

# MAORI ECONOMY

## PRE-1840

Polynesians established permanent settlements in New Zealand, and initial exploitation of natural resources gave way, probably during the fifteenth century, to a more settled world of gardening and resource management. The Maori economy produced enough surplus to support a significant cycle of pa building from the mid-fifteenth century onwards.

When Europeans first arrived in numbers in the early nineteenth century, Maori were eager to trade. Potatoes, corn and flax grown by Maori were usually bartered for weapons, rum, tobacco, blankets and European tools and products. By the late 1830s, settlers and Maori were using money in ever-increasing quantities.



George French Angas, ATL,PUBL-0014-55

**Top right:** A lithograph by George Angas showing everyday items from the Maori domestic economy, around 1847.

**Right:** John Williams is usually credited with this ink-and-wash sketch of Maori bargaining with pakeha, mid-1840s. Pigs, potatoes and flax were usually exchanged for tobacco, blankets, tools, guns and powder.



John Williams, ATL, A-079-017.