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## ARCHAEOLOGY IN NEW ZEALAND



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FITZROY BAY: A FURTHER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY

Wellington Archaeological Society

Fitzroy Bay is on the open coast, east of the entrance to Wellington Harbour. It extends from Pencarrow Head to Baring Head, a distance of some 6 kilometres (Fig. 1.).

H.N. McLeod (in Best 1917:1) noted "indistinct traces of native occupation" on the hill near the lighthouse at Pencarrow Head. He did not say precisely what these traces were but later indicated that they were those of a pa ("Wellington Country District shewing Native Names" published in 1918 by the Department of Lands and Survey, and compiled from information supplied by Best and McLeod). A range of sites was later recorded between Pencarrow and Baring Heads by H.B. Fell in the 1930s and J.B. Palmer in the 1950s (Palmer 1963).

Evidence of Maori occupation in the area recorded on early survey plans is summarised by McFadgen (1963).

Nineteenth Century Maori Settlement

A village called Parangarehu in Fitzroy Bay was visited by Colenso on a number of occasions between 1845 and 1848 (Bagnall and Petersen 1948:215, 224, 225, 227, 228, 278). On 7 March 1846 he found 40 people there and wheat was being threshed (Bagnall and Petersen 1948:215, 227). The village was recorded on Admiralty Chart 1423 by the H.M.S. Acheron survey of 1849 (Palmer 1963:132) and an early survey plan (R.P. 372) of 1859 (McFadgen 1963:124). In Kemp's census of 1850 (Great Britain Parliamentary Papers 1851/1420:239) Parangarehu, along with two other small settlements ("Mukamuka" and "Orongorongo"), are described as "small fishing villages" belonging to people usually resident at pa on the shores of Wellington Harbour. The best fishing grounds were outside the harbour limits (Best 1918:85). Kemp also noted that the land around Parangarehu was let as "cattle and sheep runs to Europeans". In 1853 just north of Parangarehu C.R. Carter noted a dry stone wall about 300 feet long, 3-ft. 6-in. high, and 2 feet thick, enclosing a plot of cultivated ground. A short distance south of the wall he reports about a dozen huts, inside which were utensils, some fishing gear, and some provisions. Nobody was about, and Carter decided that it was, in all probability, a fishing village.

Inventory of recorded sites

The following sites are recorded in the New Zealand Archaeological Association's Site Recording Scheme. The records contain information on archaeological sites that was

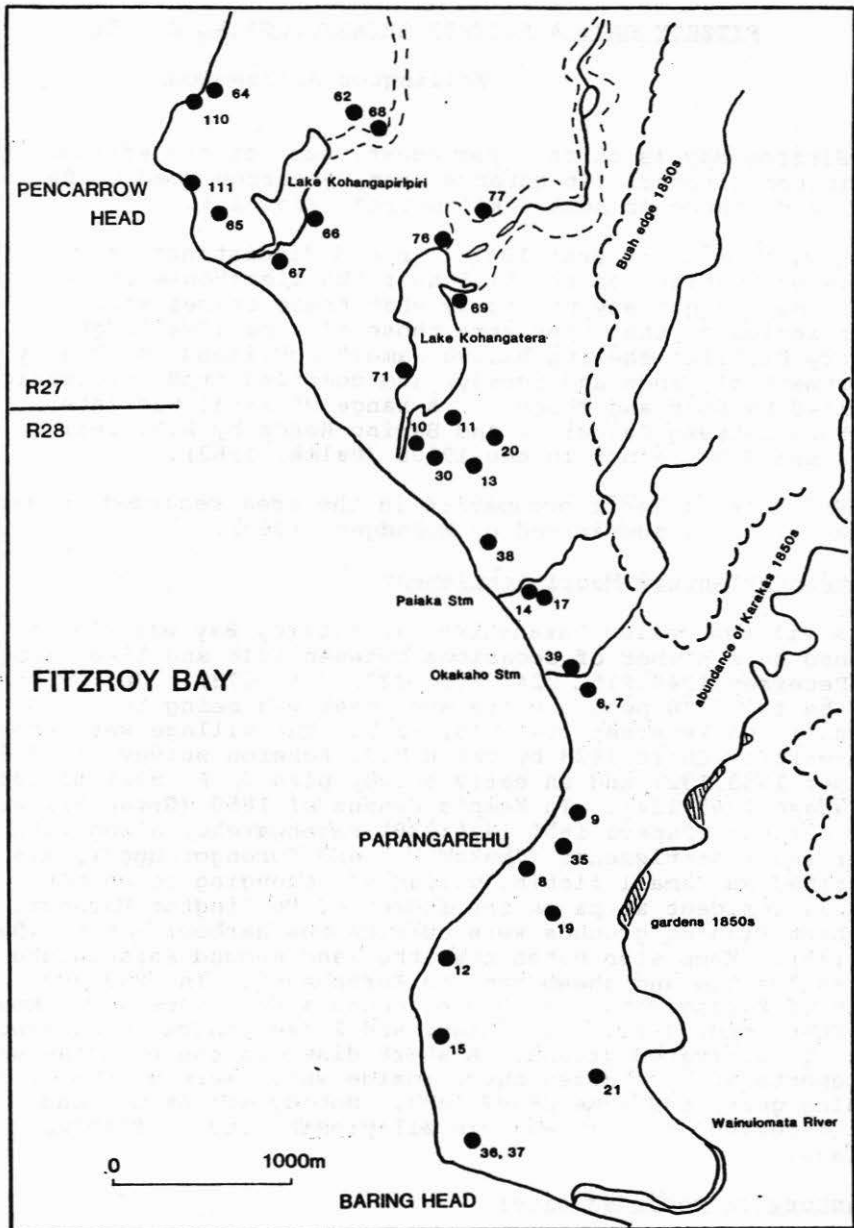


FIGURE 1. Map of Fitzroy Bay showing location of recorded archaeological sites. Mid 19th century information from early survey plans after McFadgen (1963).

originally collected by Fell in the 1930s and Palmer (1963) in the 1950s, as well as information collected by Wellington Archaeological Society members during fieldwork in the early 1960s and subsequently.

For this report, the location of each site visited during the 1987 fieldwork has been plotted onto NZMS 270 sheets and the placement checked for accuracy using aerial photographs. Sites not visited were re-located (with some exceptions, see section on karaka trees below), on the aerial photographs and plotted on NZMS 270 sheets.

The sites are discussed in order moving southeast from Pencarrow Head to Baring Head, and doing a clockwise circuit of Lakes Kohangapiripiri and Kohangatera along the way (Figure). Each site description is headed by the metric site number, metric grid reference, NZMS1 site number (in brackets), and the site type.

Vicinity of Pencarrow Head:

R27/110 648817 (N164/103) Midden

This midden is listed as Midden 4 in Palmer (1956). Palmer (1956:353) notes that it was exposed and subsequently covered over during road-making. Little is known about the site, nothing can be seen of it today, and it is not known if anything now remains of it.

R27/111 647812 (N164/104) Midden

This midden is listed as Midden 5 in Palmer (1956:353) and is described as a 4-inch layer of shell, ovenstones, and bones overlain by 15 inches of clay and rubble. Human bones, including parts of a skull, were found in the midden layer. The midden is assumed to have been destroyed when the sewer pipeline to Pencarrow Head was built.

R27/ 64 649817 (N164/ 33) Pa

A knoll, roughly triangular in shape, with a cliff on one side, and a terrace on each of the other two sides. Recorded in 1962 as a pa but since damaged by the construction of a farm track that cut a section through the two terraces. There is no sign of any occupation and the terraces appear to be natural. Now thought unlikely to be a site.

R27/ 65 649810 (N164/ 34) Pa

A knoll with scarps and flat areas which suggest artificial terracing. A doubtful site.

## Lake Kohangapiripiri:

R27/ 67 652807 (N164/ 36) Ovens/Midden

An extensive oven area at the outlet of Lake Kohangapiripiri. Palmer (1963:128-9) records quantities of burnt and fractured stones, charcoal, and some traces of shell and fish remains. Signs of industrial activity include unfinished adzes, fragments of adzes, cores of argillite, quartzite, flint and obsidian. Little is now visible on the ground surface except for some oven stones. How much of the site remains intact is a matter for conjecture since it has been subject to deflation, stock trampling and fossicking for over 100 years.

R27/ 62 657816 (N164/ 11) Dendroglyphs

At the head of Lake Kohangapiripiri are dendroglyphs described by Keyes (1968). Tree 1 survives, and at least one glyph (Figure 2 in Keyes 1968) is still clearly seen, but the tree is in a poor condition. No information is available on the other trees. The glyphs are likely to be less than about 200 years old, this being the likely maximum age for the trees (Keyes 1968:109).

R27/ 68 658815 (N164/ 37) Terraces

Three, possibly artificial, terraces on spur above the swamp at the head of Lake Kohangapiripiri. As with many terrace sites in the Wellington area, it is difficult to differentiate natural from man-made terraces without excavation.

R27/ 66 654810 (N164/ 35) Terraces

Some nine terraces on the end of a spur above Lake Kohangapiripiri. Recorded in 1962. No recent information.

## Lake Kohangatera:

R27/ 71 659801 (N164/ 41) Terraces

Five terraces on the end of a spur above eastern margin of Lake Kohangatera. Recorded in 1963. No recent information.

R27/ 76 662809 (N164/ 46) Stone Structure

Stone alignments interpreted by Keyes (1970) as a tuahu (a religious structure). Site is now in a very poor condition.

R27/ 77 664810 (N164/ 47) Terraces

Terraces on a hill slope. Most likely natural.

R27/ 69 662805 (N164/ 38) Pits/Terraces

A small number of pits on the spit of land adjacent to an isolated stack on the shores of Lake Kohangatera. Possible terraces on the hillside above the pits. Site is still in good condition, in grass.

R28/ 11 662799 (N164/ 55) Terraces

Four terraces on ridge at south-east corner of Lake Kohangatera. Fence through site but otherwise is still in good condition.

R28/ 10 660797 (N164/ 39) Pits/Ovens

Numbers of indistinct and shallow pits on grassy flat between Lake Kohangatera and the beach. Burnt oven stones in eroded areas. Palmer (1963:129) noted "several shallow depressions which look like traces of pre-European structures". Stock yard on site but otherwise still in good condition.

R28/ 30 661797 (N164/121) Ovens/Workshop

This site resembles R27/67 at Lake Kohangapiripiri (Palmer 1963:129). Palmer records midden, oven stones, and a stone working area. The midden contained paua, whelk, limpet and cat's eye. Worked stone included flakes, spawls, scrapers, saws, and drill points in chert and baked argillite. Oven stones are still visible on the surface, but little now remains of the midden and stone working area.

R28/ 13 663796 (N164/ 58) Terraces

Two terraces on spur above a swampy area south-east of Lake Kohangatera. Recorded in 1963. No recent information.

R28/ 20 664798 (N164/ 71) Terraces

Three or four terraces on spur above swampy area at south-east end of Lake Kohangatera. Recorded in 1963. No recent information.

R28/ 38 664792 Midden/Ovens

Midden and oven area recorded in 1956 by Palmer (1963:130). Midden contained paua, mussel, limpet, and sea urchin remains, together with bird and rat bones. No recent information on condition of site.

## Paiaka Stream - Parangarehu:

R28/ 14 666789 (N164/ 59) Ovens

Small area of charcoal blackened sand and burnt broken stones on the southern bank of Paiaka Stream. Site is in very poor condition. Palmer (1963:131) reports that Fell found remains on both banks of the Paiaka stream, but little information is available about remains on the northern bank and nothing has been seen there in recent years.

R28/ 17 667789 (N164/ 68) Terraces

Two terraces, and possibly others, on hillside above Paiaka Stream. Recorded in 1963. No recent information.

R28/ 39 669785 Midden/Ovens

On the northern bank of Okakaho Stream. Palmer (1963:131) found surface oven stones, charcoal, beach stone spawls, adze rough outs, and broken and scattered paua and winkle. Fell had earlier recorded the same midden and reported that it contained several species of shellfish and much bone, including fish, bird, dog, rat, and human. He had also found stone flakes and a bone needle. No more recent information is available.

R28/ 6 669783 (N164/ 28) Stone Rows

Two, and possibly three, low stone rows running roughly at right angles to the coast across the coastal platform. Still clearly visible.

R28/ 7 669784 (N164/ 29) Midden

Two small deposits of midden near the stone rows of site R28/6. One midden still visible.

R28/ 9 669777 (N164/ 31) Stone Wall/Midden/Pits

A stone wall, presumably built in the course of clearing the ground of stones. Noted by Carter in 1853 (see above) and often assumed to have been associated with wheat growing (Palmer 1963:132). Palmer (1963:131-2) argues that the wall ran from in the vicinity of Okakaho Stream south along the back of the coastal platform. Recent inspection indicates that this feature is probably an old shoreline. Only at the southern end have stones been placed to form a dry stone wall with vertical sides. The wall is in poor condition with only a few metres remaining reasonably intact. Adjacent to the wall are four pits, and some midden has been seen behind the wall in the past.

R28/ 35 668775 Midden

Scattered midden, including paua, limpets, and some fish and bird bone, visible in an eroding section next to the road. Not previously recorded.

R28/ 8 666774 (N164/ 30) Pits

Five or six pits. Palmer (1963:132) reports midden nearby but no recent information available on this. The pits (and the midden at R28/35) are possibly the remnants of the fishing village of Parangarehu. Pits are still clearly visible.

Parangarehu - Baring Head:

R28/ 19 667771 (N164/ 70) Pits/Terraces

Four or five terraces, and pits, on high ground behind the coastal platform and overlooking the Wainuiomata River valley. Recorded in 1964. No recent information.

R28/ 12 661769 (N164/ 57) Oven(s)

A area of scattered broken oven stones recorded in 1957 by Palmer (1963:133). No recent information.

R28/ 15 661764 (N164/ 61) Rock Shelter

A rock shelter with an area of oven stones at the entrance and traces of paua and burnt stones inside (Palmer 1963:133). No recent information.

R28/ 36 663759 Burial

Burial accidentally uncovered many years ago during work at the Baring Head lighthouse (Palmer 1963:134). No recent information.

R28/ 37 663759 Midden in cave

Cave at Baring Head containing patches of midden and cooking debris. Reputed to be the source of some of the material in the Bollons Collection in the National Museum (Palmer 1963:133). No recent information.

R28/ 21 670762 (N164/ 72) Terraces

Possible artificial terraces. Recorded in 1964. No recent information.

#### Karaka trees

The sites recorded as karaka trees are dealt with



separately because they represent more indirect evidence of occupation than the sites discussed above. A study comparing the distribution of archaeological sites and karaka trees on the Wairarapa coast found concentrations of karaka trees on or about pa sites, and high correlations between the distribution of karaka trees and pits and gardens (Mitcalfe 1969:185).

Mitcalfe's correlation is unsatisfactory. He published no data and described so briefly how he arrived at his correlation that it is difficult to judge how important the relationship is.

In Fitzroy Bay karaka trees are found scattered around the margins of the two lagoons, and along the coastal platform. However, only around Lake Kohangatera has a detailed record been made of the distribution of karaka trees. The location, and metric grid references, of these sites have not been checked. All the listed karaka trees were recorded in 1963. They are:

Lake Kohangatera:

R27/ 72	659810	(N164/ 42)	Karaka Trees
R27/ 73	659810	(N164/ 43)	Karaka Trees
R27/ 74	660810	(N164/ 44)	Karaka Trees
R27/ 75	660810	(N164/ 45)	Karaka Trees
R27/ 78	664810	(N164/ 48)	Karaka Trees
R27/ 79	668809	(N164/ 49)	Karaka Trees
R27/ 80	669808	(N164/ 50)	Karaka Trees
R27/ 81	670808	(N164/ 51)	Karaka Trees
R27/ 82	670809	(N164/ 52)	Karaka Trees
R27/ 84	665805	(N164/ 54)	Karaka Trees

Near the mouth of the Paiaka Stream:

R28/ 18	667791	(N164/ 69)	Karaka Trees
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At the mouth of the Okakaho Stream:

R28/ 5	667784	(N164/ 27)	Karaka Trees
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Discussion

Nearly all the recorded sites are either on the coastal platform or around the two lakes. On the hills the subsoil is hard and would have been difficult to dig. Consequently, earthworks are uncommon and where they do occur they are often so indistinct that they are difficult to identify as artificial features.

The difficulty of distinguishing man-made from natural terraces has already been noted. A number of terrace sites in the area have been recorded only as possibly artificial. Excavation would be required to determine whether they are man-made and what their function was. Two possibilities are some form of habitation, or cultivation. The problem of identification exists with the two pa recorded near Pencarrow Head. A farm road cut through one of the pa (R27/64) has sectioned the terraces and, on the basis of the sections, the site is now considered to be natural.

There is some doubt about whether karaka trees are a useful indication of human activity. They would, however, have been valuable as a food supply whether or not they were deliberately planted.

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