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NEW ZEALAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



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KAPITI ISLAND SITE SURVEY: PART I

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Abstract

In January 1972 members of the Wellington Archaeological Society recorded 17 occupation sites on the northern half of Kapiti Island. The sites, which mainly belong to the proto-historic period (1825-40) are cultivation grounds, levelled areas associated with rectangular and round depressions, midden, pa, remains of a whaling settlement and tryptots. A physical description of the island, a brief account of settlement based on historical sources and a description of the sites located follows.

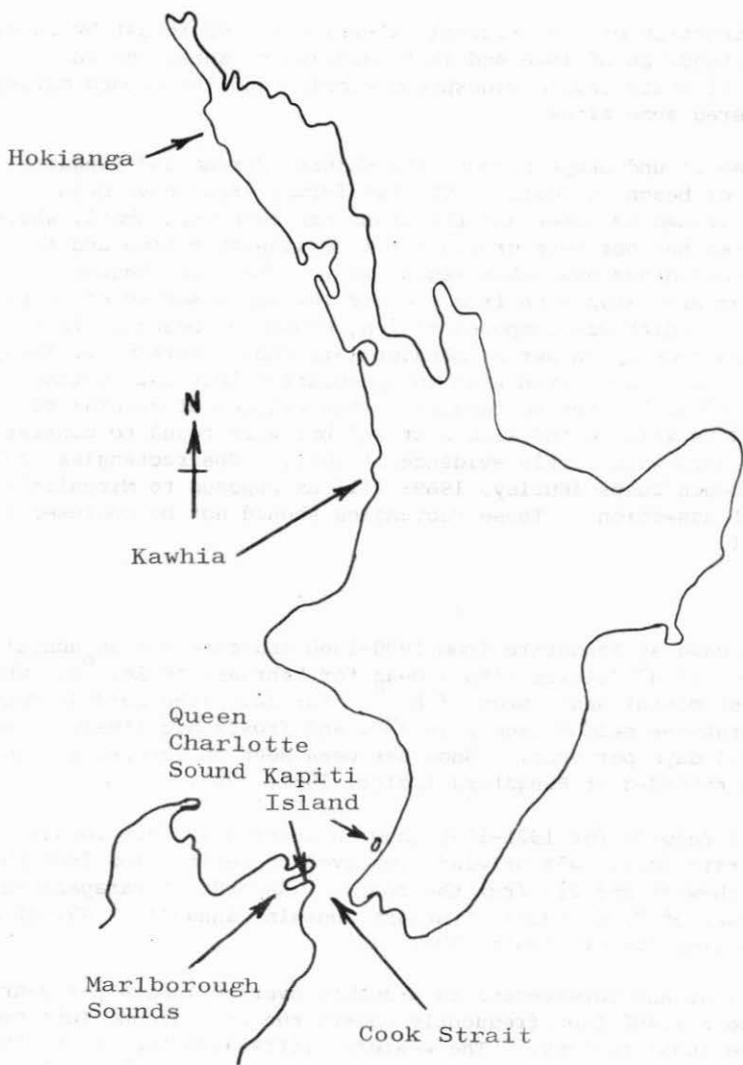
THE ISLAND

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Kapiti Island lies off the west coast of the lower North Island of New Zealand and is separated from the mainland by Otaheke Strait (or Raroterangi Channel) which is about $3\frac{1}{4}$ miles wide. The island is roughly six miles in length by a mile wide. The total area is approximately 5,000 acres, of which only about 200 acres is reasonably flat. The highest peak, Tuteremoana (1,709 feet) is situated about halfway down the western side of the island on the watershed dividing the western from the eastern side of the island. The western side of the island is composed of steep cliffs up to 1,000 feet in height. The spurs on the eastern side of the watershed initially descend gradually but they then become more steep with some terminating in bluffs. Streams tend to rise in basins on the eastern side of the island and flow through gorges to the sea. Flat areas on the island are located around Okupe Lagoon - Waiorua Stream and at Rangatira and the Wharekohu Stream.

GEOLOGY

Ferrar (1928: 312) describes the island as a fault block that has been uplifted and tilted to the east within recent times. The island consists mainly of greywacke rock. The submarine topography of Cook Strait suggests that a ridge may have once extended from Kapiti Island to the eastern Marlborough Sounds (Fleming, 1948: 462-4) and Cockayne (1907: 2) suggests that the presence of certain South Island plants on Kapiti Island may mean that the island was once connected to the South Island.



MAP 1
SCALE: 1:5,500,000

Two fault lines are located offshore of the eastern side of the island and run parallel with it. Minor earth tremors occur frequently. Depths in Otaheke Strait do not exceed 45 fathoms.

The destruction of the original extensive native forest by burning, the major earthquakes of 1848 and 1855, grazing by sheep and the introduction of goats caused widespread erosion and the eroded material may have covered some sites.

The areas around Okupe Lagoon, the Waiorua Stream and Rangatira are composed of beach boulders. The two former areas have been consistently grazed by sheep and the grass has been kept short, whereas the latter area has not been grazed for a considerable time and is covered in dense grass and other vegetation. The Okupe Lagoon - Waiorua Stream area when seen from the air reveals a series of rectangles the outsides of which are composed of long mounds of beach boulders. The rectangles show up on aerial mosaics (Air Photo Library ... 1943, 1947 and 1972) and have given rise to speculation that cultivation grounds existed within the rectangles. The centres of several of these rectangles were tested with a trowel but were found to consist of beach boulders with little evidence of soil. The rectangles could be stranded beach cusps (Hurley, 1969: 211) as opposed to Mitcalfe's (1970: 58-62) assertion. These rectangles should not be confused with Site N156/6/1.

CLIMATE

Records made at Rangatira from 1909-1960 indicate a mean annual temperature of 12.8° Celsius with a mean for February of 16.7° C. (which is the warmest month) and a mean of 8.9° C. for July (the coldest month). Summer temperatures seldom exceed 26.7° C. and frosts are likely on an average of 0.4 days per year. Snow has been seen on Tuteremoana but has not been recorded at Rangatira (Esler, 1967, 359).

Rainfall records for 1921-1950 show an average of 39.6 inches per year on 147 rain days; 45% of winds observed on Kapiti blow from the north or north-west and 21% from the south. Records at Paraparaumu give an average of 2,061 hours of bright sunshine annually - 49% of all possible sunshine (Esler, 1967: 359).

Rainfall around Tuteremoana is probably over 60 inches per year. Low cloud above 1,400 feet frequently covers the area around Tuteremoana modifying the local ecology. The western cliffs give the lee of the island some protection but south of Tuteremoana the prevailing winds sweep over low saddles and are funnelled down stream gorges. Near the eastern mouths of these gorges sudden gusts occur in strong west or north-westerly winds (Esler, 1967: 359).

The lower basin of the Taepiro Valley is probably protected from such strong winds. At the time of the investigation there was a strong north-westerly wind blowing sufficient to raise 10-foot waves but only on the cliff edge was there a strong updraft. Down in the Taepiro basin it was very hot and the air was still. European crops noted by Dieffenbach (1843: Vol. 1, 108) would not grow under very exposed conditions, but the crops might have been protected by some remaining forest.

FLORA

The island was originally covered by native forest (Dieffenbach, 1843: Vol. 1, 108). He notes especially, rata, kahikatea and rimu. Some of the rata stumps are still standing.

The forest was partially cleared (on the hilltops) by burning in the 1825-40 period to provide areas for cultivation (Wakefield, 1839: 162). The Maori population required food as did visiting pakeha vessels, traders and shore whalers. Much of the food required could be grown on the more suitable mainland but when hostilities took place there the cultivation grounds became insecure and reliance would be placed on Kapiti grown supplies.

The remaining forest was burnt off (Esler, 1967: 353, 366) for grazing purposes and grass took its place. A few remnants of the original forest remained in gullies and gorges. The grazing by sheep and goats (the latter probably introduced by shore whalers) and the introduction of the opossum in 1893 assisted erosion rather than forest regeneration. The opossum is widespread on the island while the few sheep are confined to the Waiorua Valley, but the wild goats were finally exterminated in 1928.

The island today is mainly covered in dense regenerating native forest. There are sizeable areas of kanuka, karaka, kohekohe and tawa although this growth is still retarded by opossum damage. Erosion seems to be under control and becomes less obvious as areas are covered by regenerating forest.

FAUNA

Originally the island probably supported extensive forest and marine bird life. It is difficult to compare the forest and marine bird life today with that of the past because many native birds were reintroduced when the island was declared a sanctuary.

There are no sandy beaches and the only type of shellfish found are those of the rocky shore.

Good fishing grounds abound, especially the reefs around the three offshore islands, Tokomapuna, Motungarara and Tahoramaurea. Hemi Matenga (New Zealand Times, 1907) stated that the sea around Kapiti Island was the best fishing ground in the Wellington area for warehou.

HUMAN OCCUPATION: A BRIEF HISTORY

An outline of human occupation with a discussion on some aspects of the 1820 raid (not published elsewhere) follows. Readers interested in details are referred to the bibliography at the end of this paper.

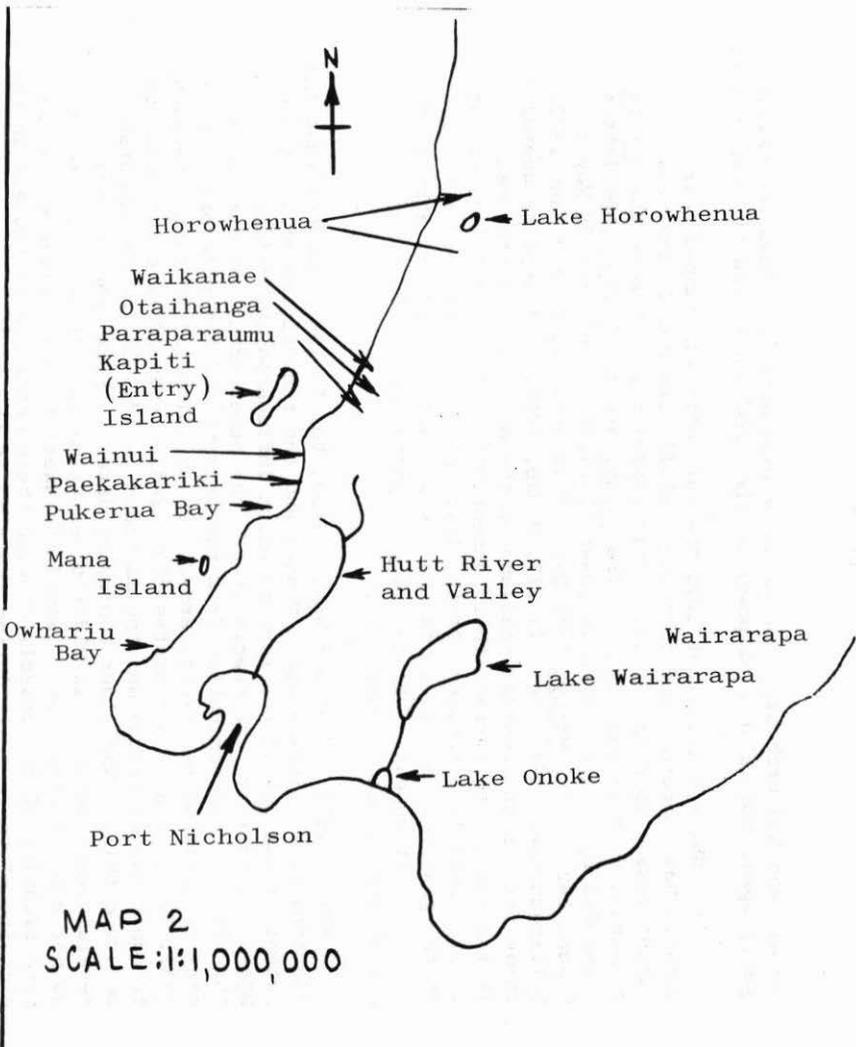
Archaic type adzes in the National Museum (National Museum Artifact Catalogue) suggest early Polynesian visits and it is likely that Kapiti Island was visited after the Polynesian settlement in New Zealand.

The island was named Entry Island by Captain Cook in 1770 (Cook, 1955: 249). but its full Maori name is "Te waeuae Kapiti o Tara raua ko Rangitane" or "The meeting place of the boundaries of Tara and Rangitane" (Carkeek, 1966: 2). This name was applied by the Rangitane to the coast opposite the island (Carkeek, 1966: 2). It is important to note that the name Kapiti perhaps applied more to the mainland than the island around 1820 and this may make subsequent events clearer.

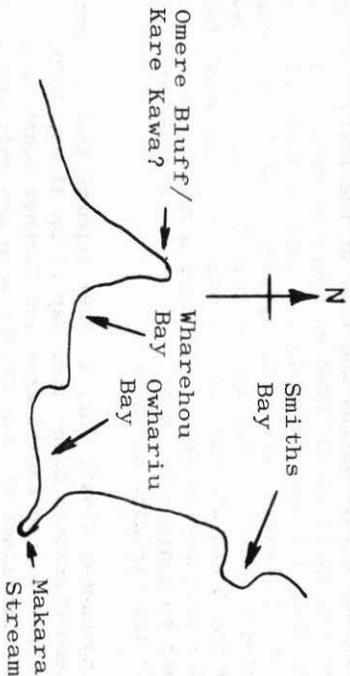
The Rangitane once occupied the land opposite the island but the area south of Wainui (see Map 2) including Paekakariki was occupied by Ngati Ira and Ngai Tara. Later the Muaupoko occupied the area south from Horowhenua to Pukerua Bay (Carkeek, 1966: 2). This was the situation in 1820.

A northern raid took place during the period 1819-20. The Hokianga Maori people assisted by the Roroa Hapu of the Ngati Whatua formed the raiding party. The principal chiefs of this party were Patuone and Tuwhare. The party left Hokianga about November 1819. They were joined in the Kawhia area by a party of Ngati Toa under the principal chiefs Te Rauparaha and Rangihaeata. The combined party moved south into the Cook Strait area. After spending sometime in the area the party returned to their people; the Hokianga party arriving home about October 1820 (Marsden, 1932: 323).

The raiders left a bloody wake in the Cook Strait area. An informant told John White (Smith, 1910 (b): 107) that there seemed to be few fortified pas in the area. He speaks later of pas in the Hutt Valley and Wairarapa. It seems unlikely that the local people were armed with the musket. White's informant speaks of a peaceful



MAP 2
SCALE: 1:1,000,000



MAP 3
SCALE: 1:25,000

people who had probably been so for a long period. Thus the raiding party upset the balance of power on the northern shores of Cook Strait.

John White's informant says the war party was camped near Owhariu Bay (Makara), and from Omere Bluff (see map 3) they saw a pakeha vessel in Cook Strait. This vessel may have been the Mirnyi commanded by Bellingshausen. The Mirnyi and the Vostok (the latter commanded by Lazarev) were in Queen Charlotte Sound from 28 May to 8 June 1820. The Mirnyi left Queen Charlotte Sound on 9 June 1820. Bellingshausen (1945, Vol. 1: 217, McNab, 1909: 255) reports seeing a large fire on the central headland of the Wellington south coast (which was lit to attract their attention). The vessel ignored the fire. White's informant (Smith, 1910 (b): 107) says they lit fires on the peaks of the hills near Kare Kawa (not located) to attract the vessel. It appears that the raiding party was still in the Cook Strait area in early June 1820.

Buick (1911: 57-8) and White (1890, Vol 6: 15-6) suggest that the sighting of Bellingshausen's vessel and the recognition of its trade potential was one of the factors which influenced the chiefs of Ngati Toa to leave the Kawhia area; the other principal ones being the threat of extermination from the Waikato and the possibility of an easy conquest of the Kapiti area. In an editorial footnote (Marsden, 1932: 323), J. R. Elder states flax trading vessels were beginning to frequent Kapiti Island and the mainland in 1819-20 and Te Rauparaha observed this. Was Elder confusing dates? Flax trading began several years later. If Elder's assertion is correct, his references do not support this view. Would the Ngati Toa be influenced by the mere sighting of one vessel, or were there other pakeha vessels in the vicinity of Cook Strait during the time of the raid? It is a possibility but there is no known evidence to support such a claim. The reasons stated below can explain a lack of evidence. Did the Ngati Toa chiefs hear a first-hand account of Bellingshausen's stay in Queen Charlotte Sound? This is possible for they could have met a party from the Sound who had crossed over from the South Island with the news for northern friends. It does however seem evident that when they decided to migrate the Ngati Toa were confident that pakeha vessels would be in the vicinity of Kapiti.

Bellingshausen (1945, Vol. 1: 208) reports that the potato was seen in Queen Charlotte Sound (see Map 1) on 31 May 1820. It is likely that the people in the Kapiti area and further south were also growing this crop. Crossings of Cook Strait were probably common in calm weather and the potato could have been carried across if it had not already reached the area from the north. The possibility of European contact (apart from Bellingshausen's two vessels) cannot be ruled out, although there is no direct evidence of such. Whalers, sealers, traders and Royal Navy spar vessels were certainly in New Zealand waters

before and after 1820, but commercial rivalry in Port Jackson (Sydney) would undoubtedly have led to secrecy about destination, ports of call, etc. (Cumpston, 1968).

The Ngati Toa and their allies had probably settled in the Kapiti area by 1825, occupying both the mainland and the island. W. B. Rhodes (O.L.C. 129) stated that there were not a great many residents on Kapiti in October 1839 and that it was used mainly as a place of refuge in time of war. The island could not support a large population as the food resources were limited. The population fluctuated as a result of the peace-hostility cycle; Carkeek (1966: 18) cites an example of a foraging party coming over from the island to the mainland for food.

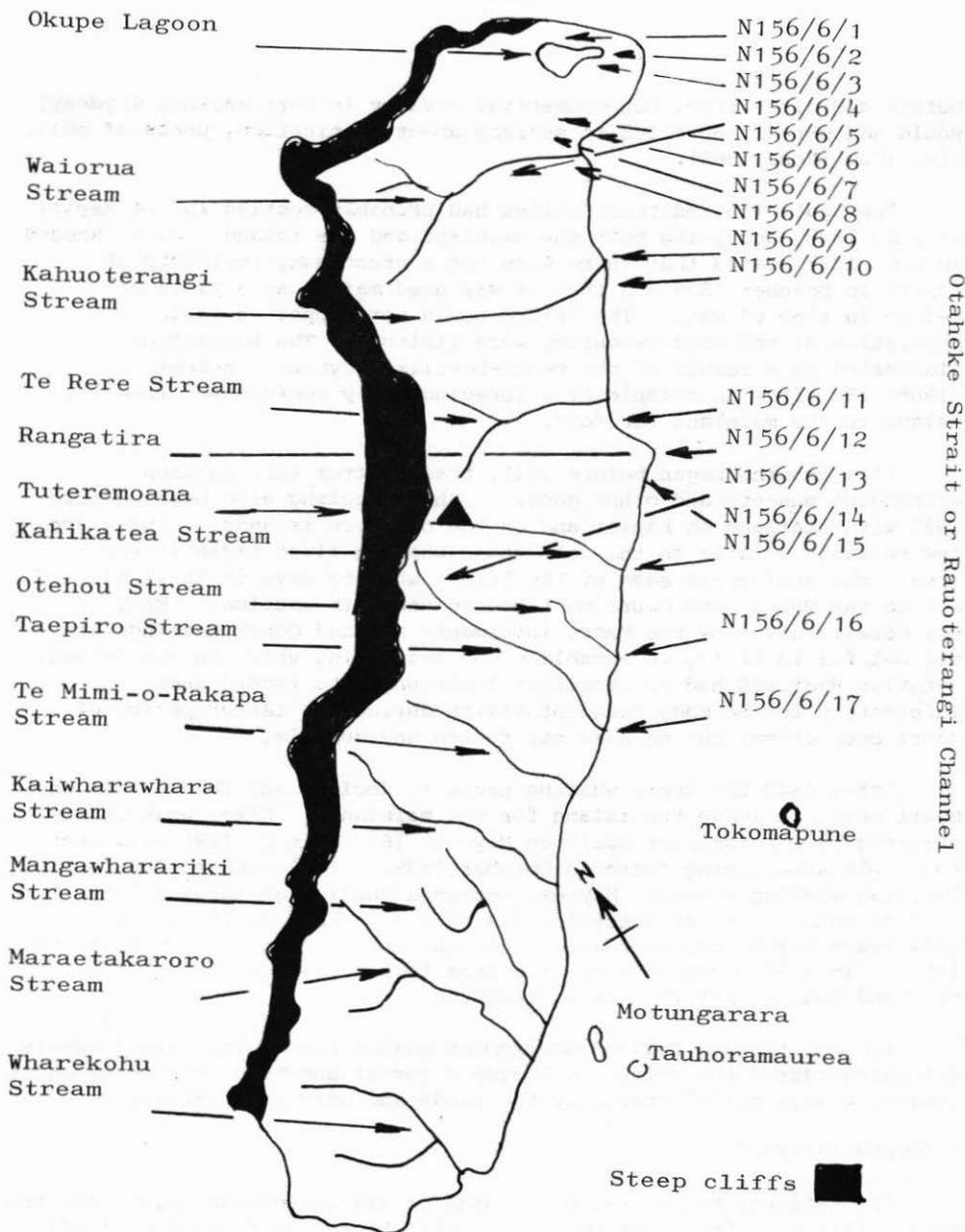
Flax trading began before 1830, traders from Port Jackson exchanging muskets and other goods. Shore whaling also began before 1830 with stations on Kapiti and on the offshore islands. There are few reliable details on the date shore whaling first began in the area; the statements some of the former whalers gave in their old age to the Maori Land Court must be treated with caution. Many of the details given by the Maori informants at Land Court hearings are not helpful in trying to establish who was living where on the island. Octavius Hadfield had an excellent opportunity to record such information for he made frequent visits during the latter period of Maori occupation, but he does not record any details.

After 1840 the shore whaling began to decline and the whalers and Maori began to leave the island for the mainland. Hiko, when cross-examined by Commissioner Spain on May 5th 1843 (O.L.C. 129) said that 60 people were living there in October 1839. In December 1839 an American whaling captain, Mayhew, obtained Maori signatures for the sale of some 617 acres (Encyclopedia of N.Z.: Vol. 2, 203), and in 1844 transferred this to Andrew Brown who was awarded a Crown Grant in 1851. In 1851 Governor Grey attempted to buy the island for five thousand pounds, but was not successful.

In 1897 the New Zealand Government passed the Kapiti Island Reserve Act which caused the island to become a forest and bird reserve which it remains today, administrated by the Lands and Survey Department.

RECORDED ARTIFACTS

The National Museum has nine adzes in its collection which come from Kapiti Island. Four have been classified by the Duff typology (Duff,



MAP 4 Kapiti Island showing principal physical features and sites
SCALE: 1:50,680

1956) (one 1A, two 2B and one 4A) but the other five are not classified. Six are made of black argillite and one of grey argillite; the remaining two are made of dark grey fine grain basalt. The 2B and 4A adzes were found in the area between the Waiorua Stream and Okupe Lagoon. The source of the other six is not known.

SITES LOCATED

The sites were recorded on N.Z. Mosaic Map Series 3, N156/6, Kapiti, 2nd ed., 1966, Scale 1:15,840. There is now a N.Z.M.S. 1, Sheet N156 and Part N157 map available for the island. The site record forms have been deposited with the New Zealand Archaeological Association and are allotted numbers arranged from north to south (see map 4 for site location).

N156/6/1. GRID REFERENCE 495774

A series of boulder walls situated between the present storm beach and boulder bank north of Okupe Lagoon. The walls are aligned roughly north-west-south-east and a directional traverse is approximately 800 feet in length. A series of boulder free U shaped areas are enclosed by the walls. Some of the walls are 4 to 5 feet in height. The boulders vary in size but some would require at least two or three men to move them. The site is well preserved. A number of walls are covered in vegetation which has a binding effect but which also makes them difficult to locate. The continued growth of vegetation will in future make the walls less easy to locate.

The site is situated in a slight hollow between the present storm beach and the boulder bank. The area receives plenty of sunlight and gets some protection from the prevailing winds. The U shaped areas receive more protection as they are sheltered by the walls.

The present storm beach is composed of smaller boulders than those which form the walls and those which form the boulder bank north of the lagoon.

At the extreme south-east end of the site and on the edge of the first U shaped area an exposure of charcoal and midden was noted. A test pit dug in the centre of the U revealed a black soil, the blackness probably being caused by charcoal. Two further test pits in centres of U shaped areas next in line in a north-west direction revealed dark brown soil similar to that found in sites N156/6/3 and N156/6/13.

No information has been located about this site but it appears to be a partially cleared cultivation area. The most effective clearance

has taken place at the south-east end of the site. Clearance and boulder walls become less apparent when a traverse is made in a north-west direction and they finally disappear. Did clearance stop because the ratio of boulders to soil made it no longer worth while to continue? Or was the requirement for cultivation no longer urgent? There is no evidence that soil was carried to the site. The nearest source would be site N156/6/3.

It is recorded that canoes crossing from Otaki landed and were beached in this vicinity (Kapiti Island ... 1876). A wide stone wall in the centre of the site suggests a ramp up which canoes could be hauled but the location is some distance above the present beach. In former times the storm beach may have been much closer to the lagoon and a ramp would be of use. Today even in rough weather it would not be necessary to pull a canoe up on the beach as far as the ramp.

In conclusion, the site appears to have been partially cleared for cultivation purposes. The area available for cultivation on the island is limited. The site may have been cleared during the 1825-40 period when there was a great demand for food. Carkeek (1966: 18) cites foraging expeditions to the mainland, and Dieffenbach (1843, Vol. 1: 108) speaks of hillsides and gullies being cultivated.

N156/6/2. GRID REFERENCE 495773

One half of a Maori canoe is situated on the beach at the north-east end of Okupe Lagoon. It is in a fairly good state of preservation. It is made of totara. Dimensions are length 16 feet, width at widest part 2 feet 10 inches and depth at this position 10 inches. The thickness of the hull bottom at the widest part is 3 inches. Rectangular holes for lashing top-strakes (Best, 1925) are located on both sides of the canoe. The outside of the hull is too weathered to reveal any adze marks but on the evidence of the stop-strake holes it appears that iron tools may have been used to shape the canoe.

Probably what is the other half of the canoe has been located. It is made of totara but is not in such a good state of preservation. The dimensions are: length 9 feet, width at widest part 2 feet 7½ inches and depth at this point 11 inches. The thickness of the hull bottom at the widest part is 2 inches. The original end of this part of the canoe has been broken off - it was probably 11 feet in length, making an overall length for the complete canoe of about 27 feet. This half of the canoe has rectangular holes for lashing top-strakes located on both sides. The canoe was cut in half in 1946 or 1947 and this half was brought to the mainland soon afterwards. The source of this information is confidential. This half of the canoe can be seen in Otaihanga, which is near Waikanae and which is just opposite the northern tip of Kapiti Island.

No references to the origin of the canoe have been located.

N156/6/3. GRID REFERENCE 493773

A flat area situated south-east of Okupe Lagoon, which is roughly 400 feet x 400 feet. Two banks and one ditch can be clearly seen running through this area. From a hill west of the lagoon faint lines in the turf can be seen running parallel with the bank/ditch system - these lines are probably the remains of plough furrows.

A series of test pits was dug at 100 foot intervals in a north-south direction through the site. The pits revealed a dark brown soil similar to that in sites N156/6/1 and N156/6/3. The soil was deeper in the centre of the site. All soil excavated from these test pits was free of pebbles. South of an old fence line on the south boundary of the site the soil is very black and mixed with small beach boulders and shell. A bank at the western end of the fence line is composed of similar material. The bank runs west-east, is 250 feet long, 1½ feet high and 11 feet wide. Two arms extend from the western and eastern ends of this bank in a northerly direction. Lengths are 50 feet and 70 feet respectively. The other dimensions are the same as for the main bank.

It seems probable that the whole site was once part of the lagoon (excluding the banks mentioned above) and this may account for the depth of good soil. The site rises gradually away from the lagoon in a south-east direction. The bed of the lagoon may have been raised by earthquake action causing partial drainage. Artificial drainage of the lagoon would involve considerable engineering skill and effort. No evidence of this was seen.

This site is shown as a native cultivation (Kapiti Island ... 1876), (Island of Kapiti ... 1916). It is probably the best area on Kapiti Island for cultivation. The climate is mild and potatoes are said to have been harvested there in September (New Zealand Times, 1899). The site has been cultivated within living memory (Mitscalf, 1970: 61).

N156/6/4. GRID REFERENCE 482770

A probable pa site situated on a clear prominent spur on the south side of the Waiorua Stream about 400-500 yards from the beach. Four post-holes and one pit on the eastern side of the spur aligned on a bearing of 035°T. were located. Some 40 feet west two further post-holes aligned on a bearing of 015°T. were also located. At 200 feet further west on the western side of the spur two other post-holes were found aligned on a bearing of 350°T. Cowan (1907: 3) suggests that this was the site of a pa of pre Te Rauparaha days.

The site is situated on grassland which is grazed by sheep. The slopes above the fence line are covered with regenerating forest. Because of the lack of time and the difficulty of traversing the hillside, no thorough survey of the area above the fence line was made.

N156/6/5. GRID REFERENCE 487768

This is the site of three graves. One grave surrounded by four posts with railings is that of a Maori chief, Te Rangihiroa (Kapiti Island ... 1876). The same source states that a half canoe was erected near the grave but was later removed and that the grave was subsequently fenced by Wi Parata. The half canoe mentioned should not be confused with that of N156/6/2, grid reference 495773. Carkeek (1966: 49) states that Te Rangihiroa was a Ngati Toa chief.

Near this grave are two pakeha graves - those of James Lacon Bennett and his wife, Lena May. The Bennetts died in 1924 and 1923 respectively. Bennett was ranger on Kapiti Island from 1911-24.

N156/6/6. GRID REFERENCE 487767

This site consists of midden in the sea bank just north of the mouth of the Waiorua Stream - charcoal and shell were noted. A greywacke awl was found in the spill at the base of the midden and has been deposited in the National Museum. Cowan (1907: 3) and Carkeek (1966: 166) state that there was Maori occupation in the vicinity. A rough sketch map in (Kapiti Island ... 1876) shows a pa called Tawhiriataka in the vicinity of this site. This name is not mentioned by Carkeek. Cowan (1907: 3) states that there was also a pakeha shore whaling station in the vicinity. It is obvious that there must have been considerable occupation on the north bank of the Waiorua Stream. Most of this is probably now buried or eroded.

Samuel Ashmore, master mariner, on 5 September 1831 purchased (O.L.C. 43) a plot of land 130 feet x 200 feet with beach as frontage in the Maori settlement of "Wyarrua". A native building was situated on this plot of land. The position of the site was fixed as latitude $40^{\circ} 49' 10''$ south, longitude $174^{\circ} 55' 25''$ east. The modern position is $40^{\circ} 50'$ south, longitude $174^{\circ} 56' 40''$ east.

Waiorua Bay (if it can really be called such) gives some shelter from the prevailing northerly winds but is exposed to southerly winds.

N156/6/7. GRID REFERENCE 486767

A trypot which appears to be in good condition is situated on the Webber's private property and near their baches. Cowan (1907: 3) saw one near the Waiorua landing "... with its stone furnace, &c., all complete".

N156/6/8. GRID REFERENCE 487766

A cairn of angular rocks on the left of the track from Waiorua to Rangatira just south of the mouth of the Waiorua Stream. The reason or purpose of this cairn is unknown and it is not known whether it was erected by Maori or pakeha.

N156/6/9. GRID REFERENCE 484757

On the north side of Te Kahuoterangi Stream and on a raised beach terrace the following structures were located. Seven stone fireplaces (three in association with excavated flat areas), remains of four stone buildings, one round pit and extensive midden in the north bank of the stream. Some of the stone structures had a clay plaster still adhering to them. A piece of hoop iron and a whale vertebrae were found on the beach just south of the stream mouth. Cowan (1907: 3) and Carkeek (1966: 161) state that there was once Maori occupation in the vicinity. Cowan (1907, map) shows a whaling station at this site. Simcox (1952: 136) who visited the area in 1910 records counting 20 fireplaces well preserved scattered over half an acre. Simcox also records that there was part of a whale skeleton on the flat and on a steep spur to the south were some depressions. Carkeek (1966: 161) mentions a village called Kaititi near Te Kahuoterangi which may have some connection with Simcox's depressions.

It is likely that some of the structures seen by Simcox in 1910 have since been covered with vegetation. Only total clearance of the area would reveal them and perhaps other occupation evidence too.

N156/6/10. GRID REFERENCE 483757

Just south of site N156/6/9 is a rocky promontory which is pierced by a cave through which it is possible to walk. Cowan (1907: 3) states that it was once a Ngati Toa burial cave. Simcox (1952: 136-7) infers that Cowan's statement is not correct. Simcox calls the promontory "Yankee Lookout". It was possibly used as a lookout point for returning whaleboats with the catch in tow which could be seen returning from the north as they rounded the north-east tip of the island. Simcox (1952: 136-7) suggests that the promontory takes its name from an American

who fell off the promontory and was killed.

A very practical suggestion about the use of the cave came from Mrs L. Rodda. She suggested that the cave might have been used by the whalers to hang their meat and fish to keep it cool and fresh. It was said to have been suspended from iron hooks in the roof but no trace of these can now be seen. At the time of the investigation there was a cool breeze flowing through the cave and making it a natural cooler.

N156/6/11. GRID REFERENCE 478746

Two trypots are located at the north end of Rangatira Flat. One is well preserved but the other is badly corroded and damaged. Cowan (1907: 3) and Carkeek (1966: 164) state that a pakeha whaling station was located at Rangatira.

N156/12. GRID REFERENCE 478743

Four pits (21 feet x 10 feet x 1 foot deep, 49 feet x 14 feet x 1½ feet deep, 20 feet x 14 feet and 12 feet x 9 feet) aligned roughly north-south were located near the most eastern tip of Rangatira Flat. In a north-west direction and about 400 feet away is a walled pit 23 feet x 14 feet. The floor of the pit gradually slopes up to ground level at the northern end and there is no wall. Cowan (1907: 3) and Carkeek (1966: 164) state that there was a pakeha whaling station at Rangatira. A chart (Anchorage under Entry Island ... 1837) shows buildings on Rangatira Flat. A map (Map of Kapiti Island ... 1929) records the site of a "Ngatittoa (old pa)" and "Site of old whaling station" approximately in the same positions as the pits.

The flat is covered with dense tall grass and other vegetation which is waist high, making it impossible to see what is beneath. Perhaps the only way to locate a pit or other structure is either to fall into it or trip over it!

N156/6/13. GRID REFERENCE 456743

The Taepiro Stream cuts the island almost in half. Its upper basin extends to the very edge of the western cliffs. The stream rises in a grassy basin and flows to the sea through a traversable gorge. The basin could be almost described as a hanging valley. The basin is very suitable for cultivation. A test pit revealed a depth of at least 12 inches of dark brown soil similar to that in sites N156/6/1 and

N156/6/3. Dieffenbach (1843: Vol. 1, 108) states that potatoes, cabbages, turnips and Indian corn were growing in ravines and on tops of hills on the island. In October 1839 the potato was reported to be growing on the island (O.L.C. 129). The Taepiro basin is well sheltered from the prevailing winds and is a natural heat bowl. Crops would probably thrive well there. Wilkinson (1952: 25) states that cultivation took place in the Taepiro basin and that a track connected the cultivations with the pa on the south bank of the Taepiro Stream near its mouth (but see comments on site N156/6/17). It seems from what Wilkinson says that the track ran down the true right (south) bank of the stream. This is doubtful because the true left (northern bank) is less steep and that is where the present track is - if it can be located!

In January 1973 three pits, each 3 feet x 4 feet x 2 feet deep were located in the basin. The bottom of one pit was covered with burnt rock. These pits have yet to be investigated.

N156/6/14. GRID REFERENCE 477741

Between the boatshed and a small stream to the south and on a raised beach terrace a large hole 17 feet x 9 feet x 3 feet deep was found near the base of the hill. Shell and burnt rock were noted in the edge of the beach terrace extending from the boat shed to the south of the small stream.

GRID REFERENCE 475738

On the raised beach terrace are four rectangular depressions aligned roughly north-south. The dimensions are 17½ feet x 16½ feet, 11½ feet x 7 feet, 12 feet x 9 feet and 10 feet x 7 feet. Carkeek (1966: 165) suggests that this area was occupied by Maori people and that there was also a cultivation site nearby. The name for the site as given by Carkeek is Tokokawau.

N156/6/15. GRID REFERENCE 473736

A raised beach terrace extends north and south of the Kahikatea Stream. Midden was located just south of the stream mouth and on the southern end of the beach terrace. Two hundred and fifty feet south of the stream mouth the remains of a hut (probably pakeha) were located and also a hearth of fairly recent origin. Between this site and the midden a pit-like depression was noted. A whale vertebrae and a rib bone were found on the south bank of the stream.

The remains of a hut and campsite of pakeha origin were located to the north of the stream and some distance inland from the beach. Initials carved on trees suggested the site had been used as long ago as 1890.

Some karaka trees were noted growing near the stream mouth.

N156/6/16. GRID REFERENCE 467731

The beach terrace runs north and south of the Otehou Stream. Perhaps the most important and best preserved site on the island is located on the south side of the stream. The site consists of four stone walls, four flat areas created by excavation and built up on the east side with the aid of a low stone wall, 12 circular shallow depressions (some with raised rims) and one rectangular depression. These are all aligned north-south because of the narrowness of the terrace which is approximately 8 chains in length and 1 chain wide at the widest part. The size of the four flat areas (in a north-south direction) is 15 feet x 9 feet, 20 feet x 11 feet, 12 feet x 7 feet and 46 feet by 9½ feet respectively. The diameter of the circular depressions ranges from 6 feet to 11 feet and the size of the rectangular depression is 10 feet x 7 feet. There is no evidence of drainage of the depressions. The whole terrace is covered in thick leaf mould and there is no erosion taking place.

Some karakas were noted near the stream mouth. Some midden was noted in the edge of the terrace 120 feet south of the stream mouth.

Carkeek (1966: 163-4) states that there was a pa at Otehou. The site located seems to be more like an open settlement than a fortified pa. It is unfortunate that no other information has been located on this site as it was evidently an important settlement.

N156/6/17. GRID REFERENCE 463725

The site is located on a flat terrace on the north side of the mouth of the Taepiro Stream. At the base of the hill aligned in a north-south direction was located a flat area (excavated and built up on the east side with the aid of a low stone wall) 42 feet x 10 feet. A stone wall 24 feet long extends from the south-east corner of the flat area and joins a stone floor (16 feet x 14 feet) at its north-east edge. A fireplace is built into the eastern side of the stone wall which joins the flat area and stone floor. The fireplace is 5 feet in length and is composed of clay and boulders. The stone floor is built from angular blocks of rock which are arranged so that the greatest flat area on each block is uppermost. This gives a flat surface.

A rectangular 6 feet x 6 feet depression is situated about 25 feet from the north bank of the stream and about the same distance from the edge of the terrace. The vague outline was seen of another rectangular depression of roughly the same size as the first and near it. A stone wall 58 feet long extends in a northerly direction on the edge of the terrace just above the beach. It begins just north of the stream mouth. The height of the wall varies from 2 feet to 5 feet. The highest part appears to have been part of a stone structure - possibly a fireplace. The wall is also thicker at this point.

In the dense regenerating forest above the terrace and on the north side of the stream two terraces were located. The terraces are roughly 30 feet to 60 feet above sea level. The upper terrace measured approximately 40 feet x 20 feet and the lower terrace 30 feet x 12 feet. The forest floor is covered in thick leaf mould, seedlings and shrubs and it was not possible to see beneath this.

Carkeek (1966: 165) states that a pa at the stream mouth was occupied by a section of the Muaupoko with a principal chief, Potau, at the time of Te Rauparaha's first visit (presumably in the raid of 1819-20). The pa was later occupied by Ngati Tama and by Ngati Toa. Carkeek's map (1966: 178) shows the pa on the south side of the stream. Cowan (1907: 3) states the pa was on the south side of the stream and that it was a Ngati Kahungunu pa until taken by a war party under Te Pehi. Wilkinson (1952: 25) also places the pa on the south side of the stream connected by a track leading to the cultivations above (see comments for N156/6/13). Simcox (1952: 134) also records Maori settlement in the vicinity. A map (Map of Kapiti Island ... 1929) also shows a pa site on the south side of the stream.

It appears that initially Cowan may have been mistaken in placing the pa on the south side of the stream and others have perpetuated this. Evidence to support this argument is contained on chart (Anchorage under Entry Island ... 1837) which shows huts on the north side of the stream but nothing on the south side of the stream. This is further reinforced to some extent by a further chart (New Zealand, Cook Strait - Kapiti Island ... 1858) which shows occupation on both sides of the stream but no pa.

There is only a small terrace on the south side of the stream and this is backed by steep bluffs consisting of loose rock and which are covered with vegetation. These bluffs continue up the gorge of the Taepiro. A steep track leads up a spur at the junction of the bluffs above the terrace and those above the gorge. A member of the party climbed this steep track to less steep slopes above and found an

excavated flat area about 6 feet x 4 feet. This flat area could have been made for a lookout point (taumata) or whaler's lookout spot.

There is no visible evidence to suggest that a fortified pa was built at the Taepiro Stream mouth apart from the terraces. The term "pa" as used by the writers probably means "open settlement".

CONCLUSION

The sites described above are mainly the result of Maori and pakeha settlement on Kapiti Island during the 1825-40 period. Little is known about earlier settlement. In the 1825-40 period the island had an increased Maori population to which was added pakeha traders and shore whalers. The visible evidence of this settlement is to be found in the cleared areas and boulder walls north of Okupe Lagoon, the evidence of settlement at Te Kahuoterangi, the trytops at Waiorua and Rangatira and the evidence at Otehou and Taepiro Streams. The literature covering the period 1825-40 relating to the island supports the visible evidence.

Probably some sites and parts of some sites are buried because of erosion but the main areas of occupation have probably been located. The dense regenerating forest has probably covered up some of the structures and more would have been located had clearance been possible.

The writer would be glad if anyone knowing details about the history of the island not mentioned or about graphic records relating to it not listed in the bibliography would write to Mr P. L. Barton, P.O. Box 8016, Wellington. Several lookout places (taumatas) or whaler's lookout spots have been reported north of Rangatira but have not been located due to lack of accurate information. The location of these sites and other small details will help to give a clearer picture of the island.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thanks are due to the following organisations and individuals:

MEMBERS OF THE INVESTIGATING PARTY

Jean Barton, Bev, Jane, Mary and Len Bruce, Neil Carter, Ray Gilbert, Janice Griffin and Sheila Williams.

OTHERS

Alexander Turnbull Library (particularly Mr B. W. Marshall with maps), A. G. Bagnall with his valuable notes on the island, R. J. Buckley, R. Broughton with his advice and help, J. R. S. Daniels for his observations of sites on the island, B. G. and B. I. McFadgen, J. R. McKinlay, National Archives of New Zealand, L. Pracy, the Rodda family on Kapiti for help and hospitality, and the Wellington District Office, Department of Lands and Survey.

POSTSCRIPT

Part II of this paper will appear in the future. This will deal with sites on the southern part of Kapiti Island and possibly on the offshore islands. It is expected that a party from the Wellington Archaeological Society will investigate the southern half of Kapiti Island in the future if permitted to do so.

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