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NEW ZEALAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



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THE KAPUNI PIPELINE SALVAGE ARCHAEOLOGY SURVEY

K. C. Gorbey
June 1969

Like all other major public works, the Kapuni Gas Pipeline will result in the destruction of sites of archaeological interest. A decade ago this fact would have aroused little concern but today, due to the efforts of members of the New Zealand Archaeological Association's Council, the principle of the Government body involved supporting at least some salvage work on threatened sites appears to have been established. The reasons for this support might differ from those that most archaeologists would put forward - the Ministry of Works seem to stress "burial grounds" and "special reinterments" (Anon. n.d. P12) - but there can be no doubt that the \$4,000 grant made to the New Zealand Historic Places Trust by this Department for archaeological work along the pipe route is an important step forward for New Zealand archaeology as a whole.

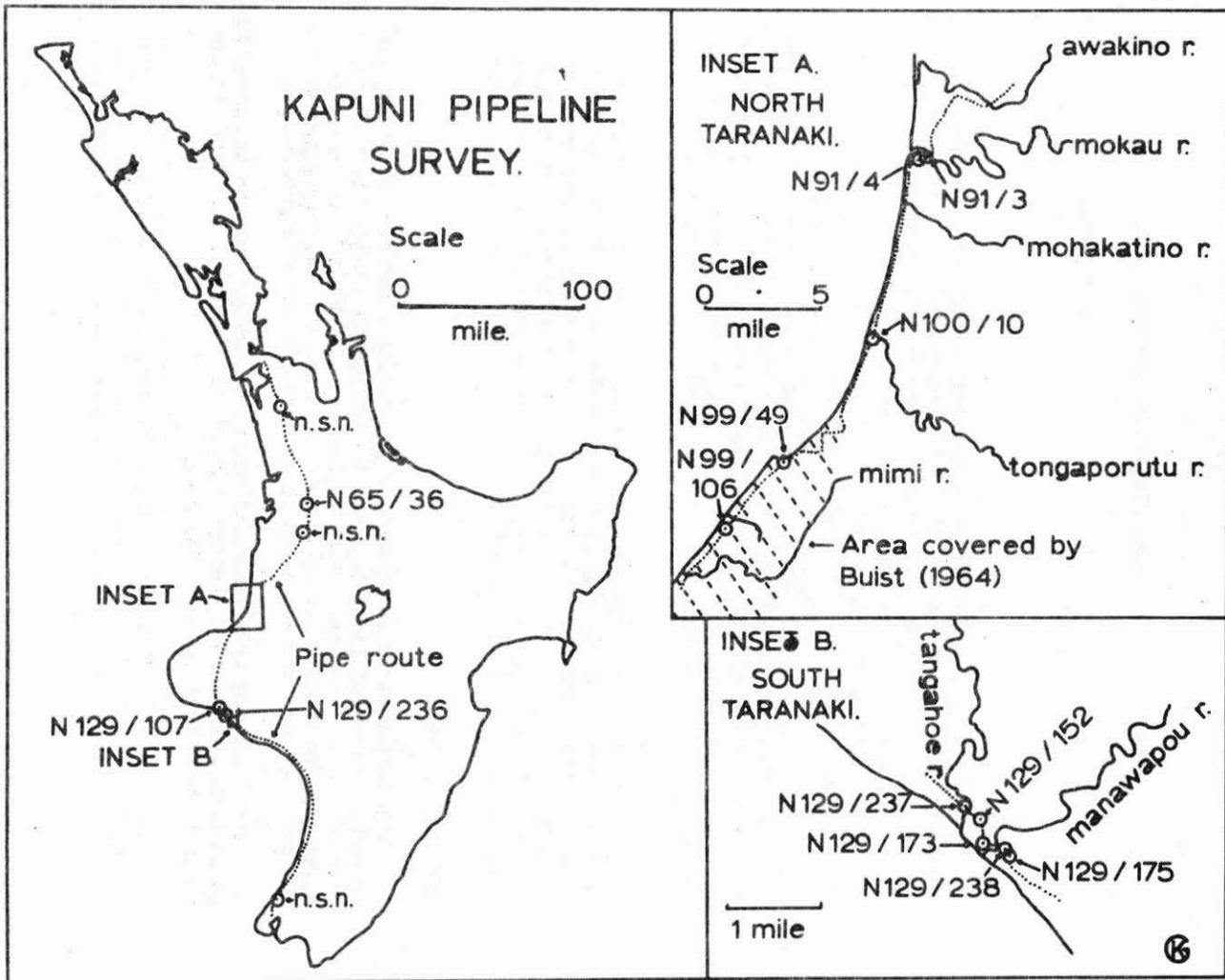
The present writer began this work in mid-April 1968 and it was realized from the beginning that there would have to be two distinct phases to the fieldwork. In the first the whole pipe route would have to be surveyed to locate sites that would be endangered by pipe-laying operations and in the second phase excavation would follow where seen fit. This paper is concerned only with the first phase of this work.

THE INITIAL SURVEY

The survey began on 15 April 1968, moving south from Auckland, and by mid-July most of the pipe route to Wellington had been covered, more intensively in some areas than in others. In Wellington a six-page typescript locating sites on or near the pipe route was presented to the Project engineers and recommendations were made on site protection.

The following brief description of the methods evolved to survey the 60 ft wide construction easement through the length of the North Island is summarized from Gorbey (1969 P5-9).

I. In all Ministry of Works districts, work began with a visit to the local office. Here aerial photographs of the route were viewed and, if possible, the surveyors who plotted the route were interviewed



for these men were able to locate danger spots they had noticed as well as being able to give valuable information on questions of access and personality problems among the landowners.

II. The Ministry of Works' aerial photograph coverage of this project consists of runs 1971 Kapuni - Wellington and 1972 Kapuni - Auckland blown up to a fairly large scale. These could not be used stereoscopically with the equipment on hand so, after the Ministry of Works' visit, the aerial photographs in the local Lands and Survey office were searched with a small pocket stereoscope. In this phase of the work a wide strip, perhaps ten miles either side of the pipe, would be viewed to obtain an idea of relative site density, site distribution, and the typical topographic features selected for visible sites in various areas. Similarly, points that could have held sites without visible features were noted.

It must be realized at this point that an aerial photograph search can never represent a full survey of an area. Gorbey (1967 P170) has listed some of the difficulties inherent in the use of most Land and Survey runs. On the other hand, this article was primarily concerned with hidden sites and hidden site features, and the importance of aerial photographs as a means of quickly searching an area for visible sites should never be underestimated. The present writer found during the Kapuni work that it was very possible to extend the use of aerial photographs beyond just visible sites to typical topographical locations chosen for visible sites and to selecting points that could have held sites with no present visible features. In this respect the environmental analysis work of Elmer Harp in the U.S.A. using multiband photography could have a real future in the New Zealand situation.

III. The third source of site location information consulted was the local N.Z.A.A. files. In several areas, North Taranaki (Buist 1964) and South Taranaki both covered by Dr A. G. Buist, and the midden in the dunes north of Waikanae recorded by Colin Smart, these proved invaluable.

IV. After an idea had been obtained of site distribution on a regional scale, fieldwork was undertaken along the route. The intensity of this work always depended on the relative density of sites in any one area. For this reason the greatest amount of work was done in North and South Taranaki, areas with large numbers of sites per unit area, less in Waikato - King Country and the coastal strip from Foxton to Paraparaumu, and all other areas were surveyed very quickly. In the Foxton - Paraparaumu strip, most sites were masked by sand; hence, the less intensive fieldwork.

In this last, fieldwork phase of the work the basic site location instrument was the strip printed aerial photographs at a scale of 1:12,000

supplied by the Project office. Once a site had been accurately located it was transferred to the N.Z.M.S. I series map and filed with the N.Z.A.A. filing system.

THE SITES ENDANGERED (See Map)

No Site Number. N 51, grid ref. 464 065

On the north bank of the Waikato River above the Tuakau Bridge a group of slit trenches was discovered. These could be of Maori War origin. Then, again, they could be Home Guard defences.

N 65/36. Pirongia Terrace Site

One of this cluster of badly defined terraces was excavated and a small ditch was found running across a ridge. This was far too small to be defensive. There are several such terrace complexes in the immediate vicinity.

No Site Number. N 74, grid ref. 694 065

These terraces can only be regarded as doubtful.

N 91/3. Poole's Knob

This small pa is the subject of a short report (Gorbey 1968). Several test squares were opened but as the results were not promising and as time was limited the excavation was abandoned.

N 91/4.

One hundred and fifty metres along the ridge from N 91/3 was another small pa. Here an elevated part of the knife ridge had been cut at one end by a ditch.

N 100/10.

On the south bank of the Tongaporutu River the pipe route climbs to a coastal flat on which are signs of collapsed bell pits and a possible track impression. The actual site designation applies to a shell midden flowing down a bank just west of the route, and this further indicates some form of occupation on the flat above.

N 99/49. Pukearuhe Pa (Buist 1969, P62)

The pipe route cuts across the southern platform and terraces of this large pa. One of these terraces was chosen for excavation in the second phase of the Kapuni Salvage Project and the results will form the subject of a future report.

N 99/106.

The pipe follows the ridge on which are found the badly eroded remnants of these pits and terraces.

N 129/107.

This group of pits were located in an aerial photograph search but they could not be located in the field due to a tall fodder crop masking the paddock in which they were found.

N 129/236.

The pipe will also cut this group of highly eroded pits.

N 129/237.

A river flat at the mouth of the Tangahoe River appeared to be a likely spot for some form of occupation evidence. In late afternoon sun long and low mounds could be seen from a neighbouring hilltop. These could be agricultural.

N 129/152.

A short distance south-east of N 129/237 a group of pits lies directly in the path of the pipeline. Dr A. G. Buist has conducted limited excavations at this site and uncovered a shallow rectangular pit.

N 129/173. Inman's Redoubt

When originally pegged, the construction easement for the pipe barely missed one corner of the redoubt. Representation was made to Project officials with the result that a promise has been made to take all care while the spread or ditching and pipe-laying team pass through this area.

N 129/238.

Buist is, at the time, excavating this single 18 ft by 6 ft pit. He reports the finding of a number of European artefacts.

N 129/175. Thacker's Redoubt

This redoubt has been fully described by Buist (1968). The pipe route passes through the "low bank enclosure" north-west of the actual redoubt and the western-most large pit south of the redoubt (see Figure 2, Buist 1968, P169).

No Site Number. N 157, grid ref. approx. 538 643

One raised-rim pit on a high ridge above Raumati will be destroyed by pipe-laying operations.

Sites not directly affected by the pipe route were recorded, especially along the coastal strip north of the White Cliffs, North Taranaki. Dr Buist has since done a far more intensive survey of this area and the sites recorded by the present writer will form part of the material to be published by Buist at a later date.

The above list cannot be exhaustive. Time was limited and the winter months made fieldwork most uncomfortable. Undoubtedly some sites have been missed.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thanks are due to all members of the New Zealand Historic Places Trust, in particular Mr Burnett, the Secretary. The rugged terrain crossed by the pipe proved less of an obstacle than it might have been due to Mr Wilfred Shawcross lending his Landrover for the Project. Fieldwork in some areas would have been near impossible but for this assistance. During the survey the present writer received every possible assistance from Ministry of Works officers both at Project office and in the various District offices.

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