

The Immigrants' Journey

The voyage from England or Germany to Nelson was challenging for all on board, and the length of the trip depended on winds and weather.



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Te Tau Ihu: Immigrants' Journey

Preparations

“Although the Company was willing to provide free passages from the emigration fund, it insisted that emigrants themselves should purchase their own bedding and clothing and pay their own fares to the port of embarkation. Each man had to provide the tools of his trade...In addition to the articles thus listed every person had to have a knife, fork, spoon, plate, and drinking mug, valued at 3s.

Children were to be furnished with a proportionate outfit, the cost being estimated at £1 for each child from one to eight years, and £1 10s for those from nine to 13. Complete outfits could be purchased from the Company.

At first emigrants had also to provide their own mattresses and bolsters, but under the amended regulations of 1842 these items were supplied by the Company.

A married couple would thus have to pay about £10 for their own outfit, plus £1 or £1 10s per child, plus their fare to Gravesend, plus £3 passage money for each child over seven, so that they might well have to meet an initial expenditure of £20.

These charges were sufficient to exclude paupers, who were only included when parishes and other charity organisations fitted them out for export as a measure of poor relief.”

Source: Ruth Allan Nelson *A History of Early Settlement* (1965) p110-111

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Each Adult Male

2 fustian jackets lined

2 pairs fustian trousers

2 pairs duck trousers

2 round frocks

12 cotton shirts

6 pairs worsted stockings

2 Scottish caps

6 handkerchiefs

6 coarse towels

1 pair boots with hobnails

1 pair shoes

4 lb marine soap

1 pair blankets

2 pairs sheets

1 coverlet

Each Adult Female

2 gowns or 18 yards printed cotton

2 petticoats or 6 yards calico

2 flannel petticoats or 6 yards flannel

12 shifts or 30 yards long cloth

6 caps or 3 yards muslin

6 handkerchiefs

6 aprons or 6 yards check

6 neckerchiefs

6 towels

1 pair stays

6 pairs black worsted stockings

2 pairs shoes

1 bonnet

needles, pins, buttons, thread, tape

4 lb marine soap

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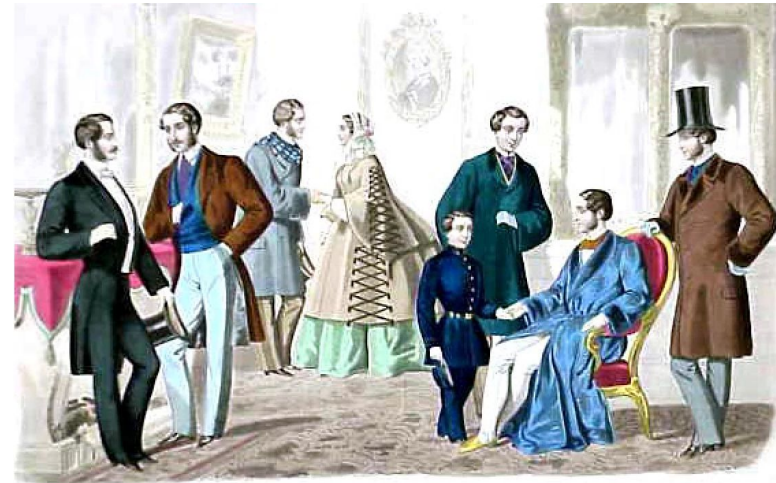
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Minimum required of each adult

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Questions

1. Who is Ruth Allan (the source)? How reliable is her writing? What might be its limitations?
2. What do these words mean: fustian, duck, round frocks, worsted, Scottish cap, hobnails, marine soap, coverlet, petticoats, gowns, calico, flannel, long cloth, muslin, neckerchiefs, stays, bolster?
3. Are any things missing from the lists?
4. Compile a list of things you would advise a person migrating from the UK to NZ now to bring.
5. Why were the lists important in the 1840s? What has changed?
6. Either describe or draw fashionable clothes worn by the well-to-do in England in the 1840s.
7. What would £20 in England in 1841 be worth in NZ dollars today?



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The Journey

The voyage from England or Germany was challenging for all on board, and the length of the trip depended on winds and weather. The first immigrant ship to arrive in Nelson, the “Fifeshire”, sailed from Deal on 26 September 1841 and reached Nelson on 1 February 1842. The “Lord Auckland” which left a week earlier arrived in Nelson on 26 February 1842. The “Lloyds” sailed on 11 September 1841 and arrived in Nelson on 15 February 1842.

Cabin passengers had much better food than steerage passengers, and the two groups were discouraged from mixing. Infectious diseases were a risk especially in the cramped steerage quarters: there were 40 cases of measles on the “Thomas Harrison”, and 65 children died on the “Lloyds”, most from whooping cough. There was little the emigrants could do about seasickness and the weather was unpredictable. The “Lord Auckland” suffered considerable damage in the Bay of Biscay: Alfred Fell, a cabin passenger, described his experience of two storms.

The first occurred in the Bay of Biscay. On Sunday 10 October:

“It has been a most wretched day, the vessel rolling about most awfully, and with a head sea, and the wind quite against us; could not have service either above or below. The dinner presented a strange scene; everything that possibly could be was lashed down, and we were lashed to the tables. The first thing that went over was a tureen of soup, then a boiled leg of mutton quietly shyed itself off the dish on to the ground, after it went a decanter of sherry. Potatoes, roast and boiled, rolled about in all directions; but you cannot form any idea of the uproar amongst the eatables. Then the crashes at every roll of the vessel, and the breaking of glasses and earthenware was alarming.”

Source: Alfred Fell *A Colonist’s Voyage to New Zealand* (1973) p 17

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Much later in the voyage, in the southern ocean, Fell recorded:

'I then went to bed, but to sleep was impossible with the noise and motion; the wind roaring like thunder; and with the motion, tie and batten things down as you will, you cannot keep them in their places, hence every cabin has its things rolling about. But anyone who has not been out in a gale of wind in a large ship can form no idea of the strange and wild noises.... the storm burst in a wild fury around us, tearing everything before it; tremendous seas came over us, sails torn to ribands, and leaning so that sometimes the sides of the cuddy seemed to be the floor. At half past eight the spars lashed at the side of the long-boat came down with a tremendous crash, and at the same time the maintop gallant mast and yard and sail were carried away, and left the appearance of the main mast a perfect wreck.'

Source: Alfred Fell *A Colonist's Voyage to New Zealand* (1973) p 73-74

"Of the same storm, Barnicoat wrote that the emigrants' cooking apparatus had been upset, the sides of one of the boats knocked in, and that cabin passengers assembled for breakfast with unwashed faces. All sails were out of action, and the main mast shook so much that the carpenter had axes ready to cut it away at a moment's notice. The emigrants went without breakfast, and at dinner the cabin passengers' galley was given up for them. If things were uncomfortable for those in cabins, the conditions below, with lanterns, and the swinging stoves which were used for warmth, both doused, must have been nigh intolerable. To add to the hazards, the "Lord Auckland's" teak decks became very slippery when wet – almost like ice, and the sailors had to go without shoes in order to keep a footing."

Source: June Neale *Landfall Nelson* (1978) p 118-119

Classes were run for both children and adults (some of whom couldn't read) and services were held on Sundays.

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Questions

1. What do these words or phrases mean: unpredictable, lashed down, tureen, shyed, decanter, batten things down, ribands, cuddy, spars, long-boat, doused, nigh?
2. What words does Fell use to describe the power of the storm?
3. How long, roughly, did the voyages take?
4. Where is the Bay of Biscay?
5. What were the risks of long sea voyages from one side of the world to the other? Think of as many possibilities as you can.
6. What qualities would emigrants require to cope with a long sea voyage?
7. Why were steerage passengers more vulnerable than cabin passengers?
8. How would you prepare yourself for such a voyage?

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Fell also recorded discussions about how to treat Maori:

“There seems to be a strange opinion on board with regard to the natives of New Zealand and our treatment of them. One says that he will not go out without a gun over his arm, and another without a brace of pistols in his pocket, and that they will not scruple to use them. Now this seems to me the very worst principle. The natives must be either our friends or our foes, and that they had much better be the former no one is prepared to deny; but this can only be by kindness and confidence on our part, not viewing them as our foes, but as our friends; not as slaves, but on a par with our own labouring population; not treating them with jealousy or distrust, apprehension or alarm, but with openness, candour and boldness. If force is used on their part, then and then only would I repel it with force, and not even then until every argument which reason and sophistry suggested had been used in vain, then only would I resort to the argument of the bullet. One single individual act of one hot-headed fellow may make them all our direst foes; and if they are treacherous, as some say, why unkindness and coercion will not make them less so, but rather, I opine, the reverse.”



Source: Alfred Fell *A Colonist's Voyage to New Zealand* (1973)

p 27-28

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Questions

1. How reliable is Fell as a source? What might be its limitations?
2. What do these words or phrases mean: scruple, apprehension, alarm, candour, repel, sophistry, in vain, hot-headed, direst foes, treacherous, coercion, I opine, the reverse?
3. Does Fell regard Maori as his equal?
Is he expecting to meet Maori who are cleverer than him? Or more honourable?
4. What was the general opinion of Maori among his fellow passengers?
5. Why was it so important for the first immigrants to Nelson to be on good terms with Maori?
6. What did Maori have that the immigrants needed?
7. Fell describes himself as a colonist. What does a colonist do? (Check the meaning of to colonise). What does the term indicate about Fell's intentions in NZ?
8. When he uses the term emigrants on board ship who is he referring to?

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Activities

Write:

A letter to a friend or family member in England or Germany explaining how you felt as you approached Nelson.

A biography of either Alfred Fell or John Barnicoat. List your sources.

One paragraph in your own words explaining Fell's belief about how to treat Maori.

Draw:

A scene on board ship.

Research:

What can you find out about the voyage of the "Lloyds" which arrived in Nelson on 15 February 1842? Who was on board? What happened on the voyage? What were the causes of the tragedy? Who were blamed? List your sources.

Read:

"A Colonist's Voyage to New Zealand" by Alfred Fell.

Explain how the cabin passengers spent their time on board. What surprised you? (500 words).

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Resources

[Departure to landing – Te Ara Encyclopedia of New Zealand](#)

[Clothes – Te Ara Encyclopedia of New Zealand](#)

[1850s Fashion | How Women, Men, and Children Dressed \(familysearch.org\)](#)

[Alfred Fell - Nelson Provincial Museum \(nelsonmuseum.co.nz\)](#)

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Social Science/ANZH Curriculum Progress Outcome Links

Understand	Know	Do
<p>Colonisation and settlement have been central to Aotearoa New Zealand's histories for the past 200 years.</p> <p>People hold different perspectives on the world depending on their values, traditions, and experiences.</p> <p>People participate in communities by acting on their beliefs and through the roles they hold.</p>	<p><u>By the end of Year 8</u> People's connections to places, resources, and environments can generate cooperation or lead to disputes over rights and responsibilities, with differing consequences.</p>	<p><u>By the end of Year 8</u> Gather information from primary sources, considering their reliability and identifying their limitations.</p> <p>Identify how language and messaging can be used to inform, to misinform, and to position people alongside particular values and perspectives.</p> <p>Make informed ethical judgements about people's actions in the past, basing them on historical evidence and taking account of the attitudes and values of the times, the challenges people faced, and the information available to them.</p>

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Reference List

Content created by Hilary Mitchell
Co-author of '*Te Tau Ihu o te Waka*'
(Huia Publishers, written by Maui John Mitchell and Hilary Mitchell)
based on text taken from the recommended readings below.

Recommended Readings:

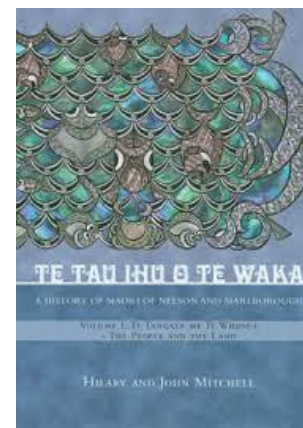
Ruth M. Allan
'*Nelson - A History of Early Settlement*'
(AH & AW Reed, 1965)

Patricia Burns
'*Fatal Success - A History of the New Zealand Company*'
(Heinemann Reed, 1989)

Max D. Lash
'*Nelson Notables*'
(Nelson Historical Society, 1992)

June E. Neale
'*Landfall Nelson*' (1978)
'*Pioneer Passengers*' (1982)

Alfred Fell
'*A Colonist's Voyage to New Zealand*'
(Copper Press, 1973)



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