



NEW ZEALAND
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NEW ZEALAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



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TARANAKI ARCHAIC ARTIFACTS

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by A. G. Buist

Since spot-finds of artifactual material have in the past led to important and even significant archaeological sites (Duff 1960 : 60) I thought it of interest to conduct a survey of collections to determine the possible geographic range of finds of archaic artifacts in Taranaki. The large collection in the New Plymouth Museum and the MacKay Collection in the Dominion Museum have been seen and rapidly sorted. Max Smart has kindly checked one adze type in the Wanganui Museum. Various private collections coming to my notice have also been seen and recorded. The repositories at Auckland Museum and Canterbury Museum, both of which have drawn and continue to draw large collections from Taranaki, have not, to my knowledge, been recorded. The limits of the Province exclude the possibly rich sites on the south-east coast and on the north coast to Kawhia.

The survey has revealed that archaic period artifacts have been found from Patea to Mokau. Collectors appear to have placed the greatest emphasis on adzes, but there are three reels and one whale tooth pendant in the survey. Of the adzes, Duff type 1A is the commonest - the most southern was found at Patea (recorded by Best - Wanganui Museum) and the most northern, Tongaporutu (N.P. Museum). Two superb examples were found recently at Ohawe Beach - an already proven "moa-hunter" site, and others have been localised to all parts of the coast north from here.

Duff's type 4A is the next most common type in the collections and these also have a wide locality range. Perhaps the best example was found near Hawera (private coll.), and this is almost identical in size with the Duff "type adze". The most northern spot-find was inland Mokau (N.P. Museum). One large 5A was localised to the coast just south of New Plymouth (N.P. Museum).

Apart from these, the MacKay Collection in the Dominion Museum - all localised to the area about Opunake, has a wide range of types and contains many pieces of crudely worked argillite. These are duplicated to some extent by a private collection, held and found near Opunake.

Obsidian flake knives are not very numerous, although there are several large pieces of these - mostly from the Cape Egmont area. I have seen no chert apart from that collected in situ at the Ohawe site.

Duff type 6A occurs about the Opunake area, and all I have seen appear to be of argillite.

Whilst I do not intend to imply that any firm conclusions can be drawn from this brief survey, I think it serves to point to the fact that Taranaki possibly supported a heavier density of archaic period Maori than was previously thought (Golson 1959 : 44).

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- Duff, Roger 1960 "The New Zealand Junior Encyclopedia" Wellington.
Golson, Jack 1959 "Anthropology in the South Seas" New Plymouth.
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CHECK LIST OF ARCHAIC ARTIFACTS .. TARANAKI

<u>Locality</u>	<u>Artifact</u>	<u>Repository</u>
Fatea	Adze 1A (Duff)	Wanganui Museum
Tangahoe River	" 4A	Private Coll. (Reeve)
Manawapou River	" 3A (rough)	N.P. Museum
Ohawe	" 1A (2)	Private Coll. (Smart)
Koupokonui	" 3A	N.P. Museum
Oeo	" 1A (4)	Private Coll. (Good)
"	" 6A (3)	" " "
Oeo-Opunake	" 1A (several)	Dom. Mus. (MacKay Coll.)
"	" rough-outs	" " " "
Opunake	" 1A	N.P. Museum
Cape Egmont	" 1A (3)	" "
" "	" 1A (greenstone, with lugs)	" "
" "	" 4A	" "
Oakura	" 1A	" "
Omata	" 5A (large)	" "
"	" 1A	" "
Warea	" 1A	" "
N.P. (Puketapu)	" 1A	" "
N.P. (Egmont Rd)	" 1A	" "
Waitara River	" 4A	Private Coll. (Martin)
Pukearuhe	" 1A	" " "
"	" 4A	" " "
"	" 6A (several)	" " "
" (tradition adze "Poutamu-Whiria")	" 1A	N.P. Museum
Tongaporutu	" 1A	" "
"	" 1A	" "
Mokau	" 4A	" "
Oeo-Opunake	stone minnow shanks	Private Coll. (Good)
Omata	" " "	Otago Museum (Duff)
Opunake	reel	N.P. Museum
Moturoa	reel	" "
"Taranaki"	reel	" " (copy)