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NEW ZEALAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



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otherwise of some of the points above, while others should yield further investigations of this kind, and the results may help to explain both problems of archaeological excavation and interpretation, and also factors which controlled the form of the prehistoric settlement.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

I should like to thank my employers, Tonkin and Taylor, consulting and foundation engineers of Auckland, for the use of the auger.

REFERENCE:

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NORTH CAPE NOTES

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Although Cape Reinga and the Lighthouse have been readily accessible for many years and are visited by thousands of people, the North Cape area which is over twenty miles East of the Lighthouse is still rather difficult to reach. This region has some flat country but it is mostly hilly and is bordered by rocky cliffs or magnificent sand beaches. It provides a great variety of interest for geologist, botanist and archaeologist, as well as for the holiday camper. There is ample evidence of the former Maori population.

In January 1960, with three companions, I visited the area the hard way. The schoolmaster at Te Hapua ferried us across Parengarenga Harbour, and then with everything on our backs we crossed to the sea coast and walked through this small, roadless, uninhabited corner of New Zealand. Since then a quarry for serpentine has been opened at Kerr Point and a good clay road enables the rock to be placed on barges not far from the entrance to Parengarenga Harbour. The quarry is closed during winter

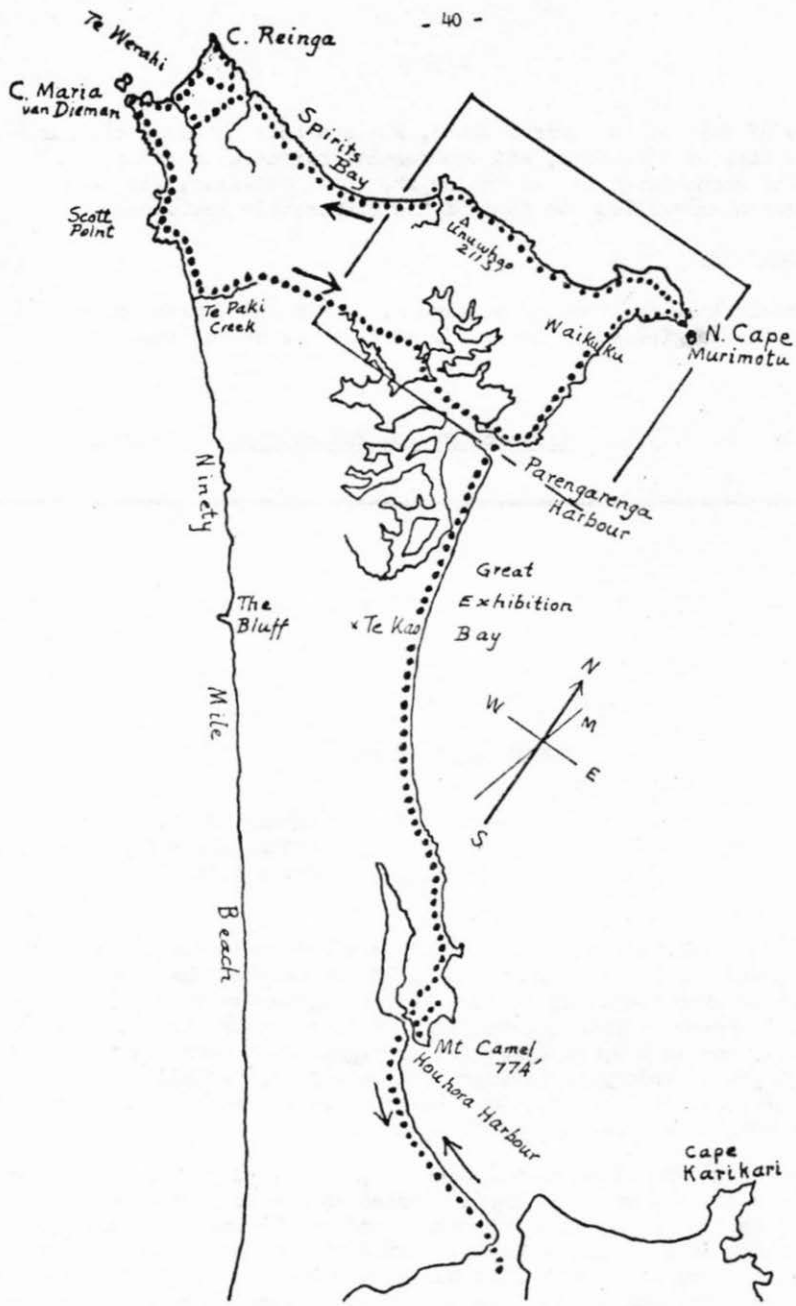


FIGURE 1

The 'Far North' of New Zealand. The dotted line shows the walking route taken by Rev. Richard Taylor, M.A., of The Church Missionary Society, and William King, in January 1841. The route has been plotted from a description of the journey and a sketch map in Richard Taylor's Journal. The area outlined is shown in Figure 2.

months. From this good clay road, a private clay road which is narrow and often steep gives access around the hilly country on the north side of the harbour to join the similar unmetalled road from Spirits' Bay, and this in turn joins the metalled road from Te Hapua to the main road. Thus there is now access by private road right to the quarry, but a motorist needs more than the good luck of fine weather to get there and back.

At New Year 1966 several of us visited the area again, this time per landrover, under the leadership of Mr J. Grant Mackie, Senior Lecturer in Geology at Auckland. He had been working at the archaeological excavations at Mt Camel, Houhora. Even a landrover proved susceptible to a broken axle on the clay access road but, after a few days' delay, we reached our destination at Waikuku Beach. Thanks to the courtesy of Mr Carl Nilsson, we had the use of his batches, first at his farm at Paua and then at Waikuku, for our tents were not required. (Figure 2)

A much earlier trip through this country is described in the journal of my great grandfather, Rev. Richard Taylor, M.A., of the Church Mission. In January 1841, while stationed at Waimate North, he made the journey on foot with Mr William King and six Maori companions. They left Kaitaia on 25th January and returned there on 9th February, having in the meantime reached Murimotu, the island which forms the actual North Cape, then walked westward to Cape Reinga and Werahi. From Ninety Mile Beach they crossed again to Parengarenga and the East Coast, then walked down the beach to Mt Camel, and on until they met their friend, Mr Puckey, from the Mission at Kaitaia. (Figure 1)

With his university training that included natural sciences, his ability to observe and interpret his surroundings, and his urge to examine as much as possible of this mostly unknown New Zealand, Richard Taylor was destined to cover most of the North Island. In those days he sometimes travelled by canoe or on horseback, but the trip to the far north, like most of his trips, was almost entirely on foot. One reason for this trip seems to have been a desire to view the piece of country of which he had recently, and somewhat reluctantly, become the joint owner. Richard Taylor had been rather annoyed and embarrassed by the receipt of a consignment of goods from a friend in New South Wales, and the request that they be used to buy land on his behalf.

The former Maori owners of this far north, the Aupouri, had been dispossessed by the Rarawa in the 1820's; some Europeans were trying to buy the land but the Rarawa chief, Nopera, readily agreed to missionary Matthews' suggestion that it be sold to Taylor's friend. Noble asked that £100 in money be added to the goods for the particular area of land he was anxious to sell, and Taylor concluded the purchase in his own name. The deed was signed by many chiefs, including those of Rarawa and the head of Aupouri. The latter were permitted to return in peace to the abodes of

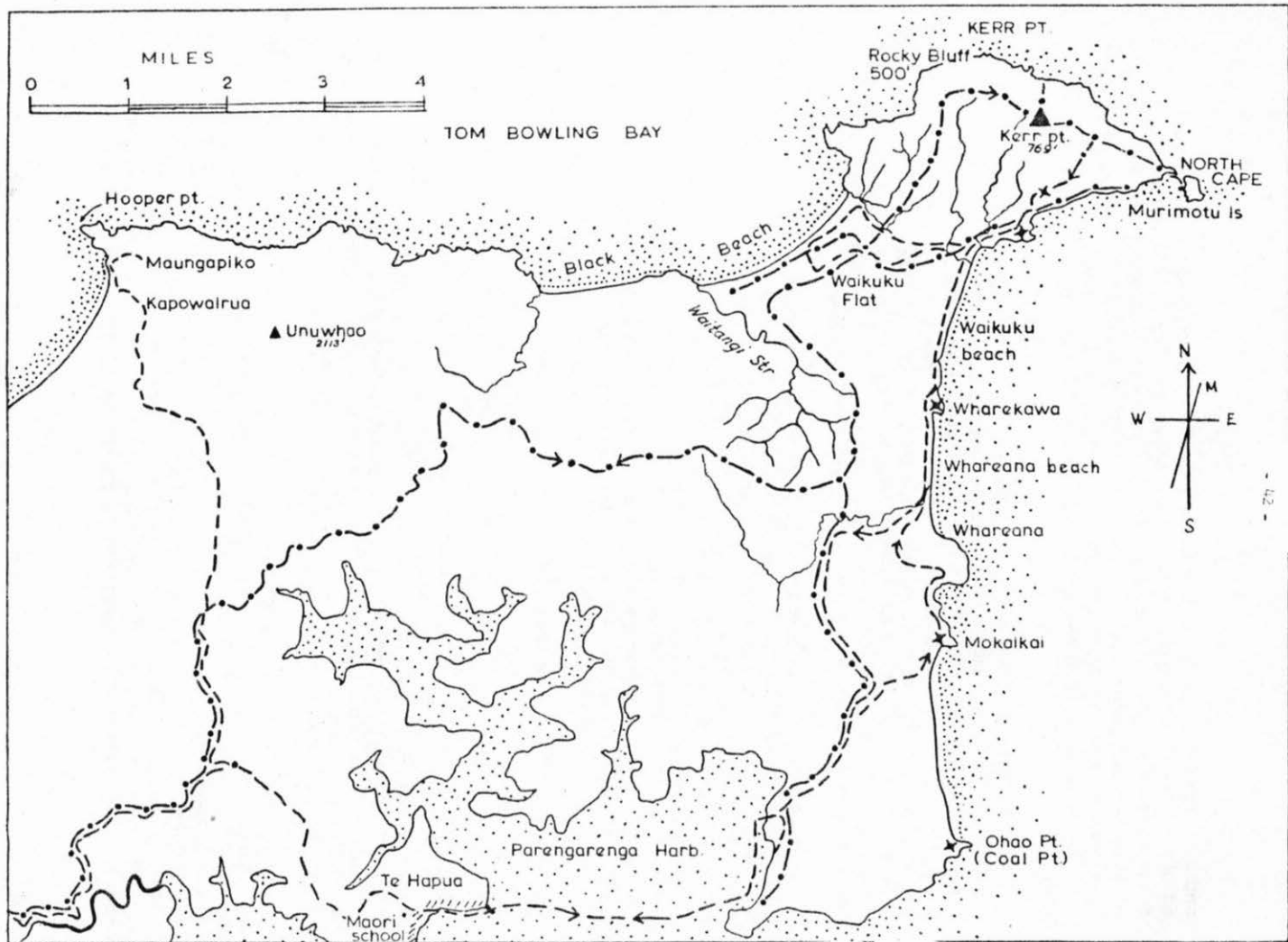


FIGURE 2 This is the area outlined in Figure 1, from Kapowairua at the Eastern end of Spirits' Bay to North Cape. It extends southward to Parengarenga Harbour. The Author's routes are shown as follows: 1960 route, - - - - - 1966 route, - · - · - · - ·. The Pa site marked inland just south of Kerr Point Trig seems to have been missed by Rev. R. Taylor in 1841 and omitted from maps, and is possibly the most northerly such site. The coastal point just below this is the site of the old Pa mentioned in Richard Taylor's Journal.

their forefathers. An equitable part of the land, namely 1,700 acres, was excepted as purchased, and this was awarded to Taylor and his friend by the Land Commissioner. "Taylor offered his half first to Bishop Selwyn and then to the C.M.S., who thought it not worth the cost of surveying, so he still had 850 acres, occupied by the Aupouri. He held it in trust for the Maoris so that they could not alienate it."

Evidently the affair was misrepresented by frustrated would-be purchasers and other Europeans anxious to discredit missionaries involved in land transactions and, although Richard Taylor's integrity was established many years ago, some misunderstandings persisted. Unfortunately, a recent opportunity to correct these was missed by Mr Mead in "Richard Taylor, Missionary Tramp", where his reference to the affair is incorrect as regards the geographical area involved. The information here given concerning the facts of the transaction was taken from a thesis by Janet Ross, who consulted the Taylor Papers in the Auckland Public Library.

I have studied Richard Taylor's account of his North Cape trip, 1841, in his journals, both through the typescript copy in the Library of Auckland Institute and Museum and also in the originals, which it is my privilege at present to hold. Though he does not specifically say so, it would seem that the land on the eastern side was virtually unoccupied at the time of his visit except for a few, evidently Rarawa, at Parengarenga. Of his 1841 journey, he writes that they dined at Mokaikai, an ancient pa, and were shown the cliffs over which the defeated defenders leapt to their deaths, but Richard Taylor's visit was probably in the nature of a picnic meal at a deserted site. The earthworks of this fine pa are still clearly visible.

In his 1841 journal, writing from just south of Parengarenga, Rev. Richard Taylor says: "We were very cold in the night, the dew made the tent as wet as if it had rained". In 1960, again in January, it was our experience also to remark on the heaviness of the dew, which soaked our tents and collected in little pools on waterproof covers. The weather had been fine and warm, and dry for some time.

Of the Waikuku Flat, Richard Taylor noted that it was covered with high grass and abounded with wild pigs, "... there is more grass and that greener and longer than any I have seen between it and the Waimate." "It has two streams watering it on the East shore and two on the N. shoreour encampment was on the banks of a beautiful fresh water stream our boys amused themselves with fishing and caught in a very short time merely with a basket almost a hundred of the Totorongu the only freshwater fish in N.Z. which has scales, and afterwards they caught eight Tunas or eels one weighing full five pounds merely snaring them with a bit of koradi."

We found the four streams easy to identify and can say from experience that both streams on the eastern side provide very good camp sites.

Mr Nilsson has built his batch beside the stream where the missionary camped.

On their first attempt to reach the Cape, Taylor and his companion, William King, evidently underestimated the distance and the roughness of the going and had to turn back, but he says they passed an old pa. This was easily identified, for the route from the end of Waikuku Beach passes up the ridge on which the pa was built (N1,2/72). On one of the lowest terraces for dwelling sites (N1,2/100) the four flat stones set on edge to form a taku ahi, or fireplace, are still in position. On the eastern side from the summit of the pa the land falls steeply to cliffs. (Fig. 3)

On my return from a solo trip to Murimotu Island I followed a more inland ridge which presented the earthworks of yet another pa (N1,2/103) similar in style to the one mentioned by Richard Taylor. He does not mention whether he was aware of the existence of this second site, and it is not marked on the modern maps. The two pa sites are on separate ridges, the second being on the southern termination of a much longer ridge which passes inland and north-east from the pa to join the somewhat plateau-like land centred on the Kerr Point Trig Station. This could be the most northerly of all pa sites in New Zealand. (Fig. 2)

Just behind the beaches of Waikuku and Tom Bowling Bay is a slightly elevated former land surface, partly covered with dunes and partly eroded by wind and drifting sand. On this surface one may find much interesting evidence of the former fauna and flora of that area, often mixed up or co-existent with evidence of former Maori occupation. There has not apparently been any notable find of artefacts of bone or stone so far recorded. There are vast numbers of burned and broken hangi stones. Shells of paua, limpet and mussel, and bones and scales of fish, indicate some of the foods that were cooked. In 1960 we found a large beach midden with fish bones and charcoal on Whareana Beach, south of Waikuku. There seemed to be larger numbers of the more durable shells (cockle, pipi, etc.) there and towards the lower end of Waikuku. On a short examination, midden sites were neither obvious nor plentiful on Waikuku, but may have been covered with sand drift at the times of our visits. The headland between Waikuku and Whareana beaches must be climbed, as passage around the rocks is not possible, even at low tide. The N.Z. Topographical Map N1, N2, shows a pa on this headland, but it was not obvious like Mokaikai and we missed it. Admittedly, we did not search for it, but the presence of middens on both beaches nearby is noteworthy.

The large amount of archaeological material, particularly artefacts relating to fishing, that were obtained from the Mount Camel site at Hourhora, were close to the main channel to and from Houhora Harbour. Parengarenga Pa was in a relatively similar situation in that it was at the entrance to a harbour. As Parengarenga Harbour

was much larger, I feel that the site may well repay investigation.

But, to return to the old land surfaces beside Waikuku Beach and Tom Bowling Bay, now bare of any vegetation. There is evidence that it was formerly well covered with vegetation. The evidence most obvious to us was the presence of shells of land snails and of small bones, mostly of birds. These bones indicated the species of former bush birds of the locality. Jaw-bones of Tuatara were found on both of these shores of Waikuku Flat, also incomplete skeletons of medium-sized moas, fragments of moa egg shells and many moa crop-stones. In one of these deposits in loose sand above Waikuku Beach I gathered 268 stones, many being quite small, without having to move my position. A number of seal bones, evidently from one skeleton, on Tom Bowling Bay, might well be of quite recent date. Fragments of four or five other seal skeletons were also found on Tom Bowling Bay.

Bones found on the trip were identified by Mr R. Scarlett of Canterbury Museum. The following brief summary is taken from his report:

There were five species of medium to small Moas, mostly of the genus Euryapteryx. Bones of takahe were present, and smaller land birds included kiwi, weka, kakapo, kokako (crow), kaka, quail, tui, owl (Australian barn owl) and kereru (N.Z. pigeon). There was a very small plover, kotuku (white heron), and many bones of the little blue North Island penguin. Other marine birds included albatross, gannet, petrels and terns. In a little more detail, there were Buller's sooty shearwater, fluttering shearwater (Puffinus griseus, mutton bird), broadbilled and fairy prions, Northern diving and Cook's petrels, Buller's mollymawk, red-billed gull, and Caspian tern.

Animal bones, tuatara and seal have already been mentioned, also kuri (Maori dog). There were bones of the Polynesian rat (Rattus exulans (Peale), Maori Kiore) which was introduced by the Moa-hunters and also by the later Maoris. But there was no evidence of pig; presumably this material, with so many extinct birds represented, is pre-European.

Of the shells of land snails we found those of Placostylus, Rhytida and Serphokivi - very few of the latter and only at Tom Bowling Bay, but Rhytida, though not plentiful, were found at both beaches. Placostylus shells were present in thousands, and at Tom Bowling Bay were found, in size, from very small (young) right through to adult, which formed by far the largest number. We did not find any bearing evidence of their having been cooked and the inference is that the snails were dead before the Maori occupation and have been uncovered by erosion in the course of time. Dr A. W. B. Powell refers to the Placostylus shells bleaching on these sites as sub-fossil. Through his careful studies of these shells in many

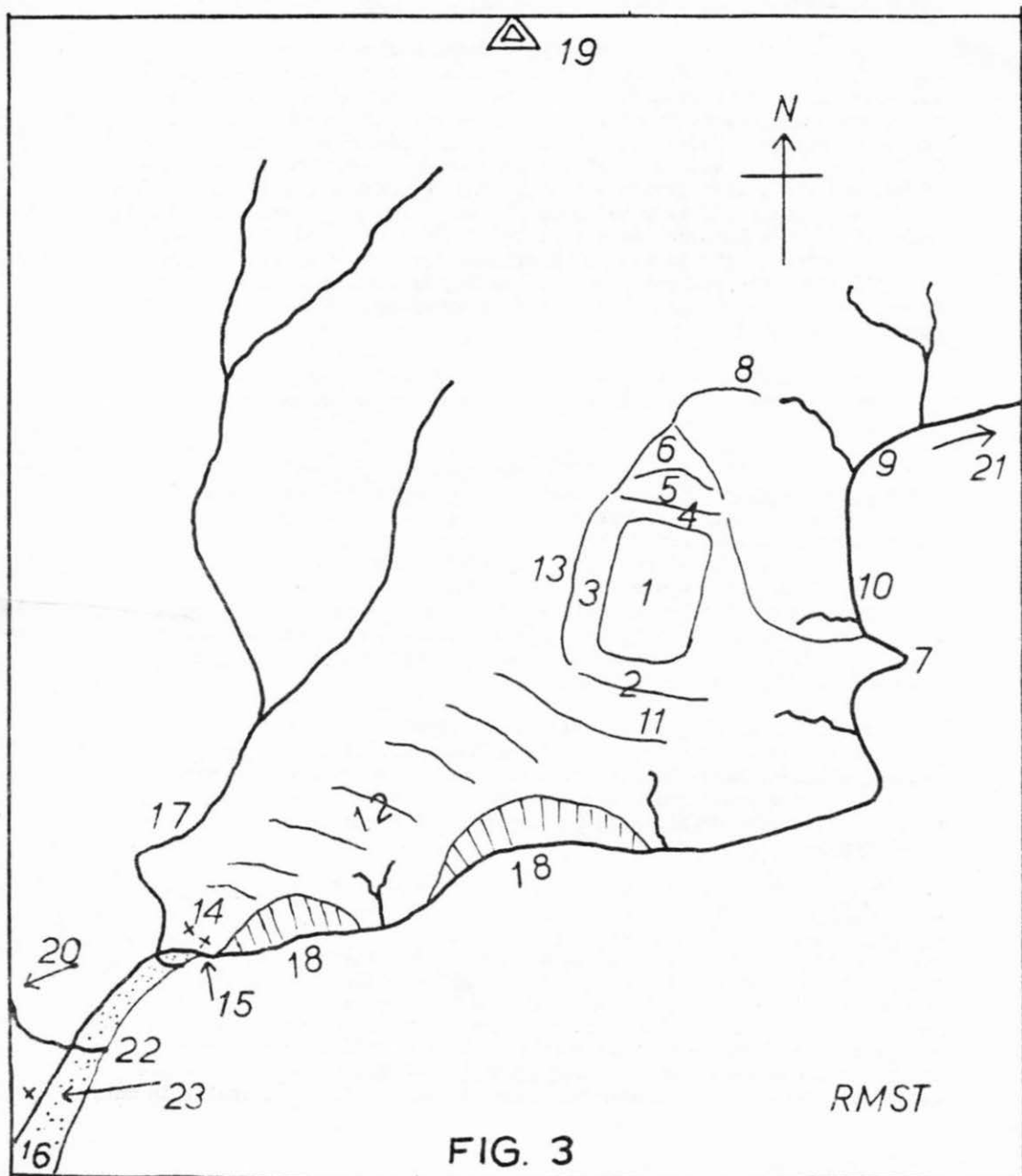


FIG. 3

RMST

Figure 3:

SKETCH MAP OF HILL COAST PA (N1,2/72)

R. M. S. Taylor

The distances and depths given were paced out or estimated. The terraces (No. 12 on sketch) were neither paced nor counted and the sketch merely indicates the rather gently sloping area where the terraces were seen.

1. Flat top, 65 x 20 paces. No pits seen.
2. Fossa with 10 yds almost flat, then another fossa (= No. 11)
3. Fossa, 15 ft deep on inner slope.
4. Fossa, 30 ft deep on inner slope.
5. Fossa, 15 yds long, 6 ft wide. A wide V-shape in cross section and placed at 50 paces from 4.
6. Slopes gently to a knoll, then descends as a ridge terminating at 8.
7. High rocky point. The land falls away steeply from 1 to the east and south-east.
8. See 6.
9. Boulder shore.
10. Rocks.
11. Fossa, 40 yds long.
12. Series of terraces and pits. Not counted nor paced nor checked.
13. Level terraces 12 paces wide, then steep slope 12 ft high, then gentle slope beyond.
14. Taku ahi in situ, about 12 ft above beach level (Kainga, N1,N2/100)
15. Solitary pohutukawa tree overhanging beach.
16. Waikuku Beach, sandy, about one and a half miles long, often backed by rather high dunes, some consolidated areas exposed.
17. Te Kanakana Stream.
18. Rocky cliffs.
19. Kerr Point Trig, 769 ft.
20. To Waiuku Flat and swamp.
21. Boulder beach and rocks to island Murimotu, which is North Cape.
22. The stream by which Rev. Richard Taylor must have camped in 1841.
23. Site of burial.

localities in the far North, and from the recognition of sub-specific differences in localised areas, he has made valuable and fascinating contributions to knowledge of prehistoric conditions of the region.

Just south of Hooper's Point and east of Spirits' Bay is the highest and most broken country of this northern region, Unuwahao, reaching a height of 2,113 feet. Most of the small remnant of native bush is here, and also the biggest living colonies of Placostylus. Many such colonies evidently have fallen victim to fires and wild pigs. Dr Powell grieves that the modern Maori inhabitants of the far North set fire to scrub for no apparent reason. But this is not a pastime of the modern Maori alone. Richard Taylor writes, "The natives fired the scrub which burned with great fury; we reached Kopua Wairua in the evening. Our boys killed a pig which they cooked for their dinner and picked the bones clean. We had a bad night being half devoured by the mosquitoes." The next day he writes: "There is a beautiful flower growing here, a species of hibiscus bearing a large yellow flower like a holyhoke." That flower must be the large Puarangi which in my own garden produces flowers six inches across. The small variety is the subject of the fourpenny postage stamp in the recent issue.

Throughout his trip from the Waikuku to North Cape and then westward to Werahi between Capes Reinga and Maria van Diemen, Richard Taylor makes frequent reference to the number of wild pigs in the area, and to their fine condition. His further observations concerning the pigs and the Maori method of catching them are of interest: "..... when taken, unless young, they soon pine away. They are very savage and run at a brisk trot. The best way of catching them is with dogs. The natives wrap their blankets round the left arm and with a hatchet in the right fearlessly attack them. When they turn against their pursuers they thrust their blanket in their mouths and strike with the right. All the pigs we killed were taken in this way; ball did not in any instance produce instant death." I commend this method to the modern pig-hunter. The hatchet would be easier to carry than a rifle and more useful in the bush. Moreover, the personal combat at close quarters would be more exciting than pulling a trigger, and having one's blanket close at hand and some pork would make it unnecessary to hurry back to camp.

In 1966 we found no complete skeleton of moa, but close to the beach at Waikuku we noticed portions of human bone uncovered by the drifting sand. These proved to be part of a complete skeleton of an adult. The body had been buried in the flexed position, head turned to one side with chin in cupped hand in a very natural attitude. Several yards away fragments of a child's skeleton were on the surface and an almost complete skeleton of the Maori dog, kuri, was found in the same burial site. Also in the vicinity a large stone which may have once been set upright as a boundary marker was found. Nearby was a taku ahi in situ, and the two stones of a haematite grinding mill, with kokowai in the working areas of

each stone. This artefact, and a sandstone hoanga, or grinding stone, from the seaward pa, together with the human skeleton and other material found, are in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Auckland.

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