed slightly from those used in the 1843 Company census of New Plymouth. In 1858 the following cohorts were used: Up to 6 years, 7 to 12, 13 to 18 and 19 to 21; while in 1843 the cohorts used were: Up to 6 years, 7 to 14, 15 to 18 and 19 to 21. The age cohorts used in constructing the three pyramids in Figure 3 were: Up to 6 years, 7 to 14, and 15 to 21. The 1843 7 to 14 years cohort was preferred to the 1858 7 to 12 years cohort because 14 years was commonly
migration at a high rate (see Figure 9) had given the New Zealand adult population, by 1858, a high proportion of males.\(^{154}\)

There were 152 to every 100 females. In Taranaki at the same time the proportion was 117 males to every 100 females - a good deal closer to normalcy.\(^{155}\) Three years earlier, in 1855, when the flow of immigration into Taranaki was still strong, the proportion had been 128 males to every 100 females.\(^{156}\)

The Taranaki population in 1858 differed, in both age and sex structure, as much from the province's 1843 population as from the 1858 New Zealand population. The two latter populations had been built up largely by immigration, while the Taranaki population of 1858 had been built up largely by natural increase.

(B) The Maori Community

As much as in the 1840s, any assessment of the Maori population and economy of North Taranaki in the 1850s is limited by a shortage of detailed and accurate information. The only attempt made during the decade to record accurately the Maori population of the whole district was part of the national census of the Maori population in 1857.\(^{157}\) Fenton's

Continued -

153 accepted at the time as the adult age (See Maori census 1857) In constructing the 1858 pyramids the estimated population aged 13 and 14 years was added to the 7 to 12 years cohort.

154 In the period 1853-58 male adult immigrants into New Zealand numbered 24,149, and female adult immigrants 9,157 (Statistics 1853-58)

155 Statistics 1858:Table 1

156 GG-NP:3 Nov 1855

157 Statistics (1857):Table 2
Plate 9: A Group of Maoris at Bell Block - William Strutt 1856

Plate 10: Back-settler's Whare - William Strutt 1856
commentary on this census threw some doubt on the accuracy of its findings. Among the sub-enumerators whose comments were quoted - Henry Halse, a New Plymouth police officer, reported that the Maoris disliked giving information about their numbers and his remarks were corroborated by the Reverend J Reimenschneider, who said that Maori opposition had delayed the completion of his inquiries.\textsuperscript{158} Maori suspicion of inquiring European officials was not a new thing. Three years before, G.S. Cooper, a Taranaki land purchase agent, had observed that it was impossible to obtain a census of the Maori population, because the Maoris were convinced that the Government was mainly interested in finding out how many fighting men the Maoris had, and therefore "what force would be needed to exterminate the Maoris and seize upon the land."\textsuperscript{159}

The 1857 census recorded the Maori population of North Taranaki between Warea in the south-west and Taniwha in the north-east as 1,462.\textsuperscript{160} Referring to the Maori population of the whole of New Zealand, Fenton claimed that nearly all those capable of forming an opinion on the subject believed that the Maori population was decreasing. The Taranaki sub-enumerators were certainly in agreement. Reimenschneider said that although no emigration to other areas had taken place,

\begin{itemize}
\item[158] Fenton (1859):2
\item[159] McLean Papers File 126: Cooper to Col.Secretary 29 Apr 1854
\item[160] Statistics (1857):Table 2
\end{itemize}
the number of people living on the lands of the Taranaki tribe, which lay to the west of Mt Egmont, had declined from at least 900 in 1847 to 588 in 1857. 161

The present writer finds that although the 1857 census figure for the North Taranaki population was no greater than his own estimate of that population for 1850 (in spite of the fact that in the intervening seven years a small number of Maoris had returned to the district)162 the evidence provided by population totals alone is too unreliable to justify or refute the common opinion that the Maori population was failing to reproduce itself.

The composition of the Maori population, however, indicates that it was not reproducing itself. In the picture it gave of the sex and age structure of the Maori population of North Taranaki, the 1857 census agreed substantially with the findings of censuses of parts of the North Taranaki Maori population in 1847 and 1848.163 Like those two earlier censuses, the 1857 census showed a population in which adults outnumbered children by about four to one, and in which the adult population had a heavy preponderance of males. Only 281 of a population of 1,462 were under the age of 14 years,

161  Fenton (1859):2
162  MLP-NP:Parris to McLean Jun 1861 (no date)
and of the 1,181 adults, 733 were males, who thus outnumbered the females in the ratio of 164 to 100.164

During the 1850s the North Taranaki Maoris' attempts to adopt European culture forms reached a peak. Between 1851 and 1855 the boom in the prices of agricultural produce encouraged this development. In the latter half of the decade, even though the level of Maori prosperity fell, and the feeling between settlers and Maoris over the issue of land-sales became more bitter, there is no evidence that the Maoris rejected any aspects of the European culture that they had adopted.

In the early 1850s, the increasing difficulty of hiring Maori labour made European settlers aware of the growth in Maori farming activity. Maoris continued to form a large part of the labour force on the larger European farms at harvest-time, but as they became more taken up with their own farming, the Maoris made themselves available for hire less frequently, and demanded wages that were sometimes higher than European employers were prepared to pay. In comparison with the 2/- to 2/6 per day that Maoris were happy to accept in 1848-49, in 1853-54 they were asking for 3/6 or 4/- .166

The Maori farmers continued to show little interest in

164  Statistics (1857):Table 2
166  Messenger:10 Jul 1854; Scholefield (1960)I:132, J M Richmond 4 Dec 1853
sheep, but they began to amass large numbers of horses and cattle, and their crops of grain and potatoes began to rival in size those of the settlers. In 1852 a settler told a friend in England that Maori demand was keeping up the price of horses in New Plymouth, and that 160 of the 200 horses in the settlement were owned by Maoris. In late 1853 it was reported that Maoris were delivering large quantities of wheat into the town.

Maori agricultural production was greatest in the middle of the decade. The only survey of Maori land use that relates to this period refers to stock and crops owned by Maoris living within the area purchased by the Government (mainly on reserves set aside for their use) in 1856. At this time these Maoris owned 507 acres of crops and 235 acres of pasture. If it is assumed that the population distribution recorded by the census of 1857 had not significantly changed in a year, it is evident that the Maoris living within the purchased area numbered about 350, less than a quarter of the total Maori population of North Taranaki (see Figure 14). Per head, these Maoris had 1.4 acres of crops and 0.7 of an acre of grass, in comparison with the figures for the settlers, in 1856, of 0.7 of an acre of crops and 3.0 acres of grass. This evidence on its own is not

167 Earp (1853):176
168 TH:23 Nov 1853
169 Statistics of New Plymouth (1857):Tables 39 and 40
enough to confirm that Maori farming, particularly arable farming, was rivalling the settlers' farming in production, for the Maoris whose lands had been surveyed lived close to the Europeans, close to markets and close to a port, and thus had a greater incentive to develop farmland than many others.

But there is sufficient other evidence available to establish the fact that while the settlers left the Maoris far behind in sheep farming, the Maoris equalled and most likely exceeded the settlers' arable farming production between 1854 and 1856. As early as 1852 it was claimed that the Maoris had more arable land than the settlers, and similar statements were made by the Native Secretary and in the "Taranaki Herald", in 1855. Potatoes had been a popular crop with the Maoris ever since the Europeans had introduced them, and the high prices this crop was bringing encouraged the Maoris to grow it widely. At the end of 1854 Maoris were selling "hundreds of tons" of potatoes, and in 1856, when the settlers had 585 acres of potatoes was easily their record for the decade, the Maoris living within the purchased area alone had 316 acres of the crop. Wheat and oats were also grown on a large scale.

170 Earp (1853):176
171 GBPP 1860 HC/2719:73, C Nugent to Col Secretary 25 Jan 1855; TH: 18 Jul 1855
172 Scholefield (1960):159 C W Richmond to J Chamberlain 21 Nov 1854
173 Statistics of New Plymouth (1857):Table 40
The rapid growth of Maori agriculture was associated with greater Maori use of European farming equipment. In 1847 the 729 Maoris living between the Sugar Loaves and the Waitara area owned one cart, two drays and one plough;\textsuperscript{174} but eleven years later, in 1858 in spite of the fact that a great deal of their property had been destroyed in four years of intermittent fighting\textsuperscript{175} the 1,135 Maoris living in the same area\textsuperscript{176} owned 110 carts, 102 ploughs, 45 harrows and 3 threshing-machines.\textsuperscript{177}

In the 1850s, Maori business and commercial activity was much greater than in the 1840s. Whereas in the 1840s the North Taranaki Maoris had carried on nearly all their trade with the local European settlers, they now developed an extensive trade both coastally and across the Tasman. Within the Maori community the benefits of this activity became more widely distributed. The Maoris who lived close to New Plymouth and its port continued to reap the benefit of their situation; but the Atiawa people living at Waitara developed a considerable trade from their river,\textsuperscript{178} and their prosperity accordingly

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{174} McLean Papers File 127:Return of Native Population 30 Oct 1847
\item \textsuperscript{175} Wesleyan Missionary Society Reports, New Plymouth Circuit:1856-58
\item \textsuperscript{176} Statistics 1857:Table 2
\item \textsuperscript{177} Article in "Maori Messenger" 15 Dec 1858, quoted in TH:9 Apr 1859
\item \textsuperscript{178} McLean Papers File 425:Wilson to McLean 14 Apr 1854
\end{itemize}
increased. As customs control did not extend beyond the boundary of the purchased area, both coastal and overseas ships were able to enter and leave the Waitara River without any official check being kept on their movements. This situation did not appeal to many of the settlers, who regretted the loss of customs duty, and feared that the anti-land selling party in the Puketapu feud was using the river to import weapons and ammunition. As well as sending produce coastally to Auckland and Wellington, the Waitara Maoris also exported regularly to Australia. The circumstances which allowed ships freely to enter and depart from Waitara also made it impossible to obtain any accurate assessment of the value of Waitara exports, but the estimates made all agree that the trade was considerable. In 1853 the "two principal mercantile firms" in the New Plymouth settlement paid the Waitara Maoris more than £2800 for produce to be exported, and in 1854 about £5000 was paid. The Native Secretary stated that in the first eight months of 1855 the exports from Waitara were worth £8,000 to £9,000, and in 1856 exports from the same place were said to be worth £6,000.

179 McLean Papers File 238: Halse to McLean 31 Jul 1856
180 McLean Papers File 425: Wilson to McLean 14 Apr 1856
181 Cooper (1857): 81-82; TH: 14 Aug 1858 and 12 Feb 1859
182 McLean Papers File 126: Cooper to Col. Secretary 29 Apr 1854
183 AJHR 1861 F - 3: Nugent 1 Sep 1855 Compare with TH: 2 May 1855
184 TH: 31 Jan 1857
As a result of all this productive and commercial activity, the Maoris became very prosperous. An official estimate, based on customs receipts, showed that in 1855, when export prices for arable produce were at their highest, the collective income of the Maoris in North Taranaki may well have exceeded that of the Europeans. The settlers were impressed by the degree to which the Maoris had adopted European attitudes and habits:

"The natives of this district are fast adopting our customs .... (see Plate 9) they are acquiring landed, household and moveable property ... They are industrious, fond of money and willing to work for it ...... They have stores in which the annual transactions reach to thousands of pounds, and hitherto, their engagements have been faithfully fulfilled." 186

From 1854 onwards, as their disputes over land-sales developed into actual warfare between the rival factions, the Atiawa came to spend more time in fighting and watching each other's movements than in farming. After 1855 many cleared and farmed areas were abandoned.

In 1856 the Atiawa Maoris were reported to be in a state of "comparative destitution." In the interest of the war they had even given up working for the Europeans. 187

185 GBPP 1860 HC/2719:228
186 TH:18 Jul 1855
187 But a few resourceful Waitara Maoris who started to manufacture their own powder (McLean Papers File 238: Halse to McLean 1 Sep and 11 Sep 1856) were able to turn the war to some economic advantage. The "Waitara Powder Manufactory" advertised for sale "good Blasting and Sporting Powder, at such a price as to defy competition, it paying no import duty. All the trouble

...... Continued P 160
their incomes accordingly reduced, many Maoris were forced to
sell the property which they had accumulated during the years
of prosperity in order to obtain rifles and ammunition,\textsuperscript{188} and
were by 1859 heavily in debt to the merchants in New Plymouth.\textsuperscript{189}

(C) North Taranaki in 1859 - Retrospect and Prospect

The outlook for the province of Taranaki in 1859 was
sombre. At a time when writers on New Zealand,\textsuperscript{190} immigrants
and even a good number of Taranaki settlers were convinced
that prosperity was only to be found in wool-growing,\textsuperscript{191}
Taranaki stood condemned as "more suitable for agricultural
than pastoral pursuits."\textsuperscript{192} Faced with the need to clear bush
in order to establish pastures in Taranaki, intending sheep-
farmers turned their backs on the province. Uncertain prices,
uncertain yields in a climate that was really too wet for
successful grain-growing, and increasing problems of soil-

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{187} and annoyance of applying to the Resident Magistrate
for licence to purchase the above is saved, as the
Manufactory ... is conducted exclusively by natives, who, being to the north of the Waitaha Stream, are
not under British law". (TH:20 Sep and 27 Sep 1856)
\item \textsuperscript{188} Wesleyan M.S. Reports NP Circuit:1856-59; Scholefield
(1960)I:325, J M Atkinson to M Taylor 15 Nov 1857
\item \textsuperscript{189} Wesleyan M.S. Reports, N P Circuit:1857-59; TH:
19 Mar 1859
\item \textsuperscript{190} Swainson (1859):211
\item \textsuperscript{191} Scholefield (1960)I:257 C W Richmond to T Richmond
29 Jan 1857, and I:267 C W Richmond to J Brind
23 May 1857
\item \textsuperscript{192} W Stones "New Zealand - the land of promise" (1859):
38
\end{itemize}
Plate 11: The Omata District - William Strutt 1855

Plate 12: The Mangorei District about 1860
exhaustion and second growth in the established farm-lands strongly tempted the arable farmer to abandon his clearing and to try his hand in parts of New Zealand where costs of land-development were less. In 1859 the "Taranaki Herald" commented, rather bitterly, that those who remained in the settlement were:

"not the medley of excited men, capitalists, labourers, speculators, land-dealers and dupes who some twenty years back met in a large room in Broad Street Buildings* to ballot for order of choice on a plan highly coloured and embellished with imaginative markets, hospitals, parks and gardens; on which every parallelogram was believed to be a mine of wealth." 195

The description was a bit overdrawn, but undoubtedly expressed the disillusionment of many.

The attitude of the Taranaki settlers to bushland in 1859 was unmistakable. The purchase of the 20,000 acre Tarurutangi Block in March of that year raised scarcely a ripple of interest, for the land was almost entirely bush-clad (see Figure 1). Yet in 1841 Carrington had voiced the general opinion of the early settlers when he claimed that the forested Taranaki country was "the most magnificent I ever saw

193 Statement of a deputation of Taranaki settlers to Governor Gore-Brown (TH:19 Mar 1859)
194 The London office of the New Zealand Company
195 TH:18 Jun 1859
196 TH:26 Mar 1859
197 TH:2 Apr 1859
In 1859 however, a newspaper editor was:

"convinced that large tracts (of unused Taranaki bushland) can never be brought under the plough, and that the growing timber constitutes their chief value, as the soil is poor . . . ." 199

Assessments of the Taranaki environment had drastically altered.

By December 1858 the area of land farmed by the settlers in Taranaki totalled 12,156 acres, 200 just over four times the size of the farmed area in 1850. Settlers had moved well out from the Fitzroy Block in the intervening eight years, and cleared land could be seen from Bell Block to Tataraimaka, a distance of about twenty miles, and up to eight miles inland. 201 Within this zone the spread of settlement was uneven. Bush land had been cleared only in isolated patches (see Plate 12) and the bulk of the farmland still lay, as in 1850, in the coastal fernland zone.

Apart from contrasting the extent and appearance of the cleared land in the bush and fernland areas, it is difficult to say much about variations in the pattern of land use within the settlement. Although the 1850 census return of agriculture 202 divided the settlement into five statistical

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198 Carrington Papers I:8 Jan 1841
199 TH:3 Dec 1859
200 Statistics 1858:Table 75. Provincial figures were not published in 1859
201 GBPP 1860 HC/2719:73
202 GBPP 1854 HC/1779:4 – 6
units, none of the censuses between 1857 and 1860 used more than three. The three units were the three electorates allocated to the province for representation in the General Assembly. One of these, Town, included only the 550 acres of Carrington's 1841 town-site; and so the rest of the settled area was divided among only two electorates or statistical units. The census return for 31 March 1857, which was the last census in the 1850s to show any regional subdivision of its findings, shows no significant differences between the two main statistical areas in the extent or the character of farming activity. Yet a comparison of the agricultural figures for 1850 and 1857 makes clear the extent to which farmers everywhere in Taranaki had developed an interest in pastoral farming. In 1850 there was still more arable land in the settlement than sown pasture, but seven years later, in both the Grey and Bell, and Omata statistical areas more than three-quarters of the farmland was in pasture. In 1858, 80% of the farmland was in grass. Dairying was as yet almost insignificant, but it was already clear that the province's farming future would be based on grass rather than on crops.

Clearance of the natural cover had, of course, been most complete in the longer settled fernland areas. Here, the

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203 GG - NP:29 Aug 1857
204 Statistics 1858:Table 75. Actual areas: Sown pasture 9,724 acres: total farmed area 12,156 acres
landscape could be quite attractive. Bell Block was described by a visitor in 1858 as "a lovely place" and another writer claimed that the countryside in the cleared areas, with its neatly thatched cottages, fences and farm buildings was English in appearance. Strutt's sketch of part of the Omata district in 1855 certainly supports these opinions (see Plate 11).

On the other hand, the appearance of farmland cleared from the bush was usually anything but beautiful. Even on land that had been cleared for a number of years, huge tree-stumps jutted up here and there all over the green pastures, and tree-trunks could be seen lying in all directions. In misty or rainy conditions the scene depressed a mind familiar with the more ordered landscape of rural England:

"... the wide rough road full of deep ruts and with here and there an old giant stump sticking up in it ... and beyond, the fields full of stumps of all sizes and shapes ... more like neglected churchyards than fields ...."

Something of the starkness of the scenery and the loneliness of the life in these areas is conveyed by Plates 8, 10 and 12.

Figure 14 gives an idea of the distribution of the

205 Letter in "Lyttleton Times" 17 Jul 1858, quoted in TH: 21 Aug 1858
206 Swainson (1859): 203
207 MacKaness (1958) II: 3
208 Scholefield (1960) I: 132, J M Richmond 8 Nov 1853
Sources - Statistics 1857: Table 2, Jury Roll for 1856-57 (TH: 19 Mar 1856) and map of Taranaki Province (1855)
European population of the province at the beginning of 1856. The actual population of each district - there was no nucleated settlement outside the town of New Plymouth - was not recorded in any census, but as the 506 names on the 1856-57 Jury List for the Province of New Plymouth \(^{209}\) represented something like 90\% of the male population over the age of 21 years, \(^{210}\) the writer decided that the distribution of their addresses would be very nearly the same as that of the total population.

The distribution of jury-men's addresses did not significantly change in the next four years. \(^{211}\) The main features of the distribution were the concentrations on the open land near the coast and in and around the town of New Plymouth.

The appearance of the town was in itself a commentary on the depressed state of the province's economy. When he landed in the settlement in March 1855 Strutt found New Plymouth "but a poor and uninviting place, indeed hardly worthy of the name of a town", \(^{212}\) and three years later a Canterbury visitor declared that "not a building (was) in progress, not a sign

\(^{209}\) TH:19 Mar 1856

\(^{210}\) On 30 June 1855 there were 515 men over the age of 21 in the province (GG-NP:3 Nov 1855) and a year later the number had risen to 618 (Statistics of New Plymouth, 1857:Table 14) In the early 1856, when the Jury List was published, the number may have been about 580

\(^{211}\) At the beginning of 1860, 54 men were living at Bell Block and 223 in New Plymouth. Otherwise the district figures had hardly changed since 1856. (Jury List for the Province of Taranaki 1860-61, TH:18 Feb 1860)

\(^{212}\) MacKaness (1958)II:2
of animated business (was) visible."²¹³

In 1841 the 550-acre site had been surveyed into 2200 quarter-acre sections, which the Plymouth Company hoped would soon be occupied by a growing town. But the hopes of the optimistic purchasers of the Company's urban sections were a long time in being realised. Fourteen years later, in 1855, nearly 800 of the sections remained unsold²¹⁴ and many others were absentee-owned and unused.²¹⁵ In 1857, most of the town-site was little different in its appearance from the surrounding suburban and rural land (see Plate 13). Only 314 of the 550 acres had been cleared, and of this area 250 acres were in grass.²¹⁶ There was still enough standing fern within the town limits in 1858 to constitute a fire-hazard.²¹⁷

Within the town-site the purchased sections were not clustered together in the centre, but were well-scattered.²¹⁸ So the sections owned by residents would improve in value, and so that unpurchased land could be grouped into units large enough for sale as farmland, in December 1859 the Provincial Council passed a Town Consolidation Ordinance whereby outlying sections could be exchanged for land of equal extent

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²¹³ Letter in "Lyttleton Times" 17 Jul 1858, quoted in TH:21 Aug 1858
²¹⁴ IA1, 55/1716: Heaphy to Col. Secretary, 31 May 1855
²¹⁵ TH:20 Dec 1856
²¹⁷ GG-NP:15 Apr 1858
²¹⁸ Map of town area accompanying IA1, 55/1716: 31 May 1855
within a new reduced site. But little could be done before the outbreak of war.

As Plates 13 and 14 show, New Plymouth in the late 1850s was little bigger in size than a modern township. At the beginning of 1860 the population within the entire town area was 937, just under two fifths of the province's total European population of 2,650. The few shops, offices and hotels mainly lined Devon Street on either side of the Huatoki Bridge (see Plate 14). Carrington had chose this point as the centre of his settlement in 1841, and today the part of Devon Street shown in the picture is still the business centre of New Plymouth. With its wide straight main street, one and two storeyed, often unpainted wooden buildings, New Plymouth in 1859 looked more like a cattle-town in the American West than a settlement built by people from quiet, conservative Devon and Cornwall. Overlooking the town, and adding to its frontier appearance, were the Military Barracks that had stood on Marsland Hill since 1855 (see Plate 13).

In 1858, while the Puketapu feud still continued, the Maoris between Waitara and New Plymouth, who had been most concerned in the fighting, were still farming 2061 acres of land and owned 218 horses, 692 cattle and 1226 pigs. The

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218 Map of town area accompanying IA1, 55/1716:31 May 1855
219 GG-T:16 Dec 1859
220 GG-T:31 Mar 1860
221 TH:9 Apr 1859
Plate 13: New Plymouth in 1857

Plate 14: Devon Street, New Plymouth, about 1860
available information does not permit a comparison of the quality of European and Maori agriculture, but a useful comparison of acreages can be made, though. From the traditional Maori interest in arable farming and the fact that the Maoris owned no sheep, it can be assumed that at least three-quarters, or 1600 acres, of the Maori farmland was arable land. This figure is the equivalent of 1.5 acres for each of the approximately 1,100 Maoris in the area. At the same time the European settlement, with a population of 2,650, had 1,867 acres of arable land, \(^{222}\) or about 0.7 acres per head.

But throughout the Maori lands of North Taranaki there was clear evidence of the neglect of agriculture in favour of fighting. Large areas of former cultivations were now abandoned. In 1854 pas and cultivated fields had filled much of the lower Waitara valley, \(^{223}\) but in early 1860 the same country was thickly covered in Scotch thistle and fern. \(^{224}\)

\(^{222}\) Statistics 1858;Tables 1 and 75
\(^{223}\) Scholefield (1960):141, J M Richmond 24 Feb 1854
\(^{224}\) White (1862):168
CONCLUSION

The New Zealand Company, for a short period acting through the subsidiary Plymouth Company, was solely responsible for the founding of the settlement of New Plymouth in 1841; and the Company's attempts to put its plan of colonisation into effect were the dominant theme in the settlement's early development.

The Company claimed that its scheme, or rather its adaptation of Edward Gibbon Wakefield's scheme of colonisation, was a means of regulating the supply of land, labour and capital so as to create in a new settlement a society which would be a replica of all the better aspects of English society. Between 1841 and 1844, when the Company's colonising activities were being investigated and debated both in New Zealand and in England, the Company was inclined, in its public statements, to attribute most of the difficulties it had encountered to conditions in New Zealand; conditions which, it claimed, could not have been reasonably foreseen when the Company was founded in 1839. Problems of access and land clearance, and opposition to the Company's plans shown by both the Government in Auckland and by the original Maori inhabitants, certainly added to the Company's difficulties. The reasons for the failure of the Company's scheme were, however, rooted in England rather than in New Zealand.

To begin with, the financial basis of the Company's activity was very shaky. The Company was able to claim the
interest of the English finance market for only a very short space of time. The 110,000 acres of original Wellington sections were the only batch to be completely sold; and later offerings of land in Wellington, New Plymouth and Nelson met with an increasingly dismal response. Conditions in New Zealand had nothing to do with this. New Plymouth sections were marketed in June 1840 when little, if any, news of the founding of the Wellington settlement had arrived back in England. Company propaganda had been able to arouse interest in the first and principal settlement, which offered the greatest opportunities for speculators; but its efforts to promote the secondary settlements failed because of the fact that at a time when railway development alone offered great hopes to the typical English investor, New Zealand remained distant, unknown, and as a colonial venture, distinctly risky.

The Company's financial difficulties were increased by the methods it had to use to obtain its limited funds. Much of the appeal of the Company's scheme to English investors derived from its use of a lottery system of land allocation and its encouragement of absentee ownership; yet ultimately, as these aspects of its plan diminished the supply of capital in the settlement, they added to the Company's burden.

If the Company had sited its settlements in places where sources of wealth were easily available, as was later the case in Canterbury, financial difficulties may have been delayed; but in Taranaki, Nelson and Wellington where, in spite of early
opinion to the contrary, economic development proved to be slow and costly, the slim resources of both the Company and private capitalists were quickly exhausted.

But equally important in thwarting the Company’s plans were the attitudes of the settlers sent out to New Zealand by the Company. In the case of New Plymouth, which was typical of the Company settlements in this respect, it has been shown how the preference of many of the settlement's "capitalists" to use their money in speculation rather than in land development and employment of labour, added to the settlement’s economic difficulties. The inability or unwillingness of the Company and private land-owners to continue to provide them with employment would have finally forced labourers to start farming on their own, but many of these men showed their desire to become independent producers by purchasing selection-rights to small areas of land in late 1841 and early 1842, before employment had really become difficult to get. With its capitalists unwilling to provide employment, and its labourers desiring independence, regardless of its financial situation the Company would have found its scheme impossible to carry out.

In England, the Company directors should have seen the first signs of eventual failure of their plans as early as 1840, when it was evident that investors' attention was turning away from the Company. In New Plymouth the Company's financial difficulties became apparent in 1842 with the Company's first attempts to cut down expenses in the settlement.
The Company abandoned the settlement in 1843, and by the end of that year the social and economic pattern that had developed in New Plymouth was the antithesis of all that the Company had worked for.

By bringing out immigrants, surveying land, building roads and employing labour, the Company had been responsible for any growth in New Plymouth's economy up until the end of 1843. After 1843, with immigration ended and finance from external sources impossible to get, New Plymouth, like the other Company settlements, had to rely on its own internal resources to generate economic development.

Throughout the period 1844-1860 a factor limiting the Taranaki settlement's rate of economic growth was the nature of the society inherited from the Company period. The small-scale subsistence type of farming which had become almost universal by 1844 was of itself capable of only slow expansion, as was particularly evident during the depressions of the mid-1840s, and the late 1850s, because of the small profit-margins it produced.

Between 1849 and 1855 the renewal of immigration into New Zealand, and strength of Australian demand created better market conditions for the province's arable farmers. But the improvement in external market conditions was not in itself enough to convince Taranaki's farmers that arable farming offered sound prospects for the future. Between 1853 and 1855, when arable produce prices were highest, the rate of land clearance in Taranaki began to decline.
Following the successful beginnings of sheep farming in the Wairarapa district between 1844 and 1847, the mass of New Zealand's colonists had become convinced that sheep farming offered a much quicker way to prosperity than arable farming. After 1847 farmers in Taranaki, as much as the farmers in any of the settlements established in the early 1840s, turned their energy to expanding the area of pasture available for sheep. But the need in Taranaki to clear and cultivate land in order to establish pastures was in itself a disadvantage, at a time when vast areas of unoccupied natural pastures existed on the east coast of both islands of New Zealand. As the amount of open land available for settlement in Taranaki rapidly decreased in the early 1850s the attractiveness of other parts of New Zealand proportionately increased.

The threatening crisis in the province's development was briefly postponed by the demand for arable produce in Australia in the early 1850s. As long as prices for grains and potatoes remained high the province continued to attract settlers who were not strongly interested in becoming pastoral farmers on a large scale. But from 1856 the prospects for both arable and pastoral farming in Taranaki were equally gloomy, and the province not only lost any attraction for immigrants from overseas and other provinces but also for many of its existing settlers.

Seen thus from the distance of a century, the depression that affected Taranaki in the late 1850s appears to have been
inevitable, and due more to the juxtaposition of the province's situation vis-a-vis other parts of New Zealand, than to developments within the province itself. The Taranaki settlers saw events rather differently.

Their growing interest in pastoral farming after 1850 could be seen in their equation of a shortage of farm land with a shortage of fern or open land. The Maoris barred the settlers from occupying most of the open land in the province, and so, as the New Plymouth Provincial Council's 1858 petition to the General Assembly particularly demonstrates, Maori opposition to land sales became, in the minds of the settlers, the main obstacle to the province's progress. They failed to see that even if Waitara - Mangaoraka and the Waimate Plains had been made available for settlement, the Province would still have remained relatively unattractive to immigrants, for the areas of open land occupied only the coastal fringes of the Province, and although cheaper to clear than bushland, they contained no natural pasture for sheep. Taranaki, like other heavily bushclad areas, remained unattractive to immigrants and relatively undeveloped until after 1880; by which time the open grassland areas of New Zealand had been fully settled, and the extensions of railways and the coming of refrigeration encouraged farmers to clear the bush on a large scale, in order to begin dairy farming.

In 1841 the few Maoris who remained in Taranaki had had some contact with European culture but it had been only
limited. Wesleyan missionaries, who had established their first station in the district in 1840, had made some little progress in educating and evangelising them, and the Maoris had begun to adopt European food, clothing and crops. They were eager to trade with and work for the first settlers, but had little or no experience of money. Cultivation was still managed on traditional lines, with the traditional tools; and work was still organised on a communal basis.

During the 1840s the Maori economy became increasingly Europeanised as contact with the settlers continued, and the process of acculturation was accelerated by the return to Taranaki of former Maori residents who had had, during their period of exile, considerable experience of the new culture. European crops almost completely replaced the traditional Maori crops, and the Maoris became familiar with the use of money as a means of exchange; but traditional tools and methods of organising work still remained dominant. Although Maori agricultural production steadily increased, throughout this period the Maori economy continued to be in some degree subsidiary to the economy of the local European settlers. The Maoris carried on their trade almost entirely with the settlers, and continued to supplement their incomes by working occasionally for them.

In the early 1850s Maori farm production rose very rapidly - to rival that of the settlers. Rises in values of produce at this time were partly responsible for the increased
production, for the Maoris were now quite market-conscious; but some credit must also be given to a much greater Maori use of European technical equipment, such as ploughs, harrows and carts. Furthermore, the Maoris were able to start exporting produce beyond the bounds of the province. As their farm production grew, the North Taranaki Maoris became more independent, economically speaking, of the local settlers. This economic independence, which showed itself in the growing reluctance of Maoris to work for the settlers, on what the settlers considered reasonable terms, strengthened Maori resistance to selling land to the Government.

Ultimately, though, it was the strength of the settlers' demand for land that brought about the ruin of the Maori economy; for if the settlers had not encouraged a minority group of the Atiawa tribe to offer to sell land, the Puketapu feud would not have started.
This bibliography contains not only the sources referred to in footnotes, but also a few other works bearing on the subject of the thesis which I have found to be of value. It has been divided into three sections.

Part I consists of unpublished primary sources: archives of the New Zealand Government, archives of the New Zealand Company, and private correspondence, reports and diaries.

Part II consists of published primary sources: official publications (New Zealand and Great Britain); New Zealand Company Reports; published correspondence, diaries and reminiscences; pamphlets and handbooks; writing of E.G. Wakefield and other theorists; newspapers and periodicals; maps.

Part III consists of secondary works.

PART I: UNPUBLISHED SOURCES.

(A) OFFICIAL

In the National Archives, Wellington.
(The appropriate National Archives reference accompanies each title, and has been used in place of the title in the foot-notes).

Archives of the New Zealand Government.

Files of the Colonial Secretary's Correspondence (IA1, 42/1308 and IA1, 55/1716)

Resident Magistrate (New Plymouth) Letter Book 1853-72 (J New Ply 1)

Files of the Native Lands Purchasing Commissioner - New Plymouth. Outwards Letter Book 1852-53 (MA 24/16)

Maori Land Purchase Department - New Plymouth. Outwards Letter Book 1846-63 (MLP-NP1)

Bluebooks of Statistics 1841-1852.

Archives of the New Zealand Company.

Dispatches from the Principal Agent, Wellington, to the Secretary of the N.Z. Company 1841-50 (NZC 3/1-10)
Dispatches from the Principal Agent relating to the New Plymouth Settlement 1841-50 (NZC 3/21-29)

Dispatches from the Secretary to the Principal Agent August 1841 - February 1843 (NZC 102/7-11)

Dispatches from the Resident Agent, New Plymouth to the Principal Agent 1841-51 (NZC 105/1-10)

Dispatches from the Principal Agent to the Resident Agent, New Plymouth 1842-48 (NZC 115/1)

In the Taranaki Museum, New Plymouth.

List of Owners and Valuations on sections within the Settlement of New Plymouth, 31 December, 1852.

(B) PRIVATE CORRESPONDENCE, DIARIES AND REPORTS.

The Papers of Frederick Alonzo Carrington 1840-45 Typescript Vol I: Journal, Vol II: Correspondence. (Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington)

The Diary of Richard Chilman 1841-42 Typescript (Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington)

The Diary of a Taranaki Pioneer - the Diary of the Late George Jupp 1851-1879 Typescript (Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington)

The Papers of Sir Donald McLean Files 123-27, 181/1, 182, 236-40, 425-28 (Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington)

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The Journal of John Newland 1841-73 Typescript (General Assembly Library, Wellington)

Letters from Miss Maria Nicholson 1859-61 Typescript (Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington)

The Diary of William Wakefield 1839-41 Typescript (Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington)

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PART II: PUBLISHED SOURCES

(A) OFFICIAL (NEW ZEALAND)

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Government Gazette for the Province of New Plymouth 1853-58

Government Gazette for the Province of Taranaki 1859-60

Statistics of New Plymouth 1853-56 New Plymouth 1857

(B) OFFICIAL (GREAT BRITAIN)

Parliamentary Papers Relative to New Zealand.

Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons on New Zealand 1840 HC/582; Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons on New Zealand and the New Zealand Company 1844 HC/556; Dispatches from the Governor of New Zealand, enclosing reports by Mr Spain, Commissioner of Land Claims, upon the Titles to Land of the New Zealand Company 1846 HC/203; Dispatches from the Governor of New Zealand 1847 HC/837; 1847-48 HC/892; 1849 HC/1120; 1850 HC/1280; 1854 HC/1779; 1860 HC/2719.


(C) NEW ZEALAND COMPANY REPORTS 1840-50

(D) PUBLISHED LETTERS, JOURNALS AND REMINISCENCES

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Selwyn G A Journals of the Bishop of New Zealand London 1848

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(E)  PAMPHLETS AND HANDBOOKS

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First and Principal Settlement  London 1839

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(F)  WRITINGS OF E.G. WAKEFIELD AND OTHER THEORISTS

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Marx K  Capital  London 1928

Wakefield E G  A View of the Art of Colonisation  London
1849 (1914 reprint)

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(G) NEWSPAPERS AND PERIODICALS

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New Zealand Journal (London) 1840-52
New Zealander (Auckland) 1845-59
Southern Cross (Auckland) 1848-58
Taranaki Herald (New Plymouth) 1852-60
Taranaki News (New Plymouth) 1857-60

(H) MAPS

1844 New Plymouth Scale: 40 chains to an inch. Faces p.133 in Report of Commissioner of Land Claims, GBPP 1846 HC/203. A survey plan of the settlement drawn to show the effects of Governor Fitzroy's decision to invalidate the original N.Z. Company land-purchase in Taranaki and to concentrate the settlement within a newly-purchased, 3,500 acre block. Shows sections sold and occupied, sections sold and unoccupied, the names of the owners, the boundary of the Fitzroy Block, and formed roads.

1848 Plan of the Settlement of New Plymouth 1848
Scale: 1 mile to an inch. Faces p.59 in C F Hursthouse Account of the Settlement of New Plymouth (1849) A survey plan which shows the boundaries of the blocks of land bought from the Maoris up to 1848, the boundary of Commissioner Spain's award in 1844, and the bush line as in 1840. Within the purchased area the individual surveyed sections are shown, and are variously coloured to show those sections unsold, those sold but unoccupied, and those sold and occupied. The map is inaccurate in its depiction of land ownership east of the Waiwakaiho River. This part of the Company purchase had to be abandoned in 1844, but as Hursthouse published his book at a time when the settlers and the Company still hoped that these lands would soon be re-occupied, the map shows the survey plan and the disposition of purchased sections as they were in 1844, before Governor Fitzroy's decision.

1855 Taranaki Province, New Zealand. Scale: about 1½ miles to an inch. An enclosure in GBPP 1860 HC/2719 Dispatches from the Governor of New Zealand, Series No.50. A map sent by Wynyard to the Colonial Sec-
retary on 18 April, 1855, to illustrate the remarks in a dispatch on the Puketapu feud. In spite of its title, the map shows only the North Taranaki coastal strip between the Waitara River and a point about six miles south-west of New Plymouth. Within this area are depicted: Maori pas, the boundaries of purchased blocks, formed roads and the bush-line.

1855 Plan of New Plymouth Scale: about 6 chains to an inch. Accompanies a file of the Colonial Secretary's correspondence in the National Archives; reference IA1: 55/1716, and is dated 31 May, 1855. This is a plan of the original 550-acre town site of New Plymouth, and was drawn to show the need to consolidate the town. The plan shows the distribution of the purchased and unpurchased sections within the town area in 1855.


1863 The Province of Taranaki from Waitara to Oeo Scale: 2 miles to an inch. Copies are held in the Alexander Turnbull Library and the New Plymouth Public Library. The map was published in London in 1863, but the surveyor's signature beneath the title is accompanied by the date 10 July, 1862. The map area includes the whole of the western part of the province, and was drawn to illustrate the first Taranaki War, 1860-61. The map shows the extent of the lands purchased from the Maoris on the outbreak of the war, formed roads, the position of Maori pas, military blockhouses and stockades, and buildings destroyed by Maoris during the course of the war. As nearly all houses and other buildings belonging to settlers outside the town area were destroyed, the distribution of the destroyed buildings gives a good idea of the distribution of the rural European population on the eve of the war.

MODERN MAPS

NZMS 1: Sheet N 108 New Plymouth (1962) and Sheet N 109 Inglewood (1943). Scale: 1 mile to an inch.

DSIR Soil Map of New Zealand, Sheet 6 (1954) Scale: 4 miles to an inch.

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