

One Hundred Havens

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THE SETTLEMENT OF THE
MARLBOROUGH SOUNDS

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Introduction

MY INTRODUCTION TO THE MARLBOROUGH SOUNDS was in 1977 when I arrived in our first, and small, yacht from Mana. The yacht sailed at about 2½ knots and it had been a long and stormy crossing. Our small daughter and I huddled on the cramped cockpit floor, soaked with spray and being sick into the same bucket. Now and again, my husband Tim leaned over the tiller to empty the bucket overboard. Our boys, a little older, were sick, then slept below.

At last we reached the sheltered waters behind Perano Head, and then Tory Channel itself. The sun came out, we shrugged off our sodden coats — and the wash from the inter-island ferry drenched us as it smacked against the side.

That trip began an exploration of the Sounds — by boat, by bike and by foot — that lasted almost 40 years, with the two of us, with our children and with our children's children.

Writing this history of settlement in the Sounds has taken me further into this unique environment. I knew something about Captain Cook, his visits and his relationships with the people he met, but little about other early explorers, visitors and surveyors. I was aware Sounds Māori had been tragically affected by the Waipounamu, and earlier, purchases but I knew nothing of their subsequent lives and situations.

In 1977 we were surrounded by farmland over which scrub was steadily encroaching; in other places, the play of light and shade of the bush was being obliterated by the relentless march of rows of pines. But of the story behind that bush and the creation of that landscape, I knew nothing. Researching — and writing — this book has therefore been a fascinating and moving journey.

There are many strands to the history of the Sounds. To ensure that they do not become too confused and to give each strand its due, my account is organised thematically. It is further focused on four broad time periods: from first human settlement to the time of Bellingshausen's visit in 1820; from 1820 to 1856, by which time the land was no longer in Māori hands; from 1856 to 1920 when the first exodus of settlers was underway; and from 1920 to about 1980, when the major options still underlying economic development of the Sounds come into focus. The final chapter brings the story to the present day, exploring what the Sounds now offer to permanent residents, and to Māori in particular as they look to develop ways to sustain and nourish their people.

The story is of two people and two fates. Māori, of East Polynesian origin, first settled in Titirangi in Pelorus Sound about 1300. When Cook arrived in Tōtaranui (Queen Charlotte Sound) in 1770, Māori were living as nomadic hunter-gatherers in a pattern of living well attuned to their environment. Today, archaeological maps and exploration attest to the multiplicity of scattered, often transitory, habitation sites all over the Sounds. But it was only when archaeologist Reg Nichol pointed out to me the pā sites on hills and headlands, the canoe haul-out places on beaches and the kūmara pits that I began to appreciate fully the extent to which Māori had once peopled the Sounds.

By 1856, however, the Crown had ‘bought’ all the Sounds land from Māori, setting aside modest reserves for them to live on. But the reserves were too small to be formed into economic farming units, and the land too poor. And even some of that was subsequently taken for scenic and roading reserves. Māori patterns of settlement and the Māori way of life were set for obliteration.

The early years of Pākehā settlement typify early colonial life in the New Zealand backblocks: a story of new settlers — mostly not well off and lacking the necessary skills — struggling to establish and maintain livelihoods in the face of limited resources and obstacles that ranged from the merely difficult to the nearly impossible. Axe, fire, herds of cattle and flocks of sheep slowly transformed the landscape. A government keen on ‘closer settlement’ funded carefully benched tracks through a rugged landscape of deeply indented bays and steep, high hills; roads would follow. Some settlers graduated from subsistence farming to more profitable enterprise.

Local papers, always keen to report success stories, heralded the opportunities for settlement and for exploiting the Sounds’ other natural resources — the forests, fish, minerals. The direct benefits settlers reaped from those activities were largely fleeting, but lasting indirect benefits included improved shipping and communications.

That second wave of settlers, with their old-world institutions and patterns of existence, had worked with an expanding farm frontier, but after 1920 that frontier contracted and reducing opportunities saw Pākehā leaving the Sounds. However, from the late 1960s, forestry and mussel-farming began to offer new opportunities. Meanwhile a third wave of settlers, long-term intermittent, often inter-generational visitors in the form of boaties and bach owners, had been growing from the 1920s. Their increasingly vocal protests against some of the new commercial developments and their implications for conservation introduced a new view not previously articulated in the Sounds.

Māori were trapped in a different reality. Their participation in the colonial world as traders, whalers, gardeners and landowners fell away from the 1860s onwards. They no longer controlled the land, and lack of capital, contested land titles and systemic and widespread discrimination constantly created barriers to economic opportunities. Well into the twentieth century, Māori survived on mahinga kai (what smaller amounts remained), subsistence farming and a little cash from seasonal work on European farms. In the midst of poverty, illness and epidemics, they got their children to one of two schools available to them. In the 1950s, families began a steady move from the Sounds and surrounding hinterland into the regional centres.

Māori had lived in a rich ecosystem in which they saw themselves in a practical and spiritual relationship with their physical world, and over which they exercised a custodial role, managing the environment for subsequent generations (kaitiakitanga). The arrival of Pākehā and the loss of their land changed all that. With an increasing inability to ‘express their cultural values in practice’ and transmit them to successive generations, iwi faced a loss of ‘material, cultural and spiritual sustenance’.¹

It is a story that historian Rachel Buchanan suggests all New Zealanders must encounter so that they can ‘step up now and take the time to learn, know and feel the history of the places they call home’.²

The final chapter provides an overview of the past 30–40 years. From a Pākehā perspective, earlier trends can be seen working themselves through. From a Māori perspective — and the story, having begun with Māori, aptly ends with them — Treaty of Waitangi settlements are enabling cultural renewal and exciting new futures for many Sounds iwi.

IN NARRATING THE EUROPEAN STORY I had access to a plethora of official reports, parliamentary records and media reports. The redoubtable and ‘patriotic’ *Marlborough Express* and *Pelorus Guardian* in particular provided a sometimes embarrassing amount of rich detail, almost all of it relentlessly positive. In this already extensively documented world, local histories and family memoirs, letters and diaries, and conversations with those who lived or are still living in the Sounds provided further detail and insights.

By contrast, what is publicly accessible on Māori lives from the 1860s to the 1930s is largely official documents and reports written from a European perspective.

Equally, local newspaper reporting tends to throw more light on European responses to an event than on the event itself.

I am very conscious that I am a Wellington writer and have almost no contact with Māori in the Sounds. My account is therefore, inevitably, a Pākehā account; it cannot be otherwise. However, to have left out the Māori history would have invalidated my account, so, wisely or unwisely, and hoping that my Pākehā sensibilities do not intrude more than is inevitable, I pressed on.

In that mission I am indebted to Hilary Mitchell and John Mitchell for their invaluable, detailed three-volume *Te Tau Ihu o Te Waka*. I have drawn considerably also on the Treaty of Waitangi's nuanced 2008 report *Te Tau Ihu o te Waka a Maui: Report on Northern South Island Claims*. Through that report I have been able to access the extraordinary work, dedication and courage of those who brought their stories to the tribunal. That largely unseen and unsung work, and the tribunal's considered assessment of the material, have allowed me to gain some understanding of Māori history in the Sounds.

All perspectives have enriched my understandings; I hope my readers will be able to say the same.

Finally, I remain particularly indebted and grateful to Rangitāne kaumātua Richard Bradley for his account of growing up in the Sounds in the 1960s, for his narrative of land, legend and belonging, and of the past and presentness of history.

A word about place names

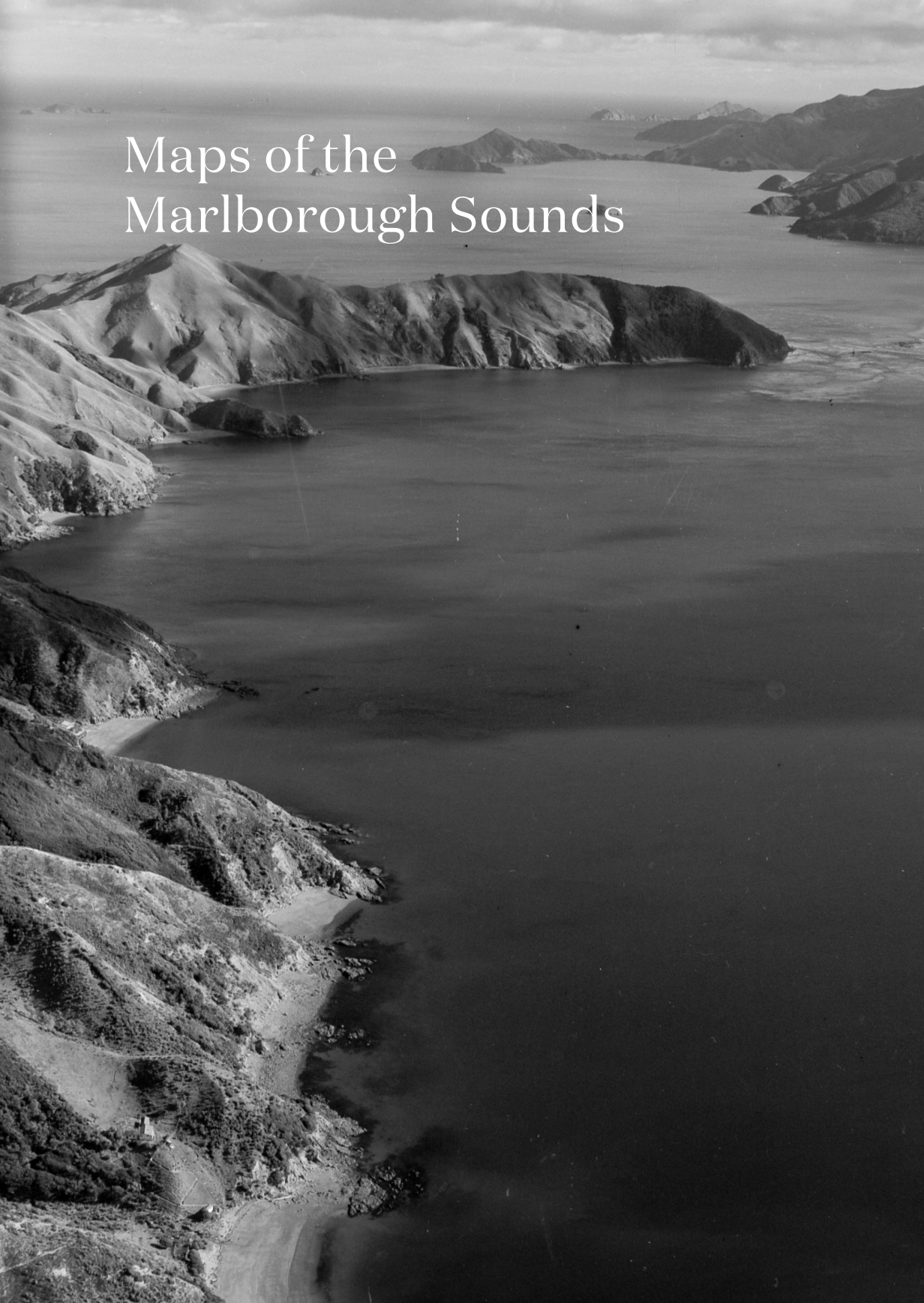
One of the things that struck me as I researched this book was the almost total loss of Māori place names in the Sounds as new European arrivals took over the land. I don't imagine the new settlers gave any thought to this, but for Māori that process must have intensified the loss of land and deracination from the world they knew. They no longer owned the land; they saw the names that had long carried their history unilaterally replaced in a further annihilation of culture, even of identity. To quote contemporary historian Danny Keenan, names were part of a link to living 'ancient landscapes'; their loss, part of that existential loss that Māori faced when their land was alienated, was one that 'cut the essence of Māori society'.³

Today, a new naming system is evolving to rectify that loss. In this book, apart from place names in the captions, I have attempted to highlight the issue in a small

way by using, at first mention in the first and last chapters, a hybrid Māori–European name (where both forms exist). For second and subsequent references I have defaulted to the Māori name, unless referring specifically to names bestowed by European explorers. In the chapters between, I default to the name most commonly used today. I include below a reference guide to these usages.

Anaho — Cannibal Cove
Kākāpō — Guards Bay
Kura Te Au — Tory Channel
Meretoto — Ship Cove
Motungarara — Tītī Island
Ngāwhatu Kai-ponu — The Brothers
Puna-rua-whiti — Endeavour Inlet
Rangitoto Ki Te Tonga — D’Urville Island
Raukawa Moana — Cook Strait
Takapourewa — Stephens Island
Te Akaroa — West Entry Point
Te Anamāhanga — Port Gore
Te Hoiere — Pelorus Sound
Te Tau Ihu — top of the South Island
Te Koro-o-Kupe — Cloudy Bay
Te Pākekā — Maud Island
Te Taonui a Kupe — Cape Jackson
Te Waipounamu — South Island
Te Whanganui — Port Underwood
Tōtaranui — Queen Charlotte Sound

Maps of the Marlborough Sounds







Takapourewa Stephens Island

Nile Head

Port Hardy

South Arm

East Arm

Rangitoto Islands

Whareātea Bay

Greville Harbour

Rangitoto Ki Te Tonga
D'Urville Island

D'Urville Peninsula

Clay Pt

TE AUMITI FRENCH PASS

Anaru French Pass

Sauvage Pt

CURRENT BASIN

ADMIRALTY BAY

Bulwer

Port Ligar

Te Akaroa
West Entry Pt

Ketu Bay

Richmond Bay

Te Pākekā
Maud Island

Kauaroa Bay

TAWHITINUI REACH

Brightlands Bay

Elaine Bay

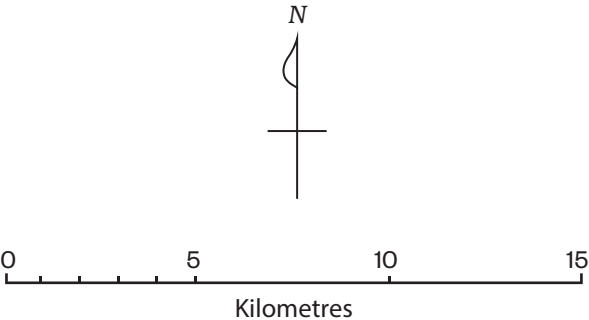
Fitzroy Bay

Te Tōwaka Bay

Hamilton Bay

Okuri Bay

Marlborough Sounds (detail)





CROISILLES HARBOUR

Okiri Bay

Penzance Bay

Tuna Bay

Te Mako Bay

Tennyson Inlet

Ngawhakawhiti Bay

Brightlands Bay

Miro Bay

Tiri Ora Bay

North West Bay

Fairy Bay

Penguin Bay

Nydia Bay

Mud Bay

Putanui Pt

Black Pt

Kaulina Bay

Cullen Pt

Havelock

Canvastown

6

Mōetapu Double Bay

Mahakipawa Arm

Anakiwa

The Grove

Linkwater

WAITOHI
PICTON

GROVE ARM

Okiwa Bay

KENEPURU

Onahau Bay

Loohmāra Bay

Tawero Pt

Marys Bay

Opani-aputa Pt

Hopai Bay

Elie Bay

Crail Bay

Crail Bay

St Omer

Wet Inlet

Four Fathom Bay

Nikau Bay

HIKAPU REACH

MAHAU SOUND

TENNYSON INLET

TE HOIERE PELORUS SOUND

Kauauroa Bay



Marlborough Sounds (detail)



0 5 10 15

Kilometres





1. Settling the Land

At times, with the sea barely touched by wind, the islands in the Sounds appear to be floating. At other times, katabatic winds sweep down the valleys . . . and solid sheets of rain reduce the world to a grey mass of water.

Planes flying into Marlborough across Raukawa Moana Cook Strait pass over the steep eastern cliffs of Arapaoa Island. Formed, like others in the Sounds, by heavy coastal swells beating on exposed rock, they delineate the south-east side of Kura Te Au Tory Channel.¹ The narrow, rocky entrance of the channel, which appears suddenly, almost improbably, from this coastline, was long feared by ships' masters for the force of its tides and, in southerly blows, the violence of the sea at its entrance. Kura Te Au winds west towards the many bays that typify Tōtaranui Queen Charlotte Sound. Behind those bays, precipitous, tortured land on the western side snakes out towards Raukawa Moana Cook Strait, separating that sound from the great reaches of Te Hoiere Pelorus Sound. The dramatic peaks that dominate the skyline behind Tennyson Inlet lie to the far west.

Massive geological forces shaped these ranges and waterways. As the Australian and Pacific tectonic plates collided, land was uplifted, faulted into blocks and tilted towards the newly forming Raukawa Moana. This tilting and the consequent river erosion along faults aligned Tōtaranui and Te Hoiere to the north-east, towards the strait; Kenepuru Sound was dragged to the east-north-east, along the major alpine and



Looking down into Kura Te Au Tory Channel, Arapaoa Island and to Tōtaranui Queen Charlotte Sound. WHITES AVIATION, ALEXANDER TURNBULL LIBRARY, WA-47659-F



ABOVE Looking across Forysth Bay, just through Allen Strait (Guards Pass), in the outer Te Hoiere Pelorus Sound, 2007. HELEN BEAGLEHOLE

BELOW Yacht at anchor, Tawa Bay, Endeavour Inlet, Tōtaranui Queen Charlotte Sound, February 2011. Summer in the Sounds does not necessarily bring good weather. HELEN BEAGLEHOLE

other nearby faults that run parallel throughout Marlborough. Such tilting, too, may have altered the course of Te Hoiere. Today it flows out past Havelock; it may formerly have flowed south-east, through the Kaituna Valley, as a tributary of the Wairau River.

After several million years of tectonic upheaval came the numerous glacial cycles of the Pleistocene era; the last one peaked about 20,000 years ago. At that point an estimated 30 per cent of the earth's surface is thought to have been covered with ice, and permafrost, which stretched from the edge of the ice some hundreds of kilometres into, for instance, North America and Eurasia. Sea levels fell dramatically around the globe, only to rise again as the ice sheets melted and the sea flooded in. During that time, Aotearoa New Zealand's two islands were connected by a land bridge so that much of what is Raukawa Moana today was dry land. As the sea began to rise at the end of that glacial period, and as the land in the area began to tilt downwards, the ancient rivers running through the Marlborough valleys were progressively drowned, forming the Sounds we see today.

Today the dull green of exotic pine forest in parts of Tōtaranui seems to absorb the light. Clear-felling can denude whole flanks of hills; dead trunks on the skyline indicate attempts to control wilding pines. Elsewhere, high rugged country, now increasingly covered with the native bush that earlier European settlers strove so hard to burn off, rises from the sea's edge. Large areas of easily cultivatable land are rare in Te Hoiere and almost non-existent in Tōtaranui.

At times, with the sea barely touched by wind, the islands in the Sounds appear to be floating. At other times, katabatic winds sweep down the valleys, even in the almost land-locked Kenepuru and Mahau sounds, and solid sheets of rain reduce the world to a grey mass of water. Williwaws — 'whirlwinds that come walking out of every bay and all over the place' — appear from nowhere, making 'clouds of water spray, and white foam dance high into the air'.² On a good day, a clear sea drops from the deeply indented coastline to translucent depths; in poor weather the water moves restlessly against a grey, forbidding shore.

MĀORI CREATION MYTHS EMBODY cataclysmic forces. In one version associated with the Sounds area, Ranginui, the sky father, and Papatūānuku, the earth mother, lay in a close embrace. From them came their children, the gods. Longing for light and air, they forced their parents apart, creating the world and its diurnal and seasonal cycles. Later, as the great chief Aoraki and his brothers were visiting their

father Ranginui's second wife, and exploring the southern oceans of Papatūānuku, they incurred the wrath of Tāwhirimātea, god of weather, who whipped up such storms that the waka in which they travelled, its crew and its cargo were all turned to stone. This was the origin of Te Waka o Aoraki (the canoe of Aoraki) or the South Island. Following a different tradition, the South Island is also known as Te Waka a Māui. The intricate trceries of the great carved prow of the canoe formed Te Tau Ihu o Te Waka a Māui — the top of the South Island: Farewell Spit, Golden Bay, Tasman Bay and the bays and islands of the Marlborough Sounds and Cloudy Bay.³

Many place names in the Sounds are linked to that legendary traveller Kupe. Differing versions of the stories of his shaping of the Sounds are common to all local hapū. Kura Te Au is said to have been named from the red blood of the wheke (octopus) that Kupe fought and killed and that still stains the waters of the channel. Te Umu Wheke, the octopus oven, now Umuwheke Bay on the western side of Arapaoa (formerly Arapawa) Island, was where Kupe's adversary was cooked. Near Picton, the spring Te Mimi o Kupe (place of urinating) or Wedge Point was formed before Kupe's party left the Sounds. He left his companions Kokomohua and Amerikiwhati, tiny islets just south-west of Cape Koamaru, to guard his resources in Tōtaranui. Te Koro-o-Kupe Cloudy Bay is held to derive from the dredge or scoop with which Kupe harvested oysters.⁴

The long reef off Te Taonui a Kupe (now Cape Jackson) was Kupe's fishing net, and his footprints are visible in the rocks at Te Anamāhanga Port Gore. Other myths associate Kupe with nearby Rangitoto Ki Te Tonga D'Urville Island and Takapourewa Stephens Island. Early Europeans were told about the islets to the north of Arapaoa Island called Ngāwhatu Kai-ponu The Brothers. They were the eyeballs of Whekenui, the giant octopus killed by Kupe. This was a place of such extreme tapu that until the 1820s Māori crossing Raukawa Moana for the first time covered their eyes with kawakawa leaves to ensure that they saw only the paddles of their waka and the sea. The eyes in the great canoe prows were also covered, the leaves being removed only when the islets were left far behind.⁵

Twentieth-century ethnographers attributed a particular importance to the myths and legends, arguing that they were conceptualised as 'detailed oral maps', providing an understanding of geography, of how to move around the country, exploit its resources and facilitate settlement. The Kupe stories in particular were seen as naming the coast for future generations of travellers. '[C]omplete with survey posts and warning beacons of the most dangerous passages', their intricate

detail enabled people to voyage across the vast Pacific and arrive at precise points.⁶

The legends of Ngahue, explorer contemporary of Kupe and the atua (god) of pounamu (greenstone), and Poutini, the taniwha who assisted him, played a similar role in helping iwi (tribes) locate such resources as the deposits of metamorphosed or ‘baked’ argillite on Rangitoto Ki Te Tonga, which early Māori used extensively, and the outcrops of pounamu in the outer part of Te Hoiere.⁷

There is no single strong oral version of these myths, however. Some scholars have more recently become sceptical about some interpretations and the existence of oral maps, yet the stories, in their varied forms, have continued to be passed down.⁸

First peoples

Māori, descended from people of East Polynesian origin, first settled in New Zealand in substantial numbers over a thousand years ago. There was a large settlement in Te Hoiere, at Tītirangi Bay, around AD 1300 to 1320,⁹ but ‘differing traditional narratives . . . different perspectives . . . and competing interests’¹⁰ mean that today there is no single, generally accepted account of the area’s occupation and settlement.

However, in the seventeenth century, Rangitāne, Ngāti Apa and Ngāti Kuia, descendants from *Kurahaupō*, one of the seven great waka said to have come from the homeland of Hawaiki, slowly migrated from the Mahia Peninsula to Te Tau Ihu, the top of the South Island. (‘Kurahaupō waka’ now serves as a kind of shorthand for a complex genealogical history that includes ‘original peoples’ — Ngāti Wairangi, Ngāti Tara and Ngāti Tūmatakōkiri — encountered when the waka first arrived in Te Tau Ihu.)¹¹

The Waitangi Tribunal report (Wai 785) on Te Tau Ihu posits that Ngāti Māmoë, Ngāti Tara and Ngāti Tūmatakōkiri were established in Te Tau Ihu in the seventeenth century. In the mid-to-late 1600s some Rangitāne and Ngāi Tahu, bound by close whakapapa links, crossed to the Sounds from the North Island. Late that century, Rangitāne settled in Te Whanganui Port Underwood and fought with Ngāti Māmoë; in Te Hoiere, Ngāti Kurī (a Ngāi Tahu hapū or subtribe) battled with Ngāti Tara. Intermittent fighting followed as Rangitāne and Ngāti Kurī attempted to move into the Wairau area.¹²

Towards the end of the eighteenth century intertribal conflict was constant, and during the first two decades of the nineteenth century other northern iwi groupings became dominant. The situation was fluid and territorial dominance was not fixed.

‘Regions could be shared along with whakapapa’ because boundary adjustments, marriage over a number of generations and successive migrations saw different descent lines intertwined. Thus people could live together in some places, while ‘settlements belonging to one group could be found interspersed within a general locality dominated by another’.¹³

As a major staging point for travel across Raukawa Moana, the Sounds were closely linked to, and traded with, a wider world. The early discovery of the Nelson mineral belt and the extensive mining of argillite on Rangitoto Ki Te Tonga placed Tōtaranui in particular on an important trade route for pounamu from the West Coast and obsidian (volcanic glass) from the North Island.¹⁴ A block of argillite found on Hippi Island (at the southern tip of Motuara Island), for instance, and the small stone carved faces found at Titirangi Bay, indicate an extensive and effective network in which Sounds iwi played a part.¹⁵

Around the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries, the local iwi used argillite from Rangitoto Ki Te Tonga and on the mainland to make adze heads. Evidence of adze-head manufacture at a number of sites suggests a thriving industry.¹⁶ Flaking the hard stone produced sophisticated artefacts and ornaments. But by the end of that period, and once Māori across the country had learned to cut and polish pounamu, a burgeoning creativity overlay many aspects of their lives, with the production of highly fashioned and beautifully styled ornaments and weapons. The use of pounamu to make carving tools also led to the creation of elegantly carved wooden combs, weapons, carvings and house fronts.¹⁷ A quadrangular adze-head was developed, often associated with pā walls and ditches that were a feature of Māori habitation in the Sounds.

The 200–400 people living in the Sounds in the late eighteenth century¹⁸ appear to have continued their nomadic hunter-gatherer pattern of moving between the hundreds of small, transitory habitations on the mainland,¹⁹ propelled by conflicts with neighbouring communities, seasonal opportunities to forage, and access to fortified pā offering protection.²⁰ In winter they repaired their weapons and boats and made clothes. Over the summer they moved ‘up and down in different parties . . . sometimes laying in the Canoes and sometimes on shore, as there is a number of huts in every Cove’.²¹ Far from haphazard, these stopping places were part of ‘a carefully, perhaps ritually, regulated seasonal round of fishing and food-gathering activities’ in which, during the summer, Māori were able to provide against winter shortages.²²

Basic, prefabricated temporary shelters were erected with practised aplomb in the small camping places during food-hunting expeditions. Māori carried the

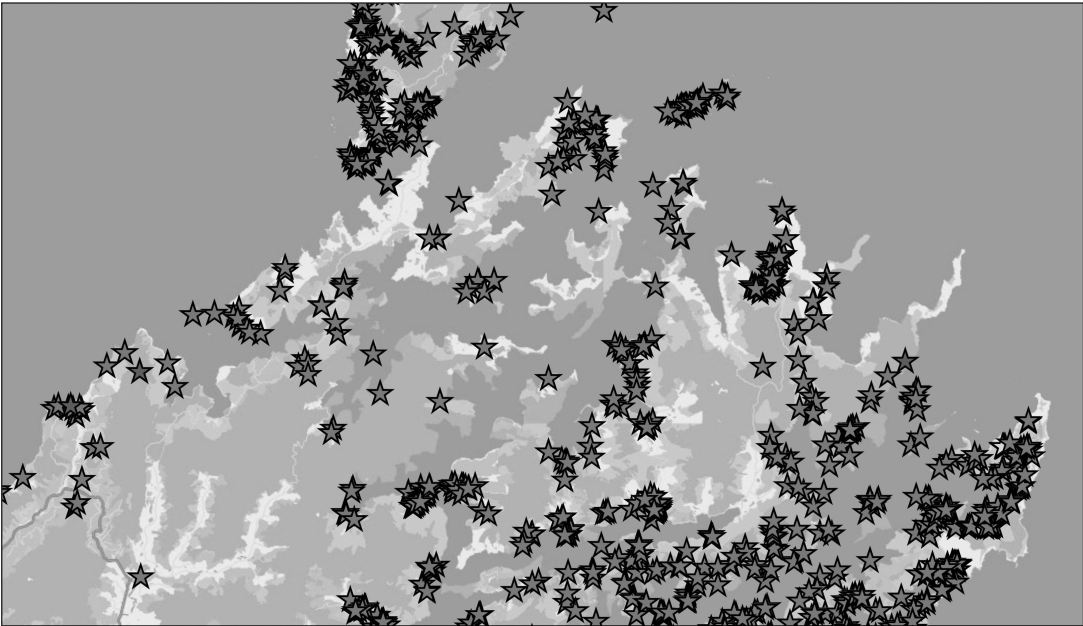
framework with them. Lieutenant James Cook observed: ‘The moment the Canoes landed men leaped out and at once took possession of a spot of ground, by tearing up the pla[n]ts etc or sticking up some part of the framing of the hut.’ The women ‘were not idle, some were taking care of the Canoes, some securing the Provisions, and the few utensils they are possessed of, and others went to gather dry sticks to make a fire to dress their victuals’.²³

Some sites were substantial, most were small;²⁴ many were so thickly clustered that to map them is to almost delineate the coastline itself — the map on page 28 gives a sense of an extraordinarily habited landscape. The sites were not limited to sheltered bays offering apparently good food resources and opportunities to garden. Their diet was wide-ranging, with middens found containing shells of mussel, pipi, cockle, whelk or mud-snail shells, as well as remains of fish, berries, dogs, seals and birds.²⁵ Even an incomplete list of the fish caught by Māori living throughout Te Tau Ihu reveals a rich variety: crayfish, mullet, elephant fish, sole, tarakihi, moki, blue cod, salmon, gurnard, skate, mackerel, parrotfish, leatherjacket and butterfish.

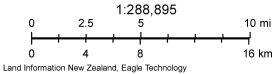
Birds were another source of protein. Kākāpō, mokai, kākāriki, robins and tits, kiwi (highly valued for their feathers for weaving cloaks), kākā (easy prey and particularly prized for their tender, well-flavoured meat),²⁶ rail, shags and penguins were all fair game. Kurī or dogs were bred and killed for meat,²⁷ and, in all probability, Māori made short work of the breeding pigs, hens and goats that Cook and his men liberated, though hens may have survived briefly in the bush behind Meretoto Ship Cove.²⁸

Particularly after the cooler conditions of the Little Ice Age (1303–1860) precluded kūmara cultivation in the South Island, fern and fernroot became an important (and apparently pleasant) food source.²⁹ Fern and fish were both dried to last over winter and were carried on the seasonal migrations. New dating techniques mean that earlier conclusions reached in terms of dating gardening activity can no longer be assumed to be correct, but it seems that, like their counterparts in northern coastal and warmer inland regions, and coastal parts of the South Island, Māori in the Sounds gardened from the time their Polynesian forebears arrived.

Some garden sites, like that in Titirangi Bay, one of the most complex and important, were sufficiently large to challenge some assumptions about seasonal movements.³⁰ To date, archaeology has uncovered nine distinct garden sites in the bay. The Cattleyards Flat site, with its middens, terracing and earth walls, was ‘[p]robably the most impressive garden site in the South Island’.³¹ Using sometimes quite substantial stones, Māori developed single stone heaps, stone lines, double

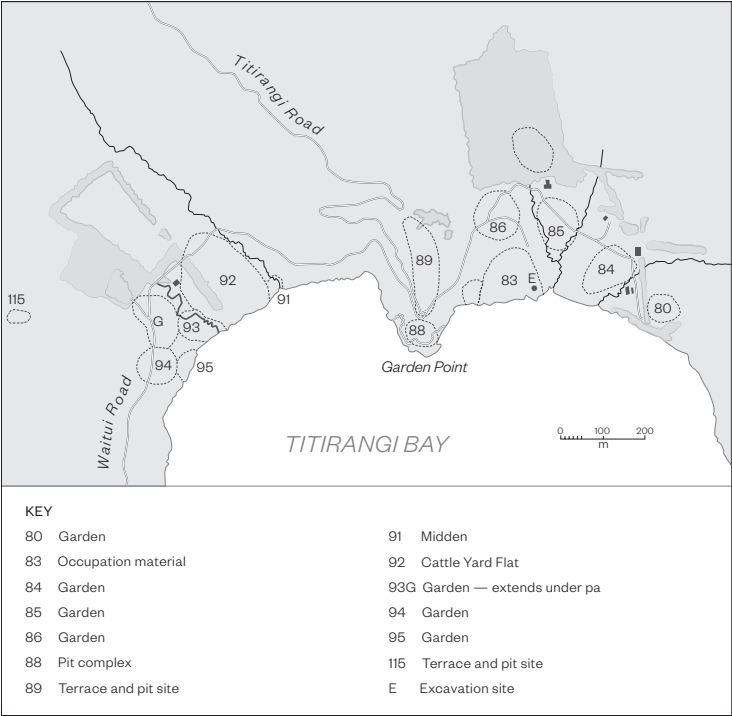


Current, pending and inactive NZAA sites, June 2020.



ABOVE The archaeological record of the Sounds covers some 600 to 700 years of habitation. Although only a small number of sites would have been in use at any one time, the range and extent of visitation of favoured spots is striking. As a Rangitāne kaumātua said, ‘My people covered the ground like ants.’ ARCHSITE, NEW ZEALAND ARCHAEOLOGY ASSOCIATION

RIGHT Titirangi Bay archaeological map, showing the extent and number of garden sites. AFTER MICHAEL M. TROTTER, MAP 7, *TITIRANGI ARCHEOLOGICAL SURVEY: AN INTERIM REPORT* (CHRISTCHURCH: CANTERBURY MUSEUM, 1977)



stone lines, and double stone lines with what appear to be paving stones between them, perhaps to hold soil. As elsewhere in the surrounding area, pebbles were added to the soil to warm and aerate the ground.³²

At Brightlands Bay in Te Hoiere a low stone wall may indicate early Māori agriculture,³³ as do the gentle slopes and lie of the land at the largest of five villages on the north-west side of Te Pākekā Maud Island.³⁴ In Tōtaranui the number of garden sites in East Bay on Arapaoa Island indicates extensive cultivation.³⁵

The gardens grew kūmara. Although the cooler, wetter weather from the end of the fourteenth century made kūmara cultivation more difficult in the Sounds and farther south, mounds built with organic matter at the core provided an excellent nursery and growing environment and encouraged the plants to develop roots.³⁶ Pits were dug for kūmara storage, although there has been some fanciful speculation about other uses. Little fireplaces, quite distinct from the stone-lined hearths used in house floors, may also have been built to keep crops warm during cold spells.³⁷

Fire was a useful tool in cultivation. Ernst Dieffenbach, naturalist on the New Zealand Company vessel *Tory* in 1839, recorded kūmara growing in the bays around Te Awaitei, with bush on the hillsides burned to improve soil fertility before planting. In 1845 Samuel Stephens, surveying for the company, noted that in Tōtaranui, possibly thousands of acres had been cleared by burning,³⁸ though this may have been to encourage bracken growth.

Although archaeological evidence indicates that both Māori men and women were taller than their European counterparts,³⁹ and Cook and his men commented on their healthy appearance, life for Māori, in the Sounds as elsewhere, could be short, hard and sometimes hungry. Evidence of the abrasive diet of gritty shellfish and fernroot that gradually prevailed after 1500 suggests that agricultural produce was too unreliable to be a main source of sustenance. Poor diet resulted in bone deterioration and occasional malnutrition; people died early. Yet there is no doubting the admiration with which Cook's men viewed the Māori they met. 'When a New Zealander stands forth,' wrote American John Ledyard, with Cook on his third voyage, 'the subsequent idea is . . . there stands a man.'

COOK'S MEN ALSO ADMIRED the psychological strength that Māori brought to the turbulent times in which they lived. During the periods Cook and his men spent in the Sounds, violent and often intergenerational tribal warfare was still a constant.



A south-east ridge on Motuara Island looking towards Long Island, Tōtaranui Queen Charlotte Sound. The steep drop-off to the sea illustrates the challenge marauding parties would have faced when attacking. COLLECTION OF HAWKE'S BAY MUSEUMS TRUST, RUAWHARO TĀ-Ū-RANGI, 15751, GIFTED BY JASPER HERRICK

Even as Māori constructed their temporary shelters, they were careful to place their weapons within easy reach.⁴⁰ James King, second officer on Cook's final voyage, was alive to the psychological pressures of the constant warfare. An account of 'their surprizes by night & other adventures' gave King 'a terrible picture of their mode of living, keeping constant guard and sleeping with their arms in their hands'.⁴¹

Cook, too, described Māori living 'under perpetual apprehensions of being received some injury or a nother from some other'. They would attack at night and, if finding their enemy unguarded, could kill 'every soul that falls in their way' and eat or mutilate the dead. Because seemingly minor slights like brief hunting incursions into others' tribal areas could cause such incidents, war 'keeps them continually upon their guard'.⁴² Fear of cannibalism, Banks suggested, meant that warriors, even when looking to pick a fight, often travelled with '[w]omen and young children in arms as if they were afraid to leave them behind'.⁴³ Such constant harassment must have occasioned considerable tension, yet Ledyard gives testimony of the 'native courage of Maori, their great personal prowess, their ineversible [sic] intrepidity, and determined fixed perspective'.⁴⁴

This pattern of warfare brought 'massive disruptions' among Sounds Māori,⁴⁵ who resorted to their pā or fortified villages when circumstances warranted. The large numbers Cook saw on Hipa Island on his first visit were villagers from Anahou, Little Waikawa and Anakakata, expecting a retaliatory raid from northern and eastern tribes beyond the Sounds. They dispersed during Cook's three-week stay. On his second voyage three years later the pā was abandoned and the vegetable garden where Cook had planted English vegetables was overgrown. By the 1777 voyage the houses and palisades had been rebuilt and were in good order, though the pā was unoccupied.⁴⁶

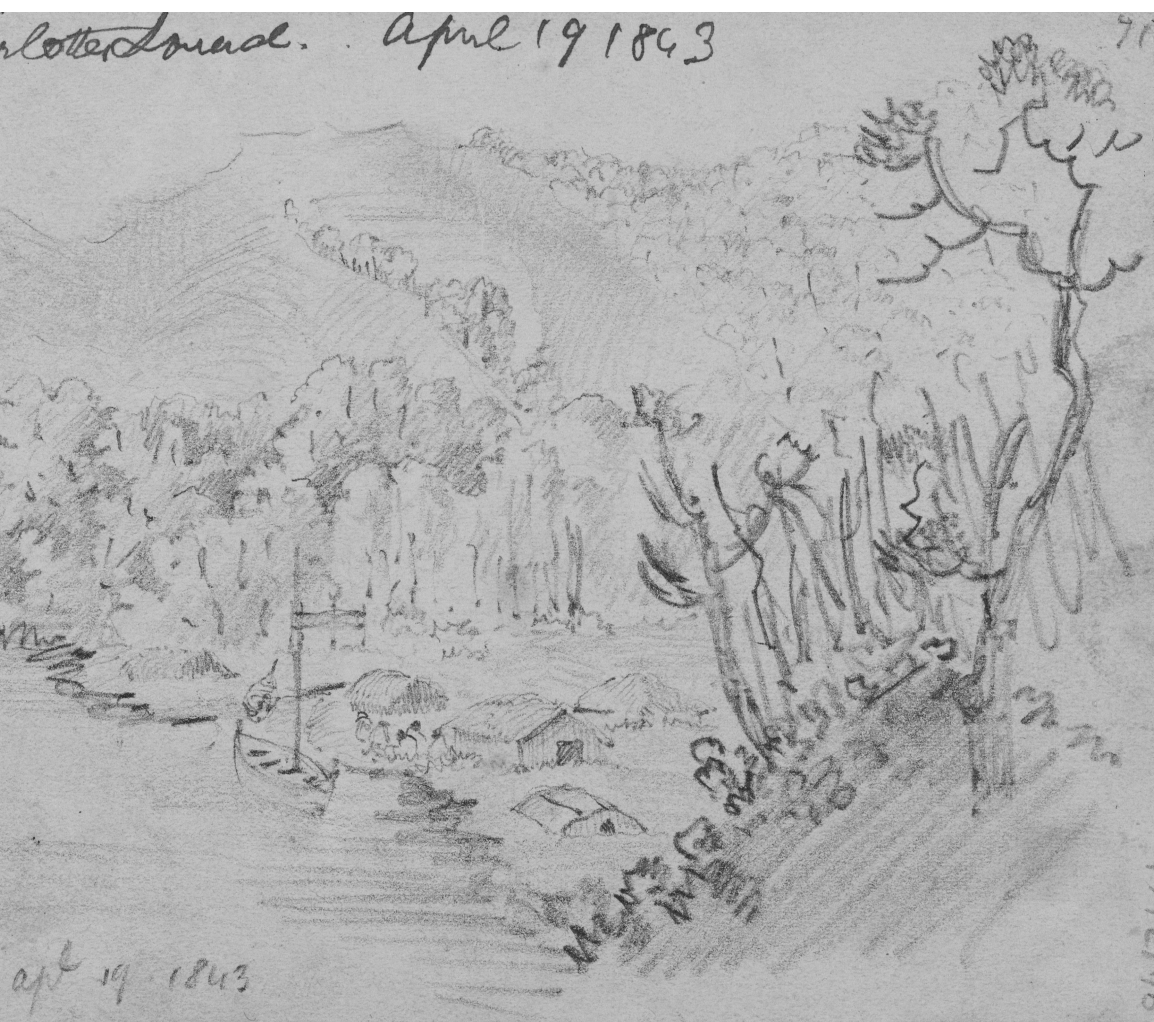
In 1839 James Coutts Crawford, who would become the region's provincial geologist, recorded that the 100 or so people living at Anahou had been dreading an attack by Ngāti Raukawa, who were themselves fighting Ngāti Awa, the parent tribe of the Anahou people. Those at Anahou had set up watch stations and had fortified the pā, though they were reportedly reluctant to retreat because they would have lost their vegetable gardens.⁴⁷ However, pā had other than defensive purposes. One of Cook's men considered a pā near Amerikiwhati Island as a defended 'separate . . . place of retreat and a magazine for securing . . . dried fish, fern root, and other provisions'.⁴⁸

Pā built with extraordinary ingenuity, skill and effort supported the many kāinga (villages), urupā (burial grounds) and tauranga waka (canoe landing places) dotted around the coastline. They help reinforce that understanding of the Sounds as a well-inhabited region. A pā employed geography to maximise the tribe's hold on it. Te Akaroa



J. W. Barnicoat's sketch of Ngākuta Bay, Tōtaranui Queen Charlotte Sound, March 1843, shows the relationship of village with pā. Here, the pā is on the forested foreland, with the village and its raised food store on the shore. HOCKEN COLLECTIONS UARE TAOKA O HAKENA, UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO, 94/244 A & B

West Entry Point, the high, narrow headland opening the eastern entrance to Port Ligar, has multiple terraces, pits and a defensive ditch. At Cannon Point, a pā that is open to north-west Raukawa Moana weather looks across to Te Akaroa and the land rises steeply above the sea on both sides to offer good natural defences.⁴⁹ At the entrance to the sound, in Kākāpō Guards Bay, there are two pā sites, one in Titirangi Bay, the other on the promontory of Dan's Nose, where, despite challenging geography, the carefully designed village and the high terraces are invisible from the sea.⁵⁰



When Cook and others visited the pā on Hipa Island, Joseph Banks thought that sides of the island were so steep that fortifications were almost redundant. On the highest point was a 'town', and when William Bayly, astronomer on the second voyage (1772–75), visited he estimated there were 32 or 33 houses on a reasonably level area about 90 metres long and 9 metres wide.⁵¹ Posts driven into the ground formed a palisade. Long vines were interwoven between these posts and the gaps filled 'with small brushwood'. An additional defence was the small entrance door to the interior of the pā, which allowed only one person at a time to crawl in.⁵² The island also had middens and a pit.

There were at least six other fortified villages in the vicinity of Meretoto, each with strong defences that capitalised on their geography. At one, 'evidently a rock

lying off Blumine or Pickersgill Island', the cliffs and rocks formed excellent natural defences. They were so steep, said Banks, 'that it was almost in danger of our necks that we climbed up'.⁵³ There, too, was evidence of Māori's extraordinary ability to create 'living space out of every habitable metre'. Along with one 'fighting stage' there were 80–90 houses.⁵⁴

Within such fortifications most structures were small, low, squat rectangular huts. Heavily, and effectively, thatched with bark covered with long grass or flax, they looked rounded; their single low door necessitated entering on hands and knees; one of the two fires was just inside the door (the smoke may have helped to repel the tiresome sandflies); low sleeping places were covered with dry grass and rushes. The small interior spaces made for warmth,⁵⁵ but William Anderson, the naturalist on Cook's second voyage, described them as 'poorly ventilated, smoky and too low to allow their inhabitants to stand upright'.⁵⁶ Lean-to style constructions, perhaps used for cooking or manufacture, and solidly built storage huts were sometimes added, as well as larger buildings 'exactly', William Anderson thought, in the style of an English country barn and apparently for a 'principal' person.⁵⁷

Surprisingly, given the constant warfare, none of these pā had a permanent water supply. But deceitful attacks, where the hosts were slaughtered by those coming in apparent friendship, appear to have been favoured over laying siege, so residents did not fear being imprisoned for long periods without supplies. Moreover, as the water in containers at Amerikiwhati pā demonstrated, a fair amount of water could be stored if needed.⁵⁸

AS LIEUTENANT JAMES COOK SAILED into Tōtaranui, which he would call Queen Charlotte Sound, on 15 January 1770, he passed the pā on Hipa Island, the islet off Motuara Island. The people there then 'set up a loud shout and every man brandished his weapons which none of them were without'.⁵⁹ He anchored at Meretoto — Ship Cove to him. On all three of his voyages he would come here for the same reasons as Māori: in search of sheltered anchorage, abundant fresh water and open ground for gardens. Cook also sought a campsite offering space for his carpenters and sailmakers, and the long sloping beach would allow him to careen his ship.

When the *Endeavour* was at anchor, canoes full of well-armed Māori from Hipa Island 'rowed round and round the ship defying and threatening us as usual and at last hove some stones aboard which we all expected to be a prelude of some behaviour



Meretoto Ship Cove has sheltering hills, deep water close inshore, freshwater streams and flat land where Cook could careen his ship and set up his observatory. It was a haven to which Cook returned on subsequent voyages. V. C. BROWNE & SON, 13361

which would oblige us to fire upon them'. An old man indicating he wanted to come aboard defused the situation. The English encouraged him and, although some of his companions tried to hold him back, he was 'receivd in as freindly a manner as we possibly could and had many presents given to him, which he returned to the canoes who immediately joind in a war dance — whether to shew their freindship or enmity it is impossible to say, we have so often seen them do it upon both those occasions'.⁶⁰

The Māori left and Cook's crew set about fishing, pulling up 300 pounds (136 kilograms) with a few hauls of the seine — more than they could possibly use, something they often did. They also shot some shags and 'some few other wild fowl which to people in our situation was fresh food not to be dispised'.⁶¹ Banks, a few days later, recorded that the shags, which 'we roast or stew', were 'not bad provisions, so between shags and fish this is the place of greatest plenty of any we have seen'.⁶²

The following morning when Cook's crew began careening the ship and making good the storm damage suffered on the voyage, Māori arrived with fish, and although the English thought it stank, Cook had it taken on board to encourage trade. He appears to have overreacted to a somewhat aggressive-seeming trader and fired some small shot,⁶³ but the locals remained willing to talk and to answer questions.

In spite of two further shooting incidents, which both Cook and Banks deplored though there is no record of the officers involved being disciplined, there were constant interchanges between Māori and Europeans — trading, visiting and seeking information, with Tupaia, the Tahitian navigator who had accompanied Cook, interpreting. Most of the English accounts compiled during all three voyages reported Māori as remarkably fearless and friendly (a word repeatedly used).⁶⁴ Even after the fraught initial contact, the Māori at Hippa Island pā, wrote Cook, 'shew'd not the least dislike of our coming but on the contrary shew'd us all over the place'.⁶⁵ Banks, too, recorded 'all possible demonstrations of friendship, if the numberless hugs and kisses we got from both sexes old and young in return for our ribbands and beads may be accounted such: they also sold and gave us a good many fish with which we went home well pleased with our new acquaintance'.⁶⁶

There were, of course, strains on this reciprocal relationship: the exasperation caused by petty pilfering, the discord over Cook's requests for further provisions and, of considerably more moment, the massacre at Grass Cove on the second voyage, when the 'hasty, foolish behaviour'⁶⁷ of master's mate Jack Rowe, 'who evidently thought you should take a high hand with "Indians"',⁶⁸ ended in his and all the crew members of one of Captain Tobias Furneaux's cutters being killed and eaten.

However, Cook, visiting the beach on his third voyage in February 1777, acted with forbearance and restraint, writing that killing anyone ‘cou’d answer no purpose at all’⁶⁹ and, wanting to reassure those involved,⁷⁰ made it clear he sought neither revenge nor punishment. His crew, however, saw things differently; Cook’s officers felt that Māori had become contemptuous of them — indeed, historian Anne Salmond argues that Māori regard of the visitors was in fact lowered, as Cook’s failure to avenge the killings would have upset their concepts of spiritual balance and harmonious societal relationships.⁷¹

On the first visit, however, Cook’s men over the few days following their making landfall, worked on the ship, collected water and cut wood. The main aim of the first voyage had been to observe the transit of Venus on Tahiti, but the Admiralty had also ordered Cook to look for, explore and chart the great land mass that contemporary geographers imagined lay at the bottom of the world, and his scientists were to explore and record the flora, fauna and peoples they encountered. Finally, he was to take possession of that country in the name of the king.⁷² And so, shortly after arriving in Meretoto, Cook set off for the head of his newly named Queen Charlotte Sound.

Headwinds slowed progress, but on 22 January he climbed to a high point (Cook’s Lookout) on the southern ridge of Kaitapeha Bay, on Arapaoa Island. Although the view was partly blocked by densely wooded higher hills, the swirling waters of Kura Te Au beyond suggested a link to the sea. Given the existence of what Cook soon confirmed was the strait that bears his name, and his own coastings down the North Island, he realised that any elusive southern continent was most unlikely.

He sailed south to Ruakaka Bay but no further. None of his detailed and beautiful charts of Queen Charlotte Sound and Cook Strait show Kura Te Au.⁷³ On his second voyage, however, on 5 November 1774, Cook took the ship’s boat up Kura Te Au to where they could see that it opened out into the sea, but the tide, which they had battled all the way up, prevented their clearing the entrance.⁷⁴ The channel thus effectively remained unknown to Europeans until whaler John (Jacky) Guard entered it in 1826/27.

A few days later Cook took men across to survey the big (now) East Bay of Arapaoa Island. There, on an unnamed hill between Onehunga Bay and Ōnauku Bay, the further sight of Cook Strait dispelled any lingering doubts that it might be a huge bay. Wanting a lasting monument, he built a small cairn from loose stones and buried musket balls, shot and anything else they had with them that would last. He also left a cairn at the top of the hill overlooking Ship Cove, one in the cove itself and one on Motuara

Island. On Motuara Island, too, without consulting Māori, he hoisted the Union Jack and ‘dignified this Inlet with the name of Queen Charlotte’s Sound and took formal possession of it and the adjacent lands in the name of and for the use of his Majesty’.⁷⁵ The names of these ‘adjacent lands’ Richard Pickersgill, with Cook on his first and second voyages, discovered a few days later were Te Ika a Māui (North Island), Arapaoa and Te Waipounamu (South Island).

ON 6 FEBRUARY 1770, HAVING been delayed by a typical summer blow, Cook sailed from Meretoto. He and his men carried accounts of the inhabitants of the Marlborough Sounds and their world that would be eagerly received at home. They reported on the freshness and newness of the plants, and wrote fulsomely on the beauty of the birdsong, little knowing that the Norwegian rat (*Rattus norvegicus*) they had taken with them would go on to devastate the country’s fauna.

But what might this land offer Britain? As Cook and his men had left the ‘miserably barren’ land at Cape Jackson and moved deeper into the sound,⁷⁶ they had found country that was steep, with deep valleys and little room for cultivation. They were amazed by the dense, impenetrable but majestic vegetation. From a commercial perspective, the trees, Cook thought, would be excellent for everything but masts, for which they were too hard and heavy. John Reinhold Forster, botanist on the second voyage, was similarly impressed by the New Zealand flax (*Phormium tenax*) that he saw growing in the Sounds. A perennial, it grew everywhere, could be cut back and needed no special care, and its hemp was ‘excessively strong, soft, glossy, and white’. He predicted it would be immensely useful in Europe. Fabian Gottlieb von Bellingshausen, in 1820, gathered seeds to plant in the Crimea.⁷⁷ Banks, the first to make this mistake, considered the soil’s quality was

best indicated by the luxuriant growth of its products, for the hills (except a few towards the sea which are covered with smaller bushes) are one continued forest of lofty trees which flourish with a vigour almost superior to any thing imagination can conceive, and afford an august prospect to those who are delighted with the grand and beautiful works of nature.⁷⁸

Cook’s visits had little immediate impact on Māori settlement in the Sounds. Most of the livestock he established got eaten or died, and his gardens lay untended. For the

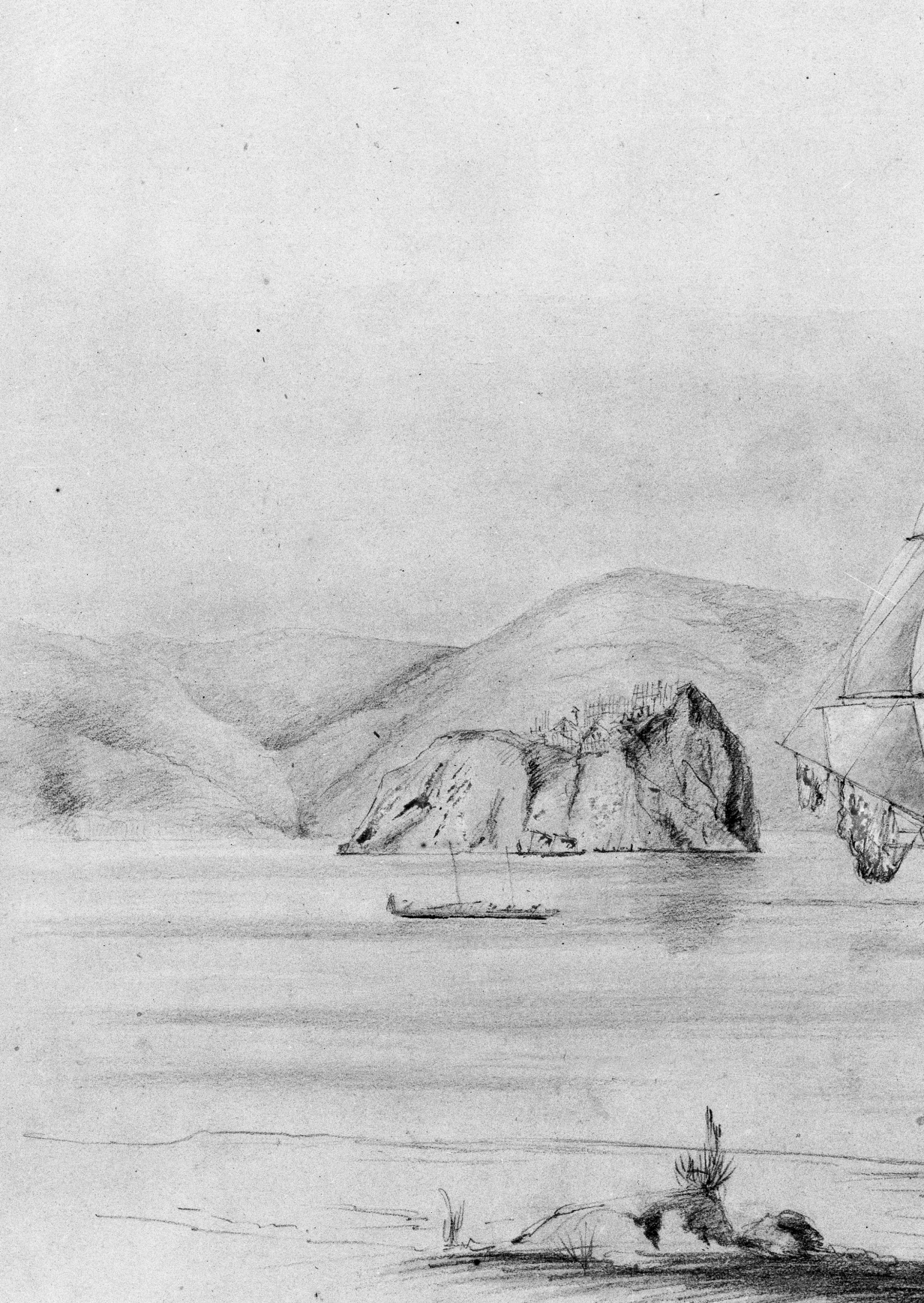
next half-century Māori probably continued to live in much the way that Cook had observed. Apart from the odd whaler or sealer, no other European visitors came.

By 1820, the year Bellingshausen and his Russian polar expedition arrived in Meretoto on 9 June, Rangitāne had become 'associated with Tōtaranui, the Wairau, Cloudy Bay and possibly as far south to the Clarence River'.⁷⁹ They shared the Kaituna River Valley with Ngāti Kuia, the dominant tribe throughout Te Hoiere as far as Rangitoto and adjacent mainland areas. Ngāti Apa, relative newcomers to the area, had interests from Nelson west. Critically, the Sounds and surrounding districts were relatively stable.

Bellingshausen, who could make comparisons because he carried with him accounts of Cook's three voyages, noted a growing appetite among Māori for European clothing. Sleeves had been added to outer garments; Māori may have acquired seamen's sweaters from a whaler or sealer, and the barter with his own crew in which Māori so enthusiastically engaged was frequently in Russian greatcoats, shirts, handkerchiefs and jackets.⁸⁰

From some 200 metres off the beach, Bellingshausen and his men spotted 'long rows of baskets' full of potatoes. These had been recently dug from a headland that is probably between Anaho (which Cook named Cannibal Cove after his crew found human bones there in the remains of a meal) and Little Waikawa Bay.⁸¹ Such cultivation, it is now known, appears to have contributed to a change in local Māori diet and possibly their way of life — although fernroot was still extensively used as a food, regular seasonal potato-growing had become part of the subsistence cycle. In Tōtaranui the observant Russians noticed '[c]ultivation of the headland; a stone-edged stream; a village with a single, ditchless palisade: all pointed to a relatively settled way of life, based upon trade and agriculture, ferns and fishing — and not on warfare.'⁸²

Bellingshausen judged the population to be only about a third of Cook's estimate. Had Cook overestimated the numbers or were they affected by seasonal migrations or moves away in time of local disturbances? Whatever the reasons, the small number and meagre defences of Māori in Tōtaranui and Te Hoiere left them highly vulnerable to attacks by those equipped with European muskets. By 1828, many in Kura Te Au, Tōtaranui and Te Hoiere would be dead, captured, hiding in remote places in the Wairau or living in a vassal-like state in and around Te Whanganui and the Lower Wairau. Nor would it be long before a second wave of settlers struck more fundamentally at the world Māori had built in the Sounds.



2. New Arrivals

