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NEW ZEALAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



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MAORI OCCUPATION OF THE FENCARROW SURVEY DISTRICT
AS RECORDED ON EARLY SURVEY RECORDS

B.G. McFadgen

INTRODUCTION:

For many years the Pencarrow Survey District has turned up evidence suggesting both early and late Maori occupation. This is especially so along the south coast, where some of the later occupation extended into historical times. This is borne out in field evidence and in historical records.

Although this article deals particularly with recorded field evidence in the Pencarrow Survey District, it will also be of general interest in showing the type of evidence to be found in early survey records, and how to go about searching it out.

In the Wellington District Office of the Lands and Survey Department there exist records of early surveys, in many cases showing the Maori occupation and associated features at the time of survey. These records include S.O. (Survey Office) plans, R.P. (Roll) plans, M.L. (Maori Land Court) plans, and field books. Throughout the Wellington Land District there are plans back as far as 1843.

THE FENCARROW SURVEY DISTRICT:

This Survey District comprises all that land on the eastern side of Wellington Harbour, south of Eastbourne across to Falliser Bay. The coastline is the whole of the south coast from Eastbourne to the Hinakitaka Maori Reserve in Falliser Bay. It includes Pencarrow Head, Fitzroy Bay, Baring Head and Turakirae Head. It is all that land shown in "Pencarrow" (Wellington 88), of the N.Z. Cadastral Map, Survey District Series.

Topography:

Much of the interior is dissected hill country, divided into three by the Waimuomata River and the Orongorongo River, the eastern portion between the Orongorongo River and Falliser Bay being the southernmost portion of the Rimutaka Range.

Prior to the 1855 earthquake, the coast from Eastbourne to Pencarrow Head was quite inhospitable with one exception, Paraoanui, a small bay about half way between Eastbourne and Pencarrow where there was occasional settlement at least, by successive tribal incomers down to late times. (Adkin, 1959). To the east of Pencarrow Head in Fitzroy Bay are the two lagoons, Kohangapiripiri and Kohangatera, both of which show field evidence of occupation. However it is in the lower reaches of the Waimuomata and Orongorongo Rivers where most of the Maori occupation contemporary with early European settlement, is recorded.

Present land usage:

Three Maori Reserves make up about one third of the total land area. They are the Hinakitaka Block, the Orongorongo Block and the Parangahu Block. About one third of the land area today is farmland, the remainder State forest.

PROCEDURE AND RECORDS:

While searching for information at the Lands and Survey Plan Records Section in the Wellington District Office, it was necessary to go through a pre-determined routine of searching. This was as follows.

The particular area treated here was the Pencarrow Survey District, which is divided into ten 'blocks', normally 250 chains x 250 chains. For each block a record sheet shows the area concerned, along with every plan within the block. It was then a matter of noting and looking at every early plan. Normally, the smaller the plan number, the earlier the plan. An alternative method was to go through the Survey District and Block Register, in which not only was the plan recorded but also the type and nature of the plan.

For Maori Land, i.e. land under the jurisdiction of the Maori Land Court, there is a 'Maori Block Register' showing all plans. In the case of the Parangahu Block, the earliest plan was the original survey at the time of sale to the Crown.

Once the plan concerned had been located, any information was noted and the relative field book inspected. In many instances the field book can give much more information than can the actual plan. In the case of Orongorongo Pa, the plan only noted the fact that the pa was there. The field book contained a small sketch along with the dimensions. If a field book needs to be located, there is a field book register indexed under the particular surveyor's name. There is also a numerical index.

Originally when the land was sold by the Maori to the Crown, deeds were drawn up defining the area sold and often the name of the tribe that sold it, and in many cases the personal names of the Maoris involved. These deeds were later sorted out and investigated by H. Hanson Turton, who, from 1865 to 1874 was Commissioner to Investigate Native Titles under the New Zealand Settlement Act. The deeds were later published in two volumes, volume I showing several of the plans and boundaries of the deeds, volume II recording the actual deeds themselves, the boundaries being defined by written description. These publications are known as Turton's Deeds, and the volumes in the Wellington District Office cover the Wellington Province, parts of Hawkes Bay, and Taranaki.

RECORDED INFORMATION:Tribal Lands:

Between 1847 and 1873, two thirds of the Pencarrow Survey District was sold by the Maoris to the Crown. By 1873 most of the Orongorongo Block had been quite successfully sold to the Crown twice. This Block, with the exception of sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 along the Orongorongo River was sold to the Crown by the Ngatiawa in 1847. In 1853 the

Ngatikahungunu, a Wairarapa tribe, sold the land to the east of the Orongorongo River, including both sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5, and the land sold by the Ngatiawa five years previously. In 1873 sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 were again sold to the Crown by the Ngatiawa. The Parangahu Block was sold only once by the "Petone Natives". (Ngatiawa?).

Bush and Vegetation:

The earliest plan showing the bushed area in the Pencarrow Survey District is R.P. 372, surveyed in 1859. This survey was followed by M.L.3070 in 1869, and S.O. 11964 L in 1882. R.P. 372 is a survey of the Wainuiomata River and includes part of the Orongorongo River and the coast from Fitzroy Bay to Falliser Bay. M.L.3070 is a Maori Land Court Plan of the Orongorongo Block. S.O.11964 L is the first topographical plan of the survey district.

In the Wainuiomata Valley prior to and during 1859, the standing bush consisted of Rimu, Titoki, Kahikatea, Rewa Rewa, Maire, Rata, Hinau, "abundant" Tawa, Totara, and "other pines of the finest description". At a distance of about two and a half miles up the Wainuiomata Valley, the bush gradually gave way to a large grove of Karakas, extending for about half a mile. These eventually gave way to "small fern and fine grass".

The floor of the Orongorongo Valley was for the most part covered in shingle and scrub. There was however, a Karaka grove just over a mile from the coast alongside section 4. (R.P.372).

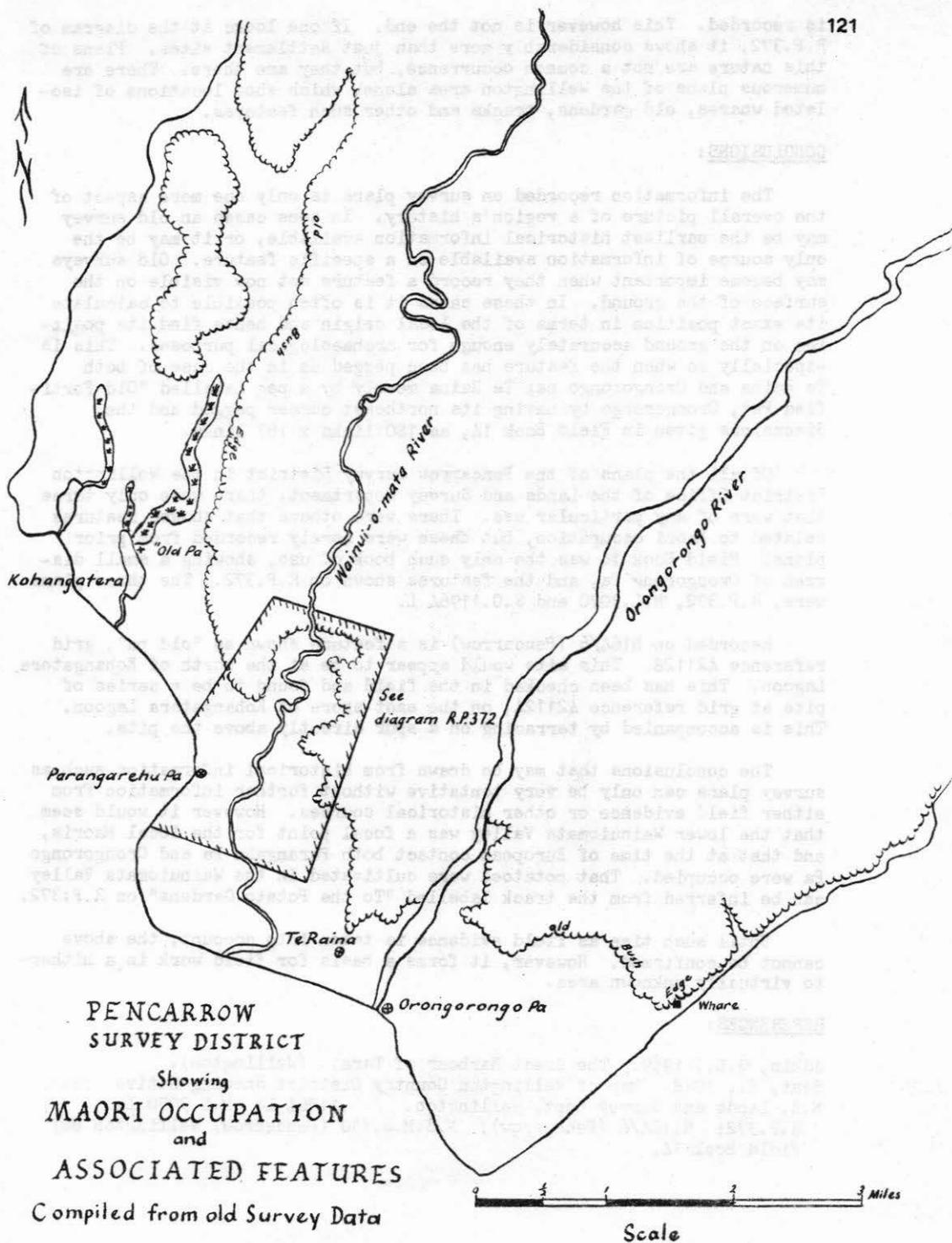
For the remainder of the area, the bush seems to vary from what is merely termed "Timber" to "Bush, Birchbush and Manuka". It seems certain that the bush would have been similar to the present State forest. The accompanying plan ("Pencarrow Survey District Showing Maori Occupation...") shows the earliest extremity of the bush as determined from survey records.

Occupation Evidence:

Many of the sites recorded on the survey plans may be found from other sources such as Best and McLeod's map "Wellington Harbour Showing Native Names" (1918). However, on the survey plans of the Pencarrow Survey District were found occupation evidence and pa sites either not recorded elsewhere or recorded as something different. One slight drawback of the old surveyor was that often he did not know the difference between a pa and a village, a cluster of huts becoming a pa simply because there was a fence around them. Orongorongo pa is one example. Recorded by Best (1918) as a village, the surveyor of R.P.372 shows the occupation area at the mouth of the Orongorongo River as being a pa. In the field book of R.P. 372 the "pa" is shown as two buildings or structures with a fence around them. (Field Book 14).

At the other extreme, Te Raina, an occupation site between the Wainuiomata and Orongorongo Rivers, is recorded by Best (1918) as a village, by Adkin (1959) as a pa, and it is shown on M.L.3070 as an "Old Fortified Pa". In this case it seems that Te Raina was a pa.

Regarding other occupation evidence, the accompanying map shows what



PENCARROW
SURVEY DISTRICT

Showing
MAORI OCCUPATION
and
ASSOCIATED FEATURES

Compiled from old Survey Data

Scale

is recorded. This however is not the end. If one looks at the diagram of R.P.372, it shows considerably more than just settlement sites. Plans of this nature are not a common occurrence, but they are there. There are numerous plans of the Wellington area alone, which show locations of isolated whares, old gardens, tracks and other such features.

CONCLUSIONS:

The information recorded on survey plans is only one more aspect of the overall picture of a region's history. In some cases an old survey may be the earliest historical information available, or it may be the only source of information available on a specific feature. Old surveys may become important when they record a feature not now visible on the surface of the ground. In these cases it is often possible to calculate its exact position in terms of the local origin and hence find its position on the ground accurately enough for archaeological purposes. This is especially so when the feature has been pegged as in the case of both Te Raina and Orongorongo pa; Te Raina merely by a peg labelled "Old Fortified Pa", Orongorongo by having its northeast corner pegged and the dimensions given in Field Book 14, as 180 links x 167 links.

Of all the plans of the Pencarrow Survey District in the Wellington District Office of the Lands and Survey Department, there were only three that were of any particular use. There were others that showed features related to Maori occupation, but these were merely recorded from prior plans. Field Book 14 was the only such book of use, showing a small diagram of Orongorongo Pa, and the features shown on R.P.372. The three plans were, R.P.372, M.L.3070 and S.O.11964 L.

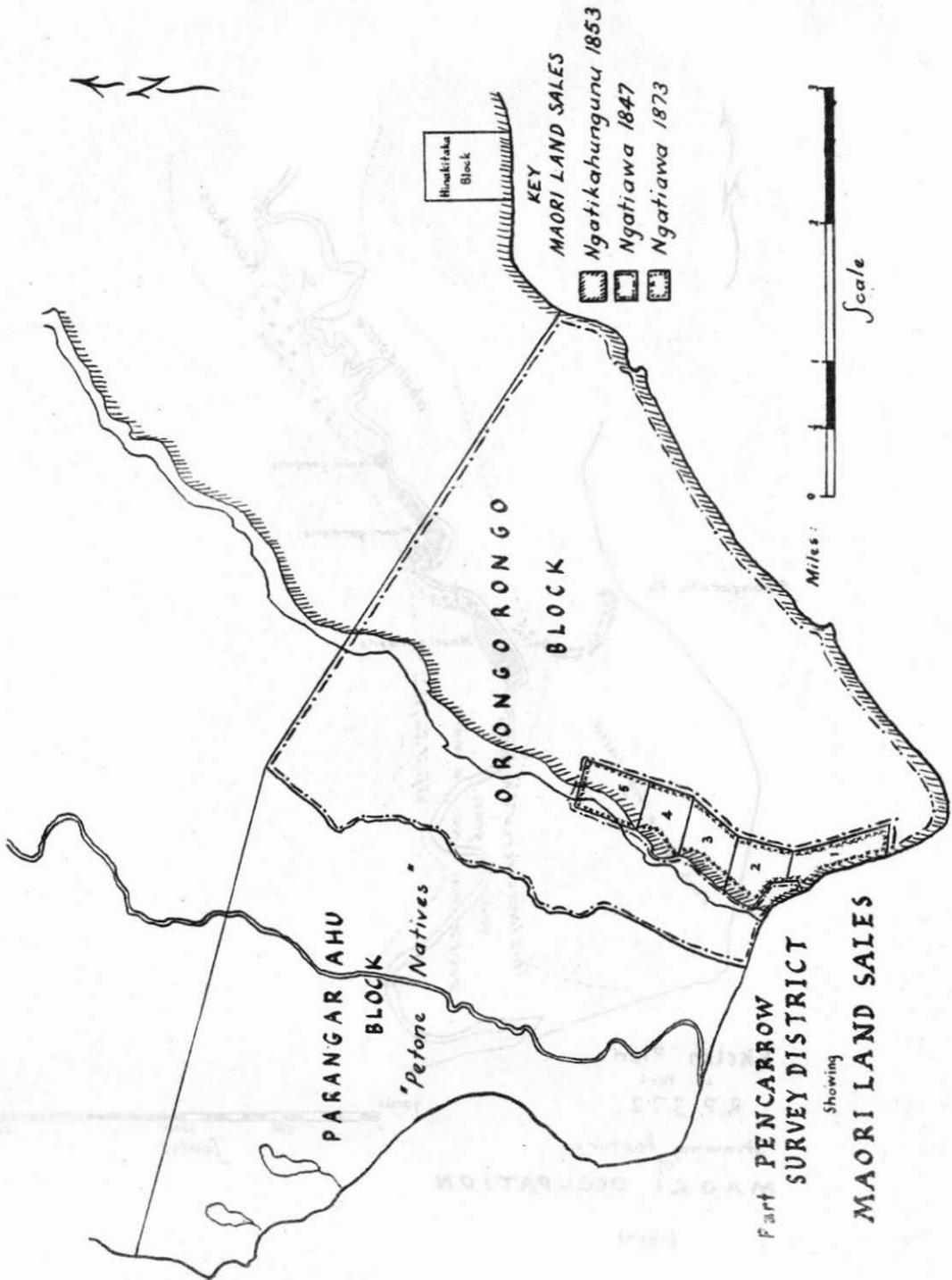
Recorded on N164/6 (Pencarrow) is a feature shown as "old pa", grid reference 421128. This site would appear to be at the north of Kohangatera Lagoon. This has been checked in the field and found to be a series of pits at grid reference 421124, on the east shore of Kohangatera Lagoon. This is accompanied by terracing on a spur directly above the pits.

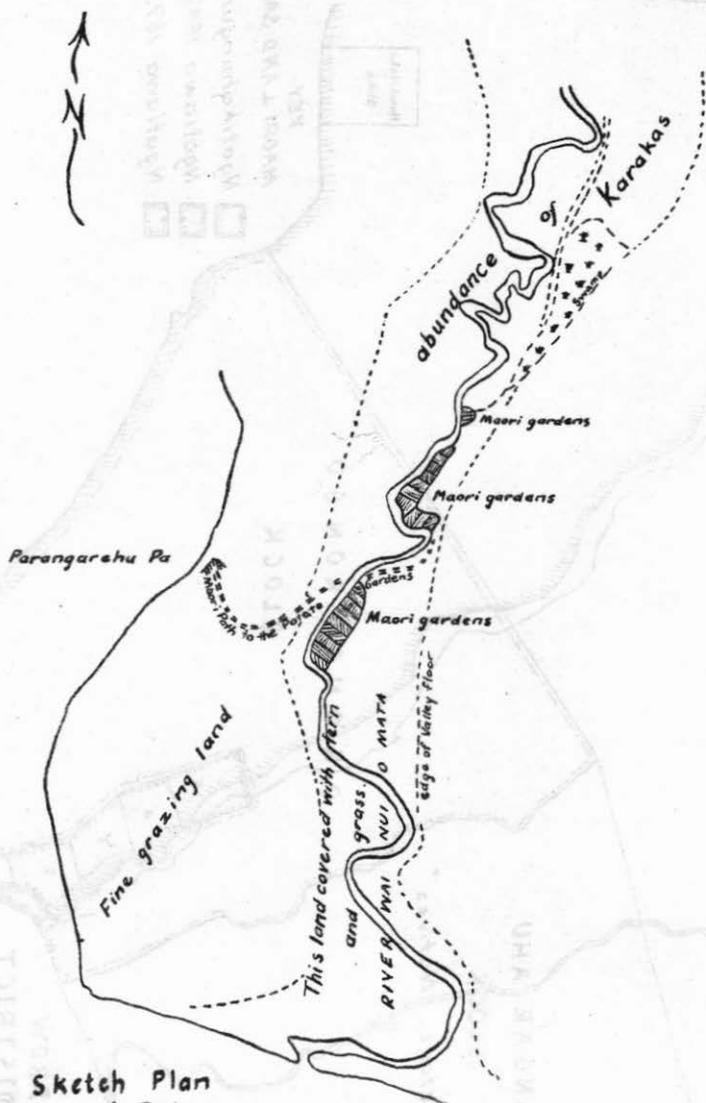
The conclusions that may be drawn from historical information such as survey plans can only be very tentative without further information from either field evidence or other historical sources. However it would seem that the lower Wainuiomata Valley was a focal point for the local Maoris, and that at the time of European contact both Parangahu Pa and Orongorongo Pa were occupied. That potatoes were cultivated in the Wainuiomata Valley can be inferred from the track labelled "To the Potato Gardens" on R.P:372.

Until such time as field evidence is taken into account, the above cannot be confirmed. However, it forms a basis for field work in a hitherto virtually unknown area.

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 R.P.372; N.164/6 (Pencarrow); N.Z.M.S.150 (Pencarrow) Wellington 88;
 Field Book 14.





Sketch Plan
of Part
R.P. 372.
Showing features
of
MAORI OCCUPATION

(1859)

- Palmer, J.B., 1956. Notes on Maori Sites in Eastern Wellington Harbour. J.P.S.65:342-55.
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By permission of the Department of Lands and Survey, New Zealand.

ERRATA:

Throughout this article Parangahu should be spelt Parangarahu.

MAORI SITES IN FITZROY BAY

J.B. Palmer

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Summary

INTRODUCTION:

A field survey of Fitzroy Bay was started in 1950 with the encouragement of J.M. McEwen. In 1957 Dr J.C. Yaldwyn kindly passed on information about the region and arranged for the writer to obtain notes by Professor H.B. Fell, who generously consented to them being incorporated in this brief report. This description therefore, contains references to Professor Fell's observations during 1936-7. Where they occur in the text they are acknowledged. The writer is grateful to those three persons in Particular, and to Messrs A.G. Bagnall, F. Fitzgerald and O. Burdan for the help they have given.

DESCRIPTION OF FITZROY BAY:

Lying on the open coast southeast of Wellington Heads, Fitzroy Bay contains some interesting, previously unrecorded sites which have some