



NEW ZEALAND
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
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NEW ZEALAND ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



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Site Despoliation:

The editorial in the Newsletter Vol. IV No. 3, concerned with site despoliation, asks 'What is the position elsewhere - for example ... in Canterbury?'. It seems to be suggesting that Canterbury field workers have not been conscientious about reporting destruction of sites. Significant Canterbury sites are better situated than those of Auckland seem to be, in that they tend to be away from urban areas and Public Works projects, and are often on land not suited to cultivation. Most of the current despoliation is due to natural agencies, which have perhaps been enhanced by clearing and grazing. It is hard to single out some sites as being eroded more rapidly than others.

THREE PA IN INLAND CANTERBURY.

by David Harrowfield

Ngai Tahu tradition indicated that a pa named Whakaepa existed in the Coalgate district. Three pa, presumably corresponding to the tradition, were located some years ago and were surveyed in December 1960. They are situated at 2300 ft. among the foothills of the Southern Alps 40 miles from the sea midway between the Waimakariri and Rakaia Rivers.

Site No. S74/7 grid ref. 276754:

lies on a gentle slope and is a terrace edge pa enclosed on three sides by a rectangular bank and ditch unit, the sides of which measure 300 ft., 210 ft. and 140 ft. A deep ditch extends from a corner of the pa along the contour and contained running water when surveyed. The interior of the pa is undulating with swampy areas and numerous pits.

Site No. S74/8 ref. 275749:

lies 600 yards west of S74/7 and is again a terrace edge pa with sides 120 ft., 140 ft. and 120 ft. defined by a ditch and bank unit. The interior is dry whilst the surroundings are swampy and water flows in the ditch.

Site No. S74/9 ref. 267737:

lies one and a half miles south-west of S74/7. It is rectangular and remarkably small, being 60 ft. by 54 ft. and is enclosed by a ditch and bank unit. Pits are present outside the platform.

Apparently the ditch and bank units of these pa served for drainage as well as defence. A series of ovens and a swamp drainage system have recently been discovered in the vicinity of these sites.