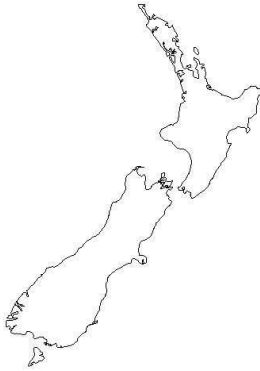


The Treaty of Waitangi: The British and Maori in Victorian New Zealand



If you are studying the Victorians in the classroom then you will be finding out about the large

Empire that was ruled by Queen Victoria. This activity will tell you about how New Zealand became part of the Empire and how the British treated the Maori people. The Maori were the first people to live in New Zealand.

Background

People from Britain began to settle in New Zealand at the start of the 19th century. It is estimated that by 1839 there were about 2000 Europeans in New Zealand. It was in that year that the British government decided to make New Zealand part of the British Empire.

They sent Captain William Hobson to convince the Maori chiefs to accept British control over New Zealand. With the help of missionaries already there, he managed to persuade many of the chiefs that they would be protected.

On 6th February 1840 many of the Maori chiefs signed the Treaty of Waitangi. This included five Maori women who signed because the ruler of Britain was also a woman (Queen Victoria). A British missionary had also translated the treaty into the Maori language.

However, thirty years later there was war between the British settlers and the Maori. One reason for this war was the different ways that the Maori and British understood the Treaty.

Activity

First read all of the extracts below about the Treaty and then have a go at the activities that follow them.

.....
: *...it is not clear that Maori chiefs who signed*
: *agreed that they were giving away their*
: *traditional authority. One chief assumed that*
: *'the shadow of the land will go to him (Hobson)*
: *but the substance will remain with us'.*
:

Source ❶
: From 'New Zealand and
: the South Pacific
: Islands' by John
: Chambers (2003)

Source ②
From the
Waitangi
Tribunal
website

The idea of buying land was something new to Maori. The British settlers thought that they owned the land after they bought it from Maori. Some Maori thought that they were letting the settlers live on and use the land but thought it would always be Maori land. Hapu(chiefs) and iwi (tribes) believe that a person can never be permanently separated from the land they were born on. Other people may use it, but other people would never be tangata whenua (owners of the land). The different ideas held by British and Maori about owning land were the cause of many problems.

The Chiefs of the Confederation of the United tribes of New Zealand and the separate and independent chiefs who have not become members of the Confederation cede to Her Majesty the Queen...all the rights and powers of sovereignty.

Source ③
From the
Treaty of
Waitangi

Source ④
From the
Treaty of
Waitangi

Her Majesty the Queen of England confirms and guarantees to the Chiefs and Tribes of New Zealand...the full and exclusive and undisturbed possession of their lands and Estates Forests Fisheries and other properties...so long as it is their wish and desire to retain the same in their possession.

Her Majesty the Queen of England extends to the Natives of New Zealand Her Royal protection and imparts to them all the Rights and Privileges of British subjects.

Source ⑤
From the Treaty of
Waitangi

Source ⑥
From a letter written by
Captain William Hobson
(1840)

If the Native chiefs do not know the contents of this treaty it is no fault of mine. I wish them fully to understand it. I have done all that I could to make them understand the same, and I really don't know how I shall be enabled to get them to do so.

Activity 1

Answer the questions below:

Which of the extracts above are primary sources and which ones are secondary sources?

These extracts are primary sources _____

These extracts are secondary sources _____

Are there any words in the sources that you do not understand? Write them down here and then use a dictionary to find out what they mean.

It means _____

It means _____

It means _____

Look at Source 3. 'The separate and independent chiefs who have not become members of the Confederation' were chiefs who did not take part in the discussion about the treaty?

Do you think that it was fair for them to be included in a treaty that they had nothing to do with? End one of the sentences below.

Yes, I think that was fair because _____

No, I don't think it was fair because _____

Why do you think that the British wanted the independent chiefs included in the treaty? Write your answer in the box below.

Do you think that the British knew that the Maori might not understand what the Treaty actually meant? End one of the sentences below.

No, because _____

Yes, because _____

Activity 2

Get yourselves into either pairs or small groups. Your task is to discuss whether the Treaty was helpful to the Maori or might damage them. Your teacher will tell you to take one side or another.

Once you have been told which side you are to take then start by choosing one person to note down all of your arguments. Use the extracts to help you reach your position.

When your teacher tells you to stop then the person writing down all of your thoughts will present your thoughts.