



(McLintock, 1966c)



GOLD DISCOVERIES

Early Traces

The presence of gold in New Zealand had been known from the beginning of European colonisation. As early as 1842 whalers discovered traces in the Coromandel district, while, almost simultaneously, one of Arthur Wakefield's survey parties found traces in the Takaka River, near Nelson. Nothing was done about these discoveries and, as the early prospectors were only interested in alluvial gold, there appeared little likelihood of any sustained rush to New Zealand sites. By the early 1850s, however, the authorities were concerned at the increasing stream of settlers who were leaving for the Australian and Californian gold-fields. Early in 1852 certain influential citizens of Auckland offered £100 reward (later increased to £500) for the discovery of alluvial gold in payable quantities near the capital. In September 1852 Charles Ring, of Coromandel, claimed the reward. A small "rush" occurred, but this lasted only from November 1852 till January 1853, less than £1,500 worth of gold being found during the whole period. A few miners continued to work at Cape Colville and Mercury Bay, but by June 1853 most had departed.

The next important discovery occurred in Nelson, where many minor "finds" had already been reported. By October 1856 it had been established that gold existed in payable quantities, but the Provincial Government showed no inclination to encourage miners to exploit the field. A few local settlers drifted to the Aorere Valley, near Collingwood; by February 1857 there were about 60 miners in the district. Three months later there were 1,500. The miners' interest centred on the Collingwood-Takaka district and by August 1859 nearly £150,000 worth of gold had been exported from Nelson. Hochstetter, who visited the field about this time, reported that returns were falling rapidly and that there were only 250 miners working around Collingwood. By this time most of the settlers had returned home and there had been no rush from Australia.

Between 1857 and 1859 Government surveyors reported seeing traces of gold on the West Coast districts. In November of the latter year Rochfort reported that his party had found gold "in vast quantities" in the Buller River. It was not until two years later, however, when Reuben Waite exhibited gold won from the Buller River in a jeweller's window in Nelson, that any real interest was taken in the discovery. A few miners hastened to the locality, but no concerted rush occurred.

Gold had been known to exist in Otago long before Gabriel Read's discoveries and, according to one popular tradition, Tuhawaiki is said to have told Tuckett of its presence as early as 1844. Throughout the 1850s settlers reported minor discoveries in many parts of the province. In 1858 Black Peter found gold near Lawrence and, in the following year, near Tokomairiro. In July 1860 Blacklock and Roebeck found it in the Maitai district. By the end of the year gold had been reported from all parts of Otago, but it was still not believed to exist in payable quantities. In March 1861 Samuel MacIntyre, an old Californian miner, found gold in payable quantities in the Lindis

Pass area and a small rush developed; however, bleak winter conditions soon forced the miners to abandon their diggings.

In view of later rushes to the New Zealand gold-fields, one may wonder why these did not begin earlier. The answer lies in the fact that while early prospectors had a keen eye for topographical features resembling those of the Australian and Californian goldfields, they possessed little knowledge of the geological formations in which gold might be found; and this, together with the miners' preference for alluvial gold, led them to ignore in certain districts rich quartz reefs.

How to cite this page: . 'Early Traces', from An Encyclopaedia of New Zealand, edited by A. H. McLintock, originally published in 1966.

Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand, updated 22-Apr-09

URL: <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/1966/gold-discoveries/1>

CURRENT BULLION PRICING

Prices are in \$NZD and are
indicative only, please call for a
firm quote.

| | We Sell | We Buy |
|-------------|---------|---------|
| Gold Kiwi | \$2,050 | \$1,861 |
| Silver Fern | \$62.62 | \$48.39 |

Last updated 8:22 on 6 Apr,
2011

International: +64 9 377-6837
New Zealand: 0800 696 468

View bullion product prices in
\$NZD and \$USD

THE HISTORY OF GOLD

Click for more...

IMPORTANCE OF GOLD

Properties of Gold
Uses of Gold

Click for more...

GOLD MINING

Click for more...

THE HISTORY OF SILVER

Click for more...

IMPORTANCE OF SILVER

Uses of Silver

Click for more...

GOLD SUPPLY AND DEMAND

Gold Demand Chart
Gold Investment Chart
Gold Supply Chart

Click for more...

BULLION CHARTS



View gold chart



View silver chart

View 24 hour charts

Gold in New Zealand

The Early Years

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE](#)

Click here for more information on the Gold Kiwi - a New Zealand
themed gold bullion product



Timeline

| | |
|------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1852 | Charles Ring discovers gold at Coromandel |
| 1856 | Gold rush to Collingwood-Takaka |
| 1861 | Gabriel Read discovers gold in Otago, followed by a gold rush |
| 1862 | Gold rush to Marlborough |
| 1865 | Gold rush to West Coast |
| 1866 | Record gold production of 735,000 oz (more than 22 tonnes) |
| 1875 | Gold rush to Waihi |
| 1878 | Discovery of Martha vein |
| 1881 | World's first successful steam-powered dredge begins work on Clutha River |
| 1952 | Closure of Martha mine, Waihi |
| 1972 | Gold price \$US58 |
| 1973 | Gold price floated |
| 1975 | NZ gold production falls below 2000 oz, the lowest since mining began |
| 1978 | Resumption of hard rock gold exploration |
| 1980 | Gold price reaches \$US612 |
| 1988 | Martha opencast mine opens at Waihi |
| 1990 | Macraes mine opens in Otago |
| 2000 | Macraes and Martha mines each produce onemillionth ounce |
| 2007 | Reefton mine opens |

The Youngest Country

Treaty of Waitangi

The Youngest Country

Early Settlement

Colonisation

New Zealand, the Youngest Country

Legend has it that New Zealand was fished from the sea. Fact has it that New Zealand was the last land mass on earth to be discovered, making New Zealand the youngest country on earth.

Nation of Migrants

The first New Zealanders, the Maori, migrated here from their ancestral Polynesian homeland of Hawaiki. This was followed about 800 years later by extensive European migration. The influence of Pacific Island and Asian immigrants during the 20th century has helped shape New Zealand into an even more vibrant and diverse multicultural society.

From Hawaiki to Aotearoa

Maori first landed in Aotearoa (New Zealand — literally 'Land of the Long White Cloud') on waka hourua (voyaging canoes) from their ancestral homeland of Hawaiki probably over 1,000 years ago. They settled throughout the land, surviving by farming and hunting. By 1800 there were believed to be over 100,000 Maori in New Zealand.

European Migration

Abel Tasman became the first European to sight New Zealand, but it was after Captain James Cook began his circumnavigation of the country in 1769 that European migration began. The first European migrants were whalers and missionaries.

One Nation

In 1839 there were only about 2000 Pakeha (Europeans) in New Zealand. However the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840, which saw New Zealand become a British colony, had an enormous effect on the New Zealand population. British migrants were offered a paid passage to New Zealand, and 40,000 arrived here between 1840 and 1860. By 1858 the Maori and Pakeha populations were nearly equal. The South Island gold rush of the 1860s saw even more migrants flood in from around the world, including English, Scots, Irish and Chinese. A labour shortage here in the late 19th century saw even more migrants from the British Isles and Europe come to New Zealand. Most came with assistance from the New Zealand Government.

Wine and Gum

From the 1890s over 5000 migrants from Dalmatia (now in Croatia) settled in the far north. Most Dalmatians worked in the gumfields, digging for gum from the giant kauri tree. When gumdigging ceased, many Dalmatians become involved with farming, intermarrying with locals and becoming part of the rural community. Dalmatian immigrants

also established vineyards in West Auckland in the early 1900s. Today, some of New Zealand's best-known wines, including Babich and Pleasant Valley, come from vineyards established by Dalmatians in this area.

Kilt Country

During the mid and late 1800s a large number of Scottish migrants settled in New Zealand, especially in the South Island provinces of Otago and Southland. Dunedin (from Dun Edin, the old Celtic name for Edinburgh) is the capital of Otago. It was designed as a city for members of the Free Church of Scotland, which broke away from the Church of Scotland in 1843. The Scottish influence can still be seen throughout the city's architecture, particularly in the University and Medical School. Pipes bands, Scottish country dancing, and the sport of curling are all pastimes originally brought to New Zealand by Scottish migrants, but now firmly part of the New Zealand way of life.

Golden Migrants

As well as bringing in large numbers of miners from Europe, Australia, and America, the Otago gold rush attracted many male migrants from China. In the country they called 'New Gold Hill', many Chinese migrants suffered hardship, discrimination and loneliness. Many of the descendants of these miners, and subsequent Chinese migrants, became market gardeners. During World War II, Chinese market gardeners heroically contributed to the war effort, producing massive amounts of food for troops.



Local Maori guides continue the tradition of passing knowledge through story telling.

[More about this image](#)

Feature story

THE LEGEND OF NEW ZEALAND



Legend has it that New Zealand was fished from the sea. Read more about the legend and

Maui, the gifted, daring, supernatural demigod of Polynesian mythology.

Photo credit: Ministry of Education

[Read More >](#)

FAST FACT:

Wine has been produced in New Zealand since Europeans first settled. With latitudes close to those of the great European wine regions, a wide variety of award winning wine varieties and styles are produced.



In Maori legend, the South Island was the canoe of the god Maui, who fished the North Island up from the sea.

[More about this image](#)

WIN a trip
to New Zealand



VIEW AND VOTE

Find us on
Facebook

SHARE

Like

24 people like this. Be the first of your friends.

massive amounts of food for troops.

Dutch Migration

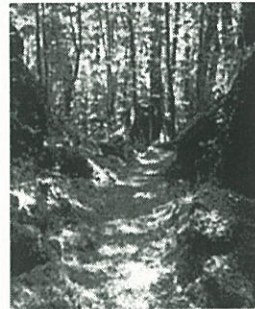
Abel Tasman, who sighted New Zealand in 1642, was the first Dutchman to visit New Zealand. In the 1950s an agreement between the Dutch and New Zealand governments saw a large number of Dutch migrants settle throughout New Zealand. Dutch migrants brought many skills with them, and made a major contribution to the development of the New Zealand restaurant, horticulture (particularly flower growing), building design, and fashion industries. Today, about 100,000 New Zealanders can claim Dutch descent. Thanks to Dutch migrants, New Zealand currently exports tulip bulbs to the Netherlands!

Pacific Friends

During the 1960s and 70s New Zealand faced a severe labour shortage. This led to a large number of migrants from the Pacific Islands arriving in New Zealand, especially in Auckland. Pacific Islanders now make up more than 5 percent of the New Zealand population, and Auckland is now the largest Polynesian city in the world. While Pacific Islanders were originally employed in factories and lesser-skilled jobs, a growing number are now entering the professions, and making a major contribution to professional sport, fashion, popular music, television, and the arts in New Zealand. The influence of Pacific Island food, fashion, and arts can be seen on the streets of most New Zealand cities.

Asian Migration

The last 15 years have seen considerable migration to New Zealand from Asia, including Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, Korea, and Japan. These Asian migrants have greatly contributed to the New Zealand economy, particularly in the areas of business and the professions. Most New Zealand cities now have many Asian restaurants and shops.



A large part of New Zealand is still covered in rugged and beautiful native forest.

[More about this image](#)

Related Links

Other Sites

- www.asia2000.org.nz
Asia 2000 - a New Zealand resource about Asia
- www.immigration.govt.nz
Ministry of Immigration
- www.minpac.govt.nz
Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs
- www.nzhistory.net.nz
Information on New Zealand history
- [Learn more about the South Pacific](#)
The official tourism website for the South Pacific, with comprehensive, accurate and up-to-date accommodation and activities listings providing a complete guide on where to stay and what to see and do in the South Pacific Islands.
- www.stats.govt.nz
Statistics New Zealand

[« Previous page](#)

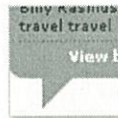
[Next page »](#)



Rugby World Cup 2011
Learn more about Rugby World Cup 2011 in New Zealand.



New Zealand Videos
Browse our collection of videos that showcase what New Zealand has to offer.



Your Words
Browse personal blogs for straight talking thoughts and opinions about our places, people and adventures.