



NEW ZEALAND  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
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**NEW ZEALAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER**



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## HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY IN THE INLAND PATEA:

### AN INTRODUCTION

R. A. L. Batley

The first European to reach the Inland Patea (Upper Rangitikei) was Rev. Richard Taylor in 1845. At the end of 1867 European settlement commenced in the vicinity of Moawhango. Until the development of the Main Trunk Railway which reached Mangaonoho from the south in 1893 and Taihape in 1904, Moawhango was the principal settlement in the Upper Rangitikei, with post office and store (established 1882), accommodation house, bakery, blacksmith, bootmaker, police station and other amenities.

European flocks of sheep were first brought on to the so-called "natural clearing" of the Inland Patea in 1868, although these were preceded by introductions of all species of farm stock (excluding goats) by the local Maori inhabitants. The first sheep were driven from Hawkes Bay by way of the Inland Patea track between the Kaimanawa and Ruahine Ranges, a distance of 90 miles from Napier.

By 1880, the Inland Patea road had been extended from Napier to Muripapango, a distance of 39 miles from Moawhango. During the next seven years it was extended across the notorious Gentle Annie hill to Moawhango and later to Tokaanu on the southern shores of Lake Taupo (65 miles) to the north, and Pipiriki on the Wanganui River (62 miles) to the west. At this time, Moawhango was the business centre of the Upper Rangitikei as well as a key point in coaching services and tourist traffic to the upper Wanganui River and the volcanic region.

With the introduction of stock and European crops to the Inland Patea, the Maori abandoned their pa sites which had been occupied at the time of visits by Rev. Richard Taylor (1845) and Rev. William Colenso (1847) and moved into the open country to the north of the Rangitikei forest. Settlement was initiated at Moawhango in 1868 when the present village came into existence. Stimulated by the presence of European settlers, rapid cultural change took place which resulted in modification to existing, as well as the adoption of new methods in agricultural, pastoral, social and economic pursuits.

A detailed historical and archaeological survey in the vicinity of Moawhango has resulted in the location of a series of archaeological field monuments related to this period. These include sites in the following categories:

- (1) Agricultural and Pastoral (Historical cultivations, storage pits, potato clamps or pits, enclosures, ditch-and-bank fences, post-and-rail fences, stab fences).
- (2) Waterworks and Industrial (Water-races, sheep-dips, wool-washing works, mill-race, brick-kilns, sawpits, etc.).
- (3) Settlement and Associated Sites (Deserted villages, hut sites - European type - raised storehouse sites, tree alignments, fruit groves, burial grounds).
- (4) Communications and Miscellaneous Sites (Coach roads, bullock tracks, pack tracks, engineers' follies, borrow pits, etc.).

At the conference, a full description of these field monuments and their function was given to assist other workers in site identification. Some comment was also made on other field monuments in the Inland Patea, as well as the "pa" concept in Maori burials. The dating of historical artifacts (clay pipes, early bottles, etc.) was also mentioned.