



NEW ZEALAND
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NEW ZEALAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



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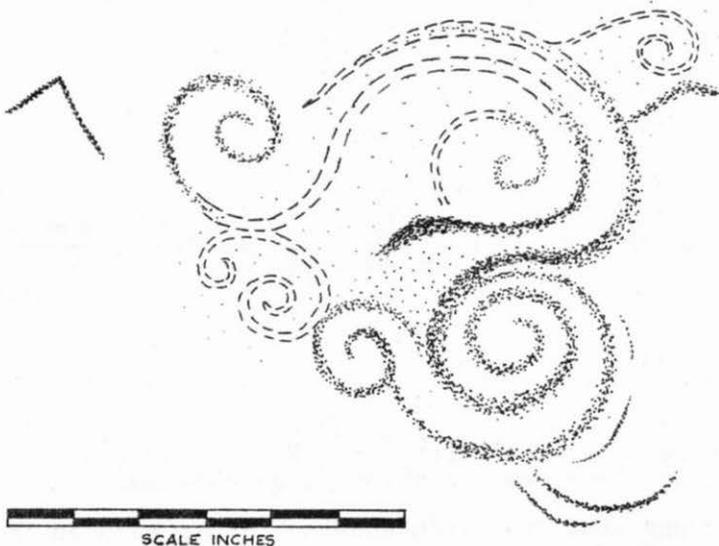
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DAMAGE TO MAORI ROCK CARVING
IN NORTH OTAGO

N.F. Turner

Early in March 1966 an enthusiastic but ill-equipped amateur archaeologist did considerable damage to a rare spiral rock carving at Te Ana Raki, North Otago.

The representation of intaglio and graffito processing combined in this carving, has been registered as site number S.136/16. Apart from this, the site was not publicised, in an attempt to prevent its damage by sightseers, fossickers, or curio hunters for commercial purposes, as has occurred to other rock shelters in North Otago and South Canterbury. There are numerous small shelters in the vicinity of the one containing the carving, each comprising overhanging or cave-like formations in outcrops of limestone on a south to south-west facing hillside. In the shelter floors are numerous fragments of bone, shell, pieces of haematite, and other occupational material. Many have drawings in very poor condition being little more than shapeless blotches on the rock face, while others have easily recognizable forms in red and black.



The shelter containing the carving is a low, shallow, south-facing overhang, large enough to accommodate two or three people lying down, and the spiral design was probably carved from this position as it is close to the floor (though this has doubtless built up in recent years). The damage was caused in a well intentioned attempt to make a cast of it by placing a wet plaster of paris mixture against the rock and removing it when dry.

This has resulted in large flakes of the soft friable limestone being broken off as the plaster was removed, completely destroying some of the spirals and damaging others to the extent that the lines can only just be traced (photographs of the design before and after damage are held at the Canterbury Museum). Quite apart from this not being a suitable way to make a cast (it is not possible to get an accurate positive from it), the rough handling is deplorable, and clearly demonstrates the necessity of preventing untrained personnel attempting to investigate pre-historic sites without supervision.

Several square yards of ground adjacent to the rock face have been dug, thus also destroying any underground archaeological evidence relating to the carving, and a few artifacts (haematite and flakes) were left lying in the diggers spoil.

In the illustration herewith (based on a recent Canterbury Museum photograph and an earlier charcoal sketch by the writer) the dashes indicate parts of the carving destroyed while the stippling shows how it now appears.

PRACTICAL USES OF DITCH-AND-BANK FENCES IN THE
AUCKLAND DISTRICT

J.T. Diamond

While working on farms at Pukekawa near Tuakau, Henderson Valley near Auckland and Awhitu on the southern side of the Manukau Harbour, I saw ditch and ditches and bank in association with hedges and post and rail fences. (Smart 1966:19) Curiosity prompted me to discuss with the farmers its relative merits and these notes summarise the information obtained.

I found that the ditch-and-bank could be used in the following ways:-

1. With gorse hedges for subdivision. Pukekawa and Henderson.
2. With post and rail fences. Awhitu and Henderson districts.
3. With a boxthorn hedge for subdivision. Awhitu.