



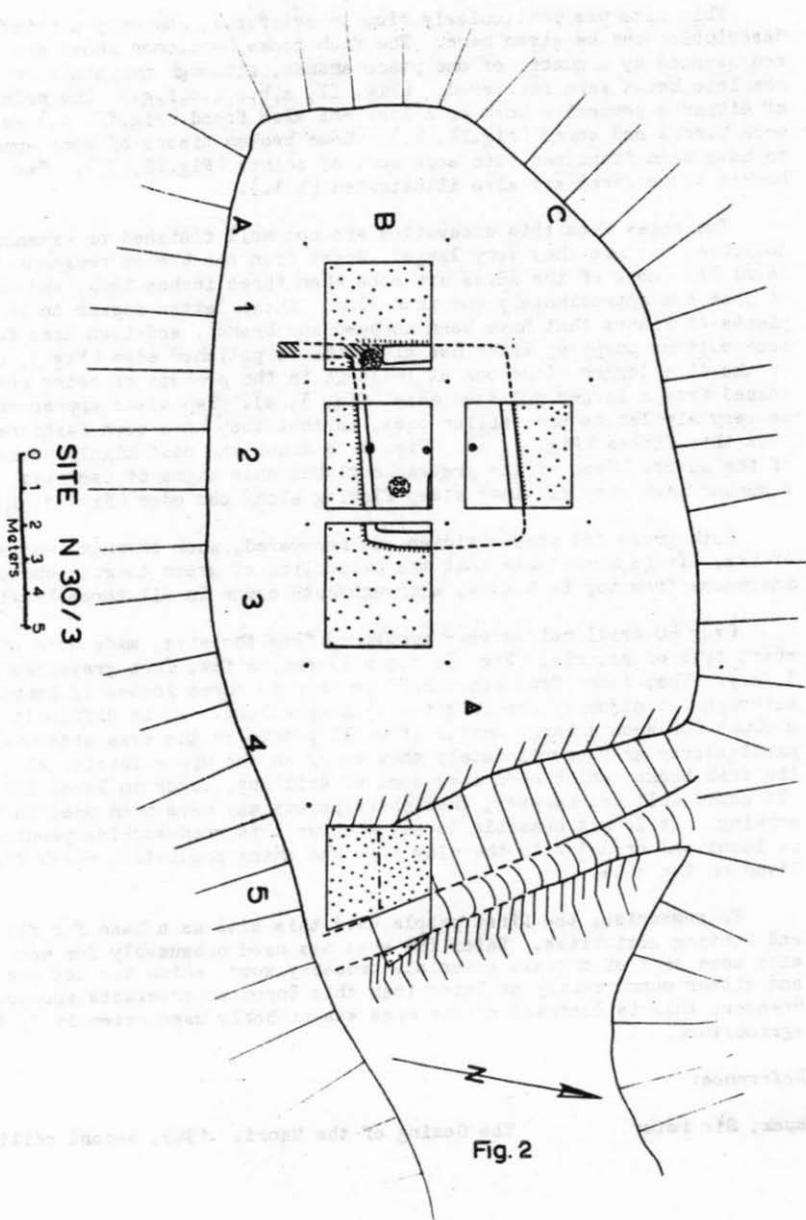
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NEW ZEALAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



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HARATAONGA - GT. BARRIER ISLAND

by Wynne Spring-Rice

It seems evident that Harataonga Bay was formerly heavily populated by the Maori. This is indicated by the extensive beach middens, the several pa sites, and the pits which extend, singly or in groups, along most of the ridges in the area (Fig. 1).

A survey in December 1961, (Spring-Rice 1962 : 92), showed that this was an area well worthy of investigation. Accordingly, a party of thirty-two from the Auckland University Archaeological Society spent five days during the 1962 Easter holiday working there under the direction of Roger Green.

Three main areas were excavated. The first, N30/3, was a site on a low headland at the eastern end of the bay, cut off by a single ditch, and only one pit evident, although it is possible there were others,

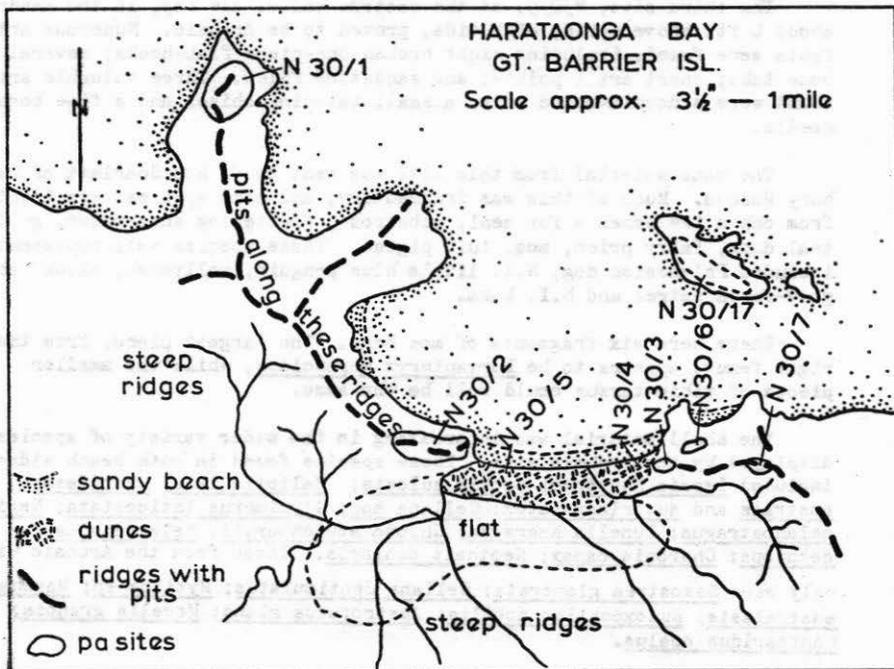


Fig.1

covered by a mantle of wind-blown sand. The pit had an unusual drainage system (Fig. 2) with a sump in one corner, and a small underground tunnel leading off from one side to carry water away. The whare appears to have been built in part of punga trunks, and the burnt remains of these were found beneath a pile of debris comprising a major infilling of thick yellow clay, on top of which were two hangi, and following this, a trash infilling of black midden material with shell, interspersed with yellow clay bands. Pits with a similar drainage pattern have been excavated on Gt. Mercury Is., N40/11, (Golson 1955 : 349), and at Shoal Bay by Mr Golson.

The second site, N30/4 was excavated in a recently wind-eroded dune terrace adjoining the beach, below the first site. This seems to have featured primarily as a cooking area. Remains of hangis were found behind a line of post-holes, which suggests a screen for shelter against the sea winds.

This site revealed two layers. The first layer between 20cms. and 35 cms. thick, contained seven hangi, from two of which charcoal samples were taken. The second layer was very thin and rested on a sterile sugar sand base. It contained mainly scattered fish bone.

All material from this site was sieved - most through $\frac{1}{4}$ " sieves, and a small quantity through an $\frac{1}{8}$ " sieve.

The third site, N30/5, at the western end of the bay, in the sandhill about 4 ft. above spring high tide, proved to be Archaic. Numerous artefacts were found, including eight broken one-piece fish-hooks; several moa bone tabs; chert drill points; and sandstone files. Three valuable artefacts found were a double-ended lure, a small tattooing chisel and a fine bone needle.

The bone material from this site was sent to Mr Ron Scarlett of Canterbury Museum. Much of this was fragmentary, and some species were identified from only a few bones - fur seal, albatross, fluttering shearwater, gull, teal duck, fairy prion, moa, tui, pigeon. Those species well-represented included Polynesian dog, N.I. little blue penguin, mollymawk, black? shag, grey-faced petrel and N.I. kaka.

There were six fragments of moa bone. The largest piece, from the right femur, appears to be Euryapteryx geranoides, while the smaller pieces of tibia-tarsus could well be the same.

The shell material was interesting in the wider variety of species displayed by the Archaic site. Those species found in both beach middens included Lepsia haustrum; Cookia sulcata; Haliotis iris; Amphidesma australe and subtriangulatum; Cellana spp; Glycimerus laticostata; Nerita melanostragus; Lunella smaragda; Chione stutchburyi; Melagraphica aethiops; Charonia capax; Neothais scalaris. Those from the Archaic site only were Saxostrea glomerata; Cellana denticulatus; Nytilus sp; Mayena australasia; Eudoxochilon nobilis; Austrofusus glans; Modellia granosa; Cantharidus opalus.

Two types of obsidian were found. The obsidian from Mayor Is. was predominant in the Archaic site, while that from N30/4 was predominantly of the clear type characteristic of obsidian from Gt. Barrier Is.

Old mining records and local information had indicated that obsidian was to be found on 1300ft. Te Ahumata. A party of five covered the top of the extensive plateau and found boulders of the clear grey obsidian of an excellent flaking quality on an extensive flat at the southern end.

The party also investigated the obsidian found in great quantities in the Awana Stream, but this proved to be useless for flaking purposes, being crumbly and full of spherulites.

When the complete bone and shell identifications and analyses are completed, it is intended to publish a full report of this excavation in the Auckland University Archaeological Society's Monograph series.

Finally, thanks are due to Mr and Mrs Harry Overton, formerly of Harataonga, for their wonderful hospitality, and to the Navy, for transport in their motor launch Ngapona. Without them our investigations would have been impossible.

References:

- (1) Spring-Rice W. 1962. "Gt. Barrier Is." N.Z. Arch. Assn. Newsletter. Vol. 5, No. 1, pp.92-95.
- (2) Gelson J. 1955. "N.Z. Arch. Assn." Journal of the Polynesian Society. Vol. 64, pp.349-351.

Fig. 1. Map of Harataonga Bay - showing pa sites and middens, with file numbers.

Fig. 2. Pit and trench on headland.

CLASSIC AND EARLY EUROPEAN MAORI SITES ON THE HAURAKI PLAINS

By R.C. and Kaye Green

One difficulty in New Zealand archaeology is that the published record for materials recovered from prehistoric sites in the North Island is scant and difficult to assemble. This is especially true for sites of the Classic Phase. While our museums are filled with such items, seldom do they comprise valid assemblages such as we have for Oruarangi, Paterangi, Kopuarahi, and Kiri Island. Even though these particular collections lack a precise stratigraphic context,