



NEW ZEALAND
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NEW ZEALAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



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 MARUWEHI VILLAGE, URENUI, NORTH TARANAKI

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Sir Peter Buck, in helping Percy Smith record the history of the Ngati-Mitunga tribe, supplied the following note: "Kahu-kura's ... pa was Maruwehi on the extreme point of the cliffs where they form the north (right) head of the Urenui River. This pa is now partly eaten away by the sea. On the level plateau a few hundred yards inland stood the modern village of Maruwehi, occupied by the Ngati-Mitunga on their return from the Chatham Is in 1868, and which was subsequently abandoned." (Smith:115).

Together with Harold Murphy I searched for the site of this village in the area indicated by Peter Buck. On a narrow bush-covered terrace on the slopes below the plateau an extensive scattered midden was found this year. There were no pits or other signs of occupation in the ploughed field of the plateau, although several adzes were found during ploughing operations several years ago. The following list of artifacts strongly suggests that the midden originated from the village Maruwehi (Site N99/24. 955005 N14)

Lid of a jar with colour reproduction of the young
 Queen Victoria
 Clay pipe pieces, one with the name HENWOOD N.Z. Lyttelton
 Jew's harp
 Brass weight - one eighth of an ounce
 Ink bottles - glass and earthenware
 One goashore
 Square nails
 Broken willow pattern crockery
 Net sinkers
 Padlock
 Scent bottles
 Slate pencil and pieces of slate
 Half a large bowl - ?soup tureen
 Lead ball shot
 Bottle with pointed bottom - marked "Shuttleworth, Taranaki"
 Large iron shark hook
 Rum bottles

The following non-artifactual material was found:

Fish bones, pipi and mussel shells, and pig tusks

In view of the interest in sites of Maori occupation of the early European contact period, I thought the site worth recording.

Reference:

Smith, S.P. History and traditions of the Maoris of the West Coast, North Island of New Zealand, prior to 1840. New Plymouth, 1910.