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SCORIA-FACED PITS NEAR MOUNT WELLINGTON

By Alan Taylor

Among a number of interesting architectural features recorded by Jack Golson in his report on the Mt. Wellington excavations¹ was that of a scarp faced with a regular wall of scoria boulders. Found a short distance from the breach in the crater wall facing N.N.W., the scarp was only partly faced and apparently was the only definite example of this type of work discovered on the site at that time.

In the course of a recent field survey of an area about half a mile from the 1960 excavation (NZMS 1: Sheet N42 (Auckland) 362562 N26), nine storage pits were found, six of which were partly walled with blocks of scoria. Three of these have only one inside face built up with blocks, while two have two sides faced. One pit has three inside faces built of blocks. Of the nine level rimmed pits, only one is completely filled in. On average, the size of the scoria blocks is 6 by 4 by 2 inches and the walls are between 1 foot and 4 feet high.

Cultural material recovered from the surface of the site includes a net sinker, two abrading or rubbing stones, three adze fragments, a hammerstone and several flakes of obsidian; one of which is in the form of a boring implement.

Reference

- (1) Golson J. 1960. "Excavations at Mt. Wellington". N.Z. Arch. Assn. Newsletter. Vol.3. No.2. p34.