

low stone cairns arranged in a curve were found, skirting the edge of a gully. On that basis, it seems likely that the other carved lines represented other garden markers. This is an astounding find and yet the petroglyph stone was not mentioned anywhere in the released documents on the DOC Waipoua Forest excavations. Elsewhere in the forest, giant obelisks bear cross-hatch design incising, found on stones across New Zealand – and in Neolithic Age sites in Britain. These are not mentioned in the archaeological reports either.

More evidence of the earliest settlements in New Zealand? How much space have we got!

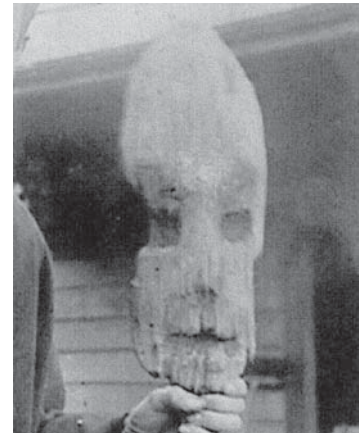
In the Waipoua to Kaipara district there is a massive network of laboriously dug ancient drains extending from the Kaiwi Lakes to Dargaville. These were written of by Edwin Harding in 1928 and photographed during a New Zealand Government survey in 1944.

Edwin Harding: “Almost every hollow that had once been a lake or a swamp has been similarly drained, noteworthy features being that the drains were perfectly straight and cut to the most direct outlet, involving in some cases cuttings over twenty feet deep. The largest work is, I think, over a mile in length and straight as a dart...A good many of the drains have now been obliterated by gumdigging, cultivation or drifting sand, but some of the more striking works still remain.” (Ref. Journal of the Polynesian Society, volume 37, no.4, pp.367-368, Dec. 1928)

Many other large drain systems exist around New Zealand, with evidence of vast navigable canals, including those at Wairau Bar in the South Island.

Ref. Ancient Drains Kaitia Swamp, D.M. Wilson 1921: “As similar drains are found in other places in this country, especially in North Auckland, there must have been a regular drainage age. The Maoris of the present day living in this district do not know anything about the history of these drains... An old door panel was found at the bottom of an old drain. The door panel was

about four feet long and one foot three inches wide... it had two mortised holes cut on the thickest edge. These were square cut and smoothly finished as if done by a chisel, and were evidently to hold a tenon from another panel. On the panel was the portion of a carved composite figure representing the head of a man and the body of a lizard...head not set straight on, but set on the slant like the heitiki. The body was marked by scales, and two fore feet were shown from the sides like a lizard. The rest would have been shown on adjoining panel. The description of this door-panel, like the carved lintel found about two miles away, shows a difference to the Maori design. The existence of squared mortised holes to fit tenons from the adjoining panels shows an advance in woodwork that was not attained by the Maoris.” ■



This very old sculptured head was found when digging a drain in 1902 at the back of the Ruawai Flats. Kaumatua at the time said there were signs of an ancient occupation but no known Maori connection to the site



Part of the extensive network of drains bordering the Awanui River, photographed during a survey by the NZ Government in 1944

NEXT EDITION:

Read All About it in Papers Past! On the Discovery of a cut Stump of a Tree, Giving Evidence of the Existence of Man in New Zealand at or before the volcanic Era T&P NZI Vol v11 – 1874 (Site: Coburg St, near Wellesley St, Auckland City)

(From the Southern Cross, March 13.)
An exceedingly interesting relic of the very remote past is now to be seen in the office of the Improvement Commissioners. It is the root of a tree found in one of the cuttings being made under the direction of that Commission. The root has evidently been chopped through by a stone adze which was found beside it. There were also several small branches and roots of the same tree on which the edge of the stone adze had been tried, and the whole crown of the stump had the marks of having been laboriously and patiently cut through by the rude stone implement in the unknown past, and by one of an equally unknown race of human beings.

Excerpt from Papers Past Southern Cross March 1874

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