



NEW ZEALAND  
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**NEW ZEALAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER**



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I have given a very general excerpt only. To make a proper study we require many hundreds of typical samples and a very careful examination of materials, ways of striking, proportions, angles of the surface etc. But the results can be very valuable and therefore we are very anxious to hear the results of the recent studies of Dr Duff, who is now with this method trying to trace back the origins of our Polynesians.

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## SITE SURVEY of WEST NELSON

by Owen Wilkes

During 1959 and 1960 a preliminary survey was made of coastal areas in West Nelson, particularly in the vicinity of Abel Tasman National Park. Much work remains to be done, but a general pattern has become apparent for the whole area, and most of Abel Tasman National Park has been covered thoroughly. Publication of this report may seem premature, but completion of the survey will take some time and as practically nothing has yet been published on the area, an interim report seemed justifiable.

Condition of Sites As in probably all other parts of New Zealand, the curio hunter has been at work in West Nelson. The Golden Bay Maoris' continued interest in and concern for their cultural heritage has probably helped restrain the curio hunter to some extent. Within Abel Tasman National Park most former farmland is reverting rapidly to scrub which provides effective protection from weather, animals and curio hunters, but in other areas ploughing and stock are destroying occupation layers and earthworks. In all areas coastal revision is constantly taking place and middens etc. are rapidly disappearing.

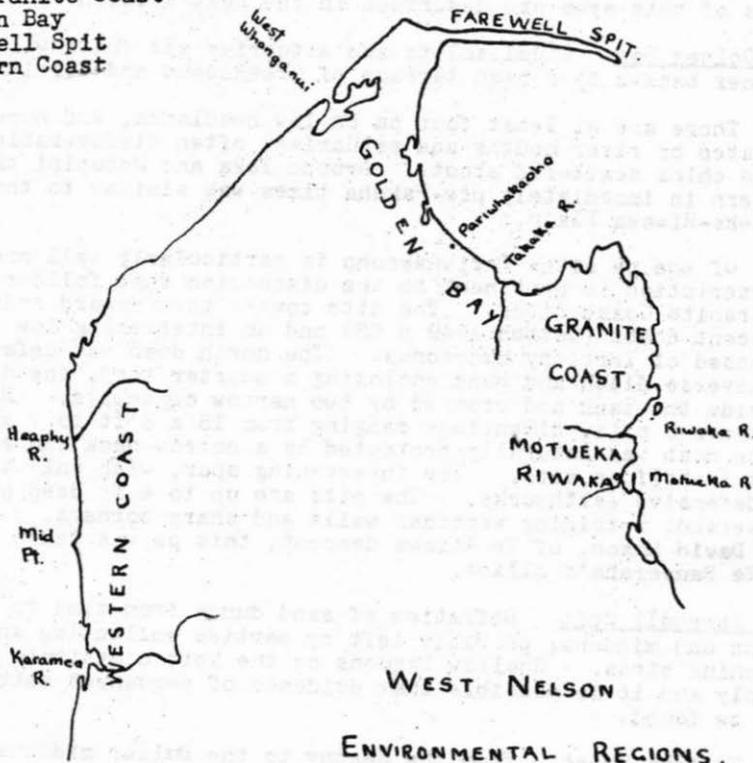
Traditional History The traditional history of the area is very sketchy. The following is summarized largely from Peart (1937):

The first definite tribe to live in the Waimea area were the Ngaitara who came from the Wellington area. They are supposed to have all died about 1600 from violating a tapu, and were followed by the Ngatitumatakokiri who came from the Marlborough Sounds and gradually spread as far as Karamea. They disputed with their neighbours - Rangitane and Ngatikuia in the sounds, and Ngaitahu in the upper Grey Valley. After surviving attacks by Ngatiapa and Ngaitahu they succumbed to a second attack by Ngatiapa, who replaced them in the Golden Bay and West Whanganui areas, and subjugated them in Tasman Bay. According to Percy Smith (1907 p 434) Ngatiapa settled the Abel Tasman National Park Coastline, but Mr Dave Mason, a Takaka Maori (pers. comm.) and Winter (c.1920) affirm that Ngatikuia settled this area. George Winter got his information from James Perrot, a run-away British sailor who lived among the Maoris at Motueka and Waiharakeke from C.1860 onwards, and married a Maori woman. He was supposed to have had a thorough knowledge of the Maori language and local traditions. However, Peart's observation (1937 p 18) should be noted here "The old Maori people .... when speaking of these tribes (Ngatikuia, Ngatiapa and Rangitane) always find it difficult to disassociate one from the other, and speak of the Ngatiapa as the Ngatikuia."

In 1827 Te Rauparaha began his war of extermination in the area. The Ngatiapa in the Motueka, Golden Bay and West Whanganui areas were annihilated while Ngatikuaia along the Abel Tasman National Park Coast were spared. Allies of Te Rauparaha settled in the Motueka and Golden Bay areas.

Environmental Regions West Nelson has been divided into the following regions based principally on topography and geology:

- (a) Motueka - Riwaka Plain
- (b) The Granite Coast
- (c) Golden Bay
- (d) Farewell Spit
- (e) Western Coast



WEST NELSON  
ENVIRONMENTAL REGIONS.

10 miles

Accounts of the individual regions follow:

(a) Motueka Riwaka Plain From the Moutere Hills to the hills south of Kateriteri the coast is taken up by the deltas, estuaries and islands of the Motueka and Riwaka Rivers.

Six flat land pa or kainga are left in various stages of completeness by marine and fluvial erosion. Two are now in built up areas and cannot be investigated. These were occupied by Te Atiawa and Ngatirua after Te Rauparaha's conquest. They were not all occupied simultaneously, the Maoris building new settlements after Pakeha settlement began.

In the Pokororo district, a few miles up the Motueka Valley, scattered ovens used to be exposed by the plough (Brereton p 60). These were probably left by fugitive Ngatitumatakokiri and Ngatiapa after Te Rauparaha's conquest.

Ancient-appearing artifacts have been recovered from a swamp at Riwaka.

(b) The Granite Coast An indented coast of granite headlands and sandy beaches and inlets stretches from Kaiteriteri to Wainui Inlet. Most of this Coast is included in Abel Tasman National Park. The sites of this area are described in the next section

(c) Golden Bay Tidal inlets and estuaries alternate with straight beaches backed by a high terrace of Cretaceous and Tertiary sediments.

There are at least four pa on low headlands, and numerous kainga situated by river mouths and estuaries, often discoverable by the argillite chips scattered about. Around Taka and Motupipi the settlement pattern in immediately pre-Pakeha times was similar to that of the Motueka-Riwaka Plain.

Of the pa sites Pariwhakaoho is particularly well preserved, and a description is pertinent to the discussion that follows the section on Granite Coast sites. The site covers the seaward ends of two adjacent doabs (Cotton 1949 p 65) and an intervening low spur, all composed of Tertiary mudstones. The north doab was defended by a transverse ditch and bank enclosing a quarter acre, the ditch being outside the bank and crossed by two narrow causeways. Within the bank are 5 pits, dimensions ranging from 15 x 8 ft to 7 x 5 ft. The south doab was naturally protected by a narrow neck and encloses 23 pits in half an acre. The intervening spur, with only two pits, has no defensive earthworks. The pits are up to 4 ft deep and are well preserved, retaining vertical walls and sharp corners. According to Mrs David Mason, of Te Atiawa descent, this pa was taken from Ngatikua by Te Rauparaha's allies.

(d) Farewell Spit Deflation of sand dunes from time to time exposes ovens and middens, probably left by parties collecting shellfish and catching birds. Shallow lagoons on the spit constitute a fresh water supply and it is possible that evidence of permanent settlement will yet be found.

(e) Western Coast From the Heaphy to the Buller middens are to be found at all the river and stream mouths, ranging from a patch about one square yard in area and six inches deep near Mid Point to a heap of pipi (*Amphidesma subtriangulatum*) and charcoal, 160 ft x 30 ft, near the Karamea Mouth, which a few years ago used to be quarried for agricultural lime\*. There is no way of telling whether these settlements were permanent or not. A similar pattern of settlement is described by McCaskill (1954) for the West Coast south of Karamea.

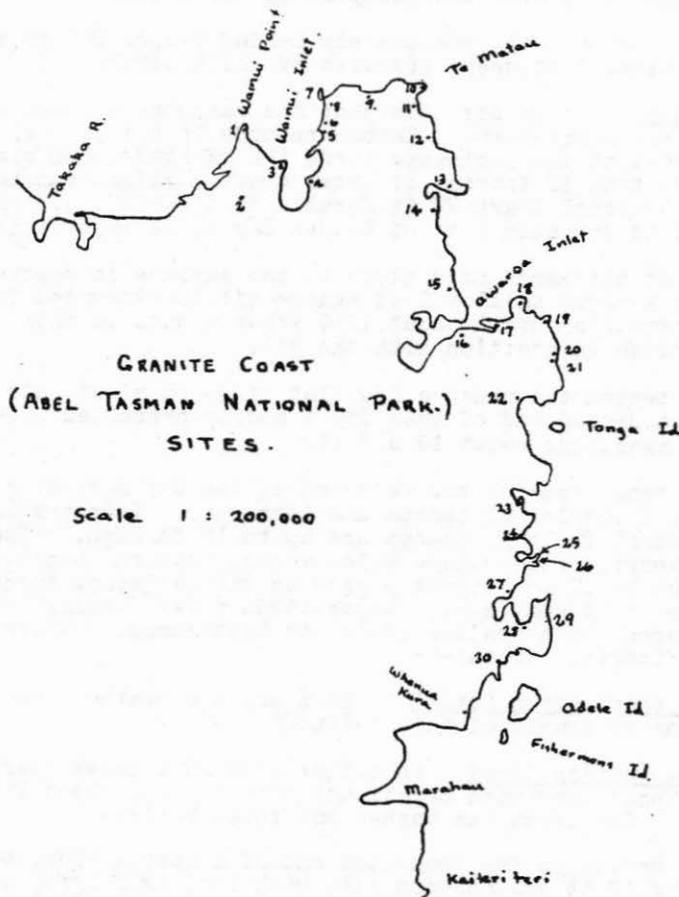
#### Sites of the Granite Coast

1. Wainui Point Four rectangular pits are scattered along the narrow ridge crest about half a mile back from the sea.

2. Wainui Hill At least one poorly preserved pit on the ridge crest, 700 a.s.l., and about 2 miles back from the sea.

3. Takapu Apparently a kainga site extending over 2 or 3 acres. Extensive midden of charcoally sand and pipi, up to 6 ft thick, in places retains a heaped form above surrounding ground level. Burials are present nearby. Last occupied by the Te Atiawa. A Native Reserve plan drawn about 1840 shows 4 huts.

4. Anatimo Probably another kainga site, although so much has been eroded away that the former extent of midden cannot be determined. Consists of a discontinuous occupation layer 3 in thick of blackened sand with pipi, and flakes of obsidian and argillite.



5. Uarou (I) In the small bay south of Uarou Point, on a small spur 30 ft a.s.l., adjacent to a creek and immediately behind the beach are 2 pits, one 6 x 10 ft, 18 in deep, the other shallower and larger. There is a blackened layer of sand in a low bank behind the beach.

6. Uarou (II) In the bay north of Uarou Point, a low bank behind the beach shows one foot of blackened sand close to the surface. A small (C 8 ft diam) vaguely circular pit has been excavated in the sand at

the north end. A Native Reserve plan drawn about 1840 shows 3 huts at the south end.

7. Taupo On the sandy isthmus of a small tombolo (Cotton 1949 p 487) there is up to 3 ft of midden. Four vague shallow pits are excavated in the sand, ranging from 5 to 10 ft diameter, roughly circular, possibly with a raised rim on the downslope side. A sketch, dated 1842 (Barnicoat, 1842) shows a small pa on the isthmus, defended by a stockade without earthworks enclosing a Pakeha style hut, 6 whare and a whata. Pit positions do not coincide with those of the whare shown. In 1847 this site was occupied by Ngatitama.

8. Taupo Hill On the hill immediately behind Taupo, 600 ft a.s.l. are two or three pits, 3 ft deep, obscured by thick scrub.

9. Wharawharangi It is possible that the massacre of Abel Tasman's men in 1542 took place here. Tasman records in his journal (Vigevano, 1942; p 48) that at the anchorage where the massacre took place they found not less than 13 fathoms of water about 2 miles from the shore. Reference to Nautical Chart NZ 22 Karamea to Stephens Id., shows that Wharawharangi is the only part of Golden Bay where this is possible.

A layer of blackened sand close to the surface is exposed behind the beach and a vague shallow 8 ft square pit is excavated in the sand. A Native Reserve plan drawn about 1840 shows 4 huts in this area, none of which coincide in position with the pit.

200 yds behind the beach a low flat ridge runs out onto the flat. On the swollen distal end of this are 4 poorly preserved pits, probably rectangular, measuring about 10 x 7 ft.

A large broad spur at the West end of the bay has, at a height of about 200 ft, a complex of scarps and terraces. Terraces are up to 30 ft wide and 50 ft long, scarps are up to 15 ft high. The terraces are on an otherwise steep slope below a broad natural bench. Trees with trunks up to 18 in. diameter grow on the terraces, suggesting that the site is of some age. Keyes (1960 p 247) assigns somewhat similar features, on a smaller scale, to Ngatimamoe. There seems little justification for this.

10. Te Matau (Separation Point) There are two weatherworn pits on the gently sloping extremity of this point.

11. Anatakanu (Mutton Cove) On either side of a creek there is 2 ft 6 in of blackened sand with occasional oven stones, about 18 in beneath the surface. The creek has washed out three burials.

Further north, on the truncated end of a narrow spur, 50 ft a.s.l. there is a 9 x 12 ft weatherworn pit, with long axis lying across the spur. The next spur, also narrow, has 3 excavated and built up terraces, about 15 ft each way, two situated where the ridge is merging into the flat behind the beach, the third about 60 ft a.s.l.

12. Anapai A cave, now fallen in, was dug some years ago by a curious hunter and yielded many artifacts. There is a well preserved pit, 17 x 11 ft, about 200 ft up a spur. It has a vague raised rim.

13. Totaranui Headland One possible pit, in long established rata-black beech forest.

14. Totaranui Bay There is an occupation layer with numerous middens and ovens along most of the length of the beach, as revealed by about 40 chains of ditch dug parallel to the beach recently. Occupation material extends inland for 2 chains or so, and is typically 13 in. thick beneath 7 in. of soil. Seaward of this, a section excavated through the beach ridge showed three occupation layers, the lower two being flat, the upper paralleling the profile of the ridge.

There are two working floors in the bay, marked by the superficial occurrence of large numbers of argillite chips.

On a spur south of the camping ground are 3 well preserved pits, about 15 x 10 ft, with narrow baulks between. From a swamp alongside this spur, numerous adzes, some of greenstone and one 1A in argillite, have been removed. Totaranui was occupied by Ngatikuia as late as 1840.

15. Maiharakeke The creek has eroded into ovens and middens immediately behind the beach.

16. Awaroa Inlet At 39/402801 there is a kainga site, marked by three pipi midden retaining its heaped form above ground level, and by worked floors with argillite chips and hammer stones. The mudflats nearby are littered with hundreds of oven stones indicating that much of the site has been eroded away. Archaic type adzes have been collected by Mr Fred Radfield in the Awaroa Valley.

17. Awaroa Beach Scattered about on the flat are middens of small extent and isolated ovens. Digging sticks have been recovered from a swamp behind the beach.

From Awaroa Head to Onatahutu the hills are covered by an impenetrable growth of Hakea acicularis. The following notes on sites at Awaroa Head, Abel Head and Wallaby Ck are taken from Winter (C.1920) who formerly resided at Awaroa.

18. Awaroa Head On the western promontory of Awaroa Head, and on several rocky knobs thereabouts, are several pits. The eastern promontory rises steeply from a narrow neck to a near-vertical seaward slope. Across the neck is a ditch, while the slope is cut into 9 terraces each about 12 ft wide and with scarps about 6 ft high. On the flatter upper portion are more terraces, the surfaces of which are cut into rectangular pits "as close as they could well be".

19. Abel Head On the hill just above Abel Head a 6 ft high bank protects a gentle even slope on which argillite chips and ovenstones used to be scattered about. There used to be a number of small circles composed of 5 or 6 good sized stones - probably hearths.

20. Wallaby Ck (I) The headland north of the creekmouth is terraced, and on the terraces are "Maori holes as close as they could be dug".

21. Wallaby Ck (II) On the south headland there is terraced ground at the top of a steep slope to the sea.

22. Onatahutu Midden, ovens and burials occur on a sand bar between the beach and a raupo swamp.

23. Wairima (Bark Bay) On the sandspit in this bay up to 2 ft of pipi-charcoal midden containing argillite chips lies directly beneath the surface.
24. Falls River Mouth Argillite chips and a small adze were picked up on the tidal flats. They show no signs of attrition and are unlikely to have been carried by marine currents from adjacent bays.
25. Potiki tawa Pa A small 80 ft high, steep-sided peninsula to the east of Frenchman's Bay is terraced all over its gently sloping upper surface. The 18 terraces are about 15 ft wide and from 15 to 100 ft long with scarps generally no more than 2 ft high. The very narrow isthmus is naturally defended by near vertical sides and a steep descent from the terraced area to the isthmus. At the base of this descent has been added a bank, outside of which is a ditch 10 ft wide and 5 ft deep, cut into the granite. There is no sign of pits. The only indication of recent occupation is one ovenstone found lying on the surface.
26. Potiki tawa A Native Reserve plan of C. 1840 shows a settlement of this name, consisting of 2 huts in the small bay south-east of site 25. No sign of this is now visible.
27. Rakauroa (Torrent Bay) D'Urville's chart (1836) shows a village of 6 huts to have existed in 1827 where the present settlement is. Coastal revision appears to have removed all trace of this.
28. The Long Beach. Adzes have been recovered from midden beneath 3 ft of sand behind the beach.
29. Pukatea There are said to be terraced spurs, without pits in this bay.
30. Astrolabe Roadstead D'Urville's chart shows a village of 8 huts in a small bay at S9/423670. This is probably the one illustrated in the Atlas of "Voyage de la Corvette L'Astrolabe" (D'Urville 1833).

The remaining portion of the Granite Coast is not yet covered sufficiently to warrant writing up, but known sites are as follows - (a) Whenua kura, a small site on a sandspit at Appletree Bay, (b) a kainga at Marahau, (c) numerous pits on Pa Hill at Kaiteriteri, (d) a kainga on the beach at Kaiteriteri.

Midden Contents The middens of the Granite Coast are notable for the rarity of fish bones and the almost complete absence of bird bones. This seems strange when good fishing is to be had all along the coast, and the bushed hinterland provided abundant bird-life, while terns, gulls, herons etc. nest in the area. (Note Moore's observations on this, quoted in the section on pits) The middens are composed mainly of pipi and include all other molluscs at present to be found on rocks, beaches and mudflats.

The local Separation Point granite, despite its convenient proximity and abundance as round boulders, was apparently not favoured as an ovenstone. Experiment shows that it is prone to breaking up explosively when heated. A large proportion of ovenstones are composed of McKays Bluff syenite (available in convenient sizes on the

Nelson Boulder Bank), greywacke and other rocks from the Mesozoic and Palaeozoic formations east of Nelson City, or the ranges south and west of Golden Bay. These rocks were also used in preference to granite for hammer stones.

Lumps of pumice, now crumbling with age, occur in an occupation layer at Totaranui. They are worn flat on one side and were apparently used for abrading or polishing some flat surfaced object.

Pieces of clear crystalline quartz (rock crystal) and of amorphous milky quartz, never waterworn, but apparently broken from the outcrop, are of unknown use. They are found in numerous middens along the Granite Coast, and in a midden near the mouth of the Heaphy River. Both varieties could have been collected from outcrops of the Separation Point granite.

Working floors are common along the Granite Coast, and also in Golden Bay. The quantity of metamorphosed argillite chips on some sites, compared with the areal extent of the site and the amount of midden present, is such as to suggest that adzes were manufactured here for trade with other areas. On some beaches chips washed out from midden form a sizeable proportion of the pebbles present. These floors are unlikely to be of any great age - in one instance the layer which includes chips is continuous with an unfurled midden which still maintains its heaped form above surrounding ground level. If these floors are as recent as they appear, then they may be assigned to the Ngatikuaia who were simultaneously in occupation at D'Urville Id (Elvy 1940; p 389). Thus the assertion that there is no argillite in the upper middens on D'Urville Id (Keyes 1960 p 249) does not mean that the argillite quarries on D'Urville Id were not used after the earliest (i.e. "Waitaha") occupation. There is no reason why parties from the Granite Coast could not have visited D'Urville Id (which is only 40 miles across the sheltered waters of Tasman Bay), quarried their argillite, and brought it back without preliminary working of it on the Island. D'Urville Id would be more convenient than the Naitai Valley quarries, which are nine miles inland and at that time were in Ngatiara territory.

Besides the Archaic type adzes mentioned most classic type adzes are rendered in argillite. Nephrite adzes also occur in small numbers, and a block of unworked nephrite has been collected from Wainui Inlet.

Small flakes of obsidian occur occasionally.

No moa remains have yet been found in human association, although at some period they were abundant throughout West Nelson.

Pits As will be seen from the above, pits on the Granite Coast are of two types - A. Rectangular pits, up to 4 ft deep, on solid-rock upland sites, and B. Smaller, shallow pits excavated in sand on low land sites.

Type A. These occur in large numbers within recognisable pa (e.g. Awaroa Head, No. 19) or singly and in small groups on spurs, sometimes isolated from water and other settlement, and up to 700 ft a.s.l. and two miles inland (e.g. Wainui Hill, No. 2). They are rectangular, about 12 x 9 ft or larger, and up to 4 ft deep. Except in one doubtful case (No. 12) they are devoid of raised rim, and where found on headlands or spurs they generally have their long axes pointing out to sea.

Evidence for the Recency of Type A. At Pariwhakaoho Type A pits can be tentatively assigned to the period immediately preceding Te Rauparaha's conquests. According to Mr Dave Mason of Takaka, who owns the site, the pa was taken by Te Rauparaha's allies, it then being occupied by Ngatikuaia. It is conceivable, however, that Ngatikuaia occupied only the northern doab, which is only partly covered with pits.

Evidence for Antiquity of Type A. Both D'Urville, who explored Golden Bay and Tasman Bay in 1827, (Smith, 1907) and Moore who traded with the Maoris in 1840, describe settlement only in the bays and on the flats. Moore (1828-9) wrote "After rounding Separation Point I found we were in Tasman Gulf or Blind Bay ..... keeping well into the Western Shores I observed and anchored in several snug little bays with sandy beaches, high wooded ranges in the background and fresh water streamlets in every one and a few Maori families were settled here and there and catching fish, pigeons, and other wild fowl". Surely a pa like that on Awaroa Head would, if occupied, have drawn comment from one of these explorers.

No area containing type A pits was claimed as a Native Reserve, except Pariwhakaoho, and the pit in Anatakapu, and in this latter case there is no settlement shown on the relevant Native Reserve Plan.

It seems, then, that at Pariwhakaoho, in the Golden Bay region, pits were used until Te Rauparaha's conquest, while in the Granite Coast region they were used at some earlier date. There is no conclusive evidence either way. This may be compared with Elvy's statement based on traditional evidence (1926 p 329) that pits of similar form in Queen Charlotte Sound were dug in pre-Ngatikuaia times. Pits of similar form but possessing a drain, seen in Queen Charlotte Sound and said to be of Ngatimamoe origin (Elvy 1927 p 221) have not been seen in the Granite Coast region. Rutland (1894 p 221) assigns pits of similar form and topographic situation but possessing a raised rim and occasionally surrounded by a drain, to an early period of occupation on non-traditional criteria. As Ngati Mamoe apparently have not occupied the Granite Coast, it seems dangerous to use pits of this type as a criterion of Ngatimamoe occupation as Keyes (1960 p 247) would like to do.

Function of Type A pits The large number of pits compared to the total habitable area of the site in the case of sites No. 18 and 19 ("as close as they could be dug") and to a lesser extent Pariwhakaoho, suggest that they were used for habitation purposes, as does the lower size limit (6 x 6 ft).

Type B pits The smaller flat land pit is recorded for sites 6, 7, 8, all of which were occupied about 1840, although the drawing and plans show no feature that can be correlated with the pits. There are two possibilities (a) the pits were used at some other date than 1840, or (b) they were used in the 1840's, but were not prominent or permanent features, and thus were not recorded on the drawing or plans. Their lower size limit suggests they were for purposes other than habitation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS I would like to thank the many residents of Karamea, Golden Bay and Motueka who provided me with information, cups of tea, feeds, lifts, and shakedown during the course of my fieldwork.

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BOOK REVIEWS

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Archaeology in the U. S. S. R. by Alexander Mongait, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1959. N.Z. price £1.5.0

A very considerable amount of important archaeological work has been done by Soviet archaeologists in the great territory of the Soviet Union during the last 40 years, but to those of us, like myself, who do not read Russian, much of it has been inaccessible. I have met with some references to it in books by such writers as Gordon Childe, and some articles have been translated in the United States and elsewhere, but I have long felt the need for a comprehensive survey of the whole corpus of Russian archaeology. This book supplies that need, and does it well.