



MOTUIHE: ASSESSMENT OF HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE

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1. History

1.1 Maori history and places of cultural significance

A brief traditional history of Motuihe, and a map showing a number of traditional placenames, was provided by George Graham and the Te Akarana Maori Association to the Lands & Survey Department in 1931:

Formerly a Maruiwi tribal home. About 1200 AD they were conquered by Te Tini-o-Toi, that people being in possession when "Arawa" canoe people arrive 1325 AD. Kahumatamomoe naming various localities after self & the island itself he named "Te Motu-o-Ihenga" - (a nephew of his) & this is said to be original form of name. Huarere, a brother of Ihenga was the founder of the Arawa sub-tribe Ngati-Huarere who dispersed the Tini-o-Toi. Later in warfare with the Tainui tribes (the Marutuahu) the N/Huarere were displaced by Ngati-Paoa. This later people held these islands until European times (despite much warfare with Ngati-Whatua of Tamaki & Ngapuhi under Hongi Hika & others) - & were the vendors as recognised owners to the Crown.

(NP 26, 27 August 1931).

The placenames are shown on attachment 1. They include two battle sites, *Mangopare-rua*, and *Wai-hao-Rangatahi*. The latter is said to have been the site of a naval battle.

There are also two legends that relate to Motuihe, recorded by George Graham and reproduced in Walsh (1937:14-16; see also Graham nd). These help to explain the origin and significance of some of the island's Maori placenames.

There are 37 archaeological sites associated with Maori occupation recorded on the island. These include 2 pa, both on headlands with steep natural defences. It appears that there was a third pa (R11/149) on the point where the quarantine cemetery is located. This site has been largely obscured by more recent European activity, but a defensive ditch is faintly visible in a 1930 aerial photograph of the island (Fig. 3).

The other recorded sites are midden deposits, pits, terraces, or sites that contain combinations of these features.

The island has not been surveyed comprehensively, and there are a significant number of Maori sites that remain unrecorded. Most of the unrecorded sites are likely to be terrace/pit sites, representing small *kainga*. A human burial and midden near the present kiosk is also unrecorded.

Some of the recorded archaeological sites correspond with places named on the 1931 map prepared by the Akarana Maori Association. *Te Rae-o-Kahu* and *Mangopare-rua* are both pa sites, and *Te Tumu-rae* also seems to have been a pa as noted above. The burial site referred to above is adjacent to the battle site *Wai-hao-rangatahi*, but is not necessarily associated with that event.

1.2 European history and places of cultural significance

1.2.1 Early visits

The earliest recorded visits by Europeans to Motuihe are by the Rev Henry Williams, who camped on Motuihe in 1833, and anchored at Motuihe again in 1835. Williams unfortunately recorded little detail of his visits to the island (Rogers 1961: 338, 416-7).

1.2.2 Early land transactions

About 1837, a man named Butler is said to have negotiated the purchase of Motuihe, and the island was for a time known as Butlers Island (see Fedarb diary, also Walsh 1937: 4,8).

On 5 November 1839, William Fairburn purchased the island from "William Jowett of Te Iwi Tutu a Native Chief, Ko Nuku of Te Ngatitai, a Native Chief, and Te Manako of Ngatiwaki, also a Native Chief" (Turtons Deeds No 354). He resold Motuihe on March 21 1840 to Henry Tayler, who on 8 September 1843, obtained a Crown Grant title to the island. Five days later Tayler sold the property to William Brown and John Logan Campbell (Walsh 1937:9)

1.2.3 Farm settlements 1843 - 1872

Brown & Campbell, two of Auckland's best known early colonists, established a farm settlement on Motuihe after acquiring the island in 1843. The partners also owned Motukorea (Browns Island), where they had built a dwelling and established a pig farm in 1840.

The farm on Motuihe appears to have been run by Maori workers under a farm manager. J W Fedarb, who was employed at Motuihe between 1848 and 1852, kept a diary of life on the island in which he records such activities as building stockyards, fences and a fowl house, tending pigs and goats, and planting gorse, ngaio trees, and a range of cereal and vegetable crops. There are also references to the construction of a dwelling and stone chimney, and to a well. There is an interesting record from 10 February 1849, of Fedarb going to Browns Island for an old house, presumably the dwelling built for Brown & Campbell by the Ngati Tamatera people in 1840.

Unfortunately the locations of the various activities on the Motuihe are in most cases not clear from Fedarb's diary.

The olive grove that remains on the southwest end of Motuihe, and the other plantings of olives in various places on the island are popularly believed to be associated with Logan Campbell. While this is quite possible, it is unlikely that they were planted during Brown and Campbell's period of ownership. John Logan Campbell did not begin his experiments with the establishment of olives at what is now Cornwall Park until 1877. It is likely therefore that the plantings were carried out after the establishment of the quarantine station (see below). Public

parks, reserves and institutions like quarantine stations and mental hospitals were often donated plants and trees by either charitable wealthy gentlemen or by public domains or botanic gardens, and while no record of the sources of the wide range of plantings on Motuihe has been located to date, Logan Campbell would appear to be a likely source of the olive trees.

On 1 February 1858, the island was sold to John Graham, who owned Motuihe until 1873. Graham continued to run the island as a farm. In 1862 it is recorded that he employed four men on the island, which was stocked with 25 horses, 36 cattle, 200 sheep and pigs, and turkeys and geese 'without number' (Latham 1862). By 1868 the island had been stocked with game, including herds of deer, partridges, pheasants, and quail, and new buildings erected (*NZ Herald* 22 August 1961; DOC 015-40).

Graham drowned on his way to Motuihe on 7 May 1868. After his death the island was leased to Alex Alison and to Thomas Duder (Walsh 1937:11).

1.2.4 Quarantine station 1872 - 1941

In 1872, the entire island was set aside as a (human) quarantine station by the Board of Health of the Port of Auckland (APCG 16 July 1872; see also *NZ Gaz* 1873:429). A human quarantine station complex was built soon after, at the smaller end of the island. The larger end of the island was subsequently used for animal quarantine purposes, and was administered by the Department of Agriculture after that Department was formed in 1892.

The human quarantine station complex incorporated buildings and materials salvaged during the demolition of Albert Barracks (Maddock 1966:43). It was centred around two large two storied buildings known as the "barracks"¹. There were several other accommodation buildings, along with hospital wards, stables, a Health Department caretaker's house, a brick building with a tall chimney which was used for fumigating baggage and clothing from ships in quarantine (Heighton nd), and a cemetery. The station, which was able to accommodate 287, contained 22 buildings by at the time it was converted to a naval training establishment in 1941 (Grattan 1948:619; National Archives file N10/10)

The first vessel to be quarantined at Motuihe was the *Dorrette* in 1874 (*NZ Herald* 16 April 1874:2/2). The *Hydaspes* arrived in Auckland with scarlet fever on board on 6 November 1874, and a 16 year old girl named Mary Long, who died that day, was the first to be buried in the quarantine cemetery. Since that time there have been a number of further burials (at least 11) at the cemetery (see RCF 7 June 1967; Dickens & Dickens 1982) but these have not been systematically recorded or researched.

In 1893 the Government decided to close the animal quarantine station at Motuihe and use Somes Island for all stock imported into the country. The Auckland Agricultural & Pastoral Association objected, and the Motuihe station was reopened (AAPA 1925). It finally closed in 1941, after the Navy took control of the island. During the war, the few head of stock that were imported were sent via the port of Wellington. After hostilities ended, the Navy advised that Motuihe was required on a permanent basis, so an animal quarantine was established on Motutapu Island.

¹ Comparison of photographs of indicates that these were the old barracks from Albert Barracks.

Although the animal quarantine on Motuihe was well used, and the larger end of the island was permanently closed to the visiting public, the human quarantine was rarely called into service. Picnic parties would regularly visit the island by ferry during times when the station was not in use, often bringing their own bands, and the two large 'barracks' buildings were let to influential people over summer (Heighton nd).

The human quarantine station was, from time to time, used for other purposes as well. On one occasion it accommodated mental patients for a period of 6 months after the Avondale Mental Hospital was partially destroyed by fire (Heighton nd).

1.2.5 Internment camp 1914 - 18

In 1914 the quarantine station was used to accommodate some of the prisoners of war who fell into the hands of New Zealand military forces when Samoa surrendered. A number of New Zealand residents of German or Austrian nationality were subsequently also interned there (Walsh 1937: 9-10).

In November 1917, the Q-ship Captain Count Felix Von Luckner and his boat's crew were imprisoned on the island. Von Luckner made a sensational escape attempt on 13 December 1917, reaching the Kermadec Islands before being captured on 21 December.

In a second attempt at escape, Von Luckner planned and directed the construction of a dug-out in a gully on the South end of the island. The plan was for 5 men to vanish by hiding in this dugout for at least six weeks until the alarm had subsided. It was on the point of being implemented when news of the armistice arrived (Walsh 1937:11).

Motuihe closed as an internment camp on 17 December 1918, after the interned aliens had been transferred to Narrow Neck Camp, Devonport (National Archives file 3/435/2), but in the meantime saw service again as a quarantine station. During November - December 1918, the *Makura* was quarantined at Motuihe during an influenza epidemic, while the 80 interned aliens were transferred to a canvas camp (Dickens & Dickens 1982:3). Five graves in the cemetery date from this quarantine episode.

After the passing of comprehensive quarantine regulations in 1921, quarantine stations continued to be maintained, but were seldom used (Maclean: 34 - 58). In about 1929, the Community Sunshine Association was given permission to use the quarantine station for children's health camps. This organisation also cared for a large number of children on Motuihe after they were evacuated following the Napier earthquake of 1931.

In January 1928, control of the greater part of Motuihe (excluding the human quarantine station) was vested in the Auckland City Council for development as a marine park. The Council also operated a profitable sheep farm on the island (Bush 1971:276). Somes Island in Wellington Harbour had been designated under the Stock Act 1908 as New Zealand's primary quarantine, and all cloven footed animals imported into the country were from that time quarantined at Somes (RFBPS 1990:7). In 1930, the quarantine Station declaration over the entire island was partially revoked, and an area of just over 31 acres (ie the human quarantine station) substituted (NZ Gaz 1930:2800; see also folio 267 np 26 vol 1).

By the 1930s, human quarantine stations, which had formerly been maintained in a constant state of readiness, had effectively become obsolete as infectious diseases were able to be controlled by hospitalisation, isolation, or immunisation, and they were abolished about 1933 (Maclean :34-58). However the Motuihe quarantine was not officially abandoned until the Navy took control of the station in 1941.

1.2.6 HMNZS *Tamaki* 1941 - 63

After the outbreak of World War II, Motuihe was chosen as the location of a self-contained naval training establishment. The need for a new training facility had initially arisen as a result of a shortage of crews to assist the British Admiralty with the manning of a large number of recently acquired naval vessels.

The new training establishment, named HMNZS *Tamaki*, was commissioned on 20 January 1941. During the following two years, between July 1942 and May 1943, the former quarantine station was converted at a cost of £53,350 [Waters 1956 says about £90,000]. Buildings were constructed or extended, new equipment was added, and the water supply, drainage, roading, and other amenities were improved. A total of 15 new buildings, covering a floor area of 63,500 square feet, were added to the existing 22 from the quarantine station.

The number of staff, which totalled 42 when training started, had more than doubled by September 1941, and in March 1945 was 150. The total accommodation available was 517. From January 1941 until the end of hostilities, more than 6000 recruits, representing about 60% of the New Zealanders who saw active naval service during the war, passed through *Tamaki* (Grattan 1948:618-9; Waters 1956:422-3).

During World War II (1941) Motuihe was declared to be a prohibited place under the Defence Emergency Regulations Act 1939 (NZ Gaz 1941:2033), and in 1942 the two 4" guns (one QF, one BL) used for training recruits at Motuihe were brought into service as part of Auckland's coastal defence system. The guns were relocated to provide coverage of the channel between Waiheke and Motuihe, an area outside the coverage of the battery on Motutapu (National Archives file 25/1/9). One gun was installed on Cemetery Point, the other near the present kiosk. A photograph held by the Department of Conservation shows one of the guns mounted on the shoreline facing Home Bay, presumably at a later time.

After the war HMNZS *Tamaki* continued to operate as a shore training establishment, and the site was formally gazetted for defence purposes in 1951 (NZ Gaz 19 April 1951:534). Public access to Motuihe again became available in the summer of 1948-9 after joint use with the Navy had been negotiated. The popularity of Motuihe regained only slowly, but by 1962, record numbers of excursionists were visiting the island NZ *Herald* 20 November 1962; Bush 1971:342). In February 1964, there were 6500 visitors in a single weekend (NZ *Herald* 24 February 1964).

The HMNZS *Tamaki* base finally closed in August 1963, when it was moved and combined with the army facility at Narrow Neck.

1.2.7 Later history

While the future of the disused base was being considered, the Kerridge Odeon Corporation lobbied the Department of Lands and Survey to lease or purchase the facility for development into a tourist and holiday resort. The proposal prompted a steady stream of opposing letters to newspaper editors from members of the public, who wished to see the land returned as part of the Motuihe Domain (see NP 26:472 and subsequent folios).

The property was subsequently offered to Auckland City Council. The Council was in the process of considering options for the complex when it was discovered during an inspection by the Parks and Library Committee that the Navy had stripped the plumbing and fittings from the buildings, an act that was described as 'criminal wanton destruction by a Government department under bureaucratic control'. A request was subsequently made to the Government for £10,000 towards the removal or demolition of the buildings (of which there were more than 70), who responded with an offer of £2,500, which was reluctantly accepted (*NZ Herald* 24 February, 22 September 1964:3).

Most of the former navy buildings were subsequently demolished. A small number of other buildings were moved to other parts of the island (NP 26:538), or retained for use on site. By November 1967, only a few potentially useful buildings, and the concrete water tower, remained (NP 26:607-8). The cost of demolishing the water tower was considered to be too high and so it was left 'largely as a historic feature' (NP 26:661). Today, the only other buildings that remain at the HMNZS *Tamaki* site are house number 66, which was retained for use by the Sea Cadet Corps (NP 26:665); building 67, a concrete block building that had been a MOW workshop and was kept as a hay barn; and the shed at the landward end of the wharf.

In the meantime, the HMNZS *Tamaki* site had been gazetted as a recreation reserve (NZ Gazette 22 October 1964:1846). Control of Motuihe passed to the Hauraki Gulf Maritime Park Board on 1 April 1968 (NP 26:633).

2. Assessment of significance

For the purpose of assessing the significance of Motuihe, it is convenient to divide the island into two parts:

- the smaller/northwestern end, which has been the site of most European activity on the island and also has Maori cultural significance;
- the balance of the island, where places of cultural significance are of a more dispersed nature.

2.1 Northwestern end (Quarantine station site)

2.1.1 Places of Maori Cultural Significance

There are a number of places on this end of the island that are of Maori traditional significance, including the battle site Mangopare-rua. Archaeological evidence of Maori occupation includes the two pa sites (one modified, the other in good condition), and several midden sites. It is to be

expected that there will be a range of other archaeological sites that are not exposed or are overlain by evidence of more recent European activity.

2.1.2 Places of European Cultural significance

The quarantine station and HMNZS *Tamaki* training establishment occupied virtually the entire area. The most conspicuous surviving artefact of these facilities is the concrete and brick water tower. There is considerable other evidence in the form of exotic planting, roads and paths, terraced areas, archaeological deposits, the 3 remaining buildings, the wharf and sea walls, the gun emplacement, and the cemetery. Of particular note is the avenue lined by mature Norfolk pines and Moreton Bay figs, which leads up from the sand tombolo. The range of exotic trees also includes a large Holm oak, and a number of Gallipoli pines.

Brown & Campbell's initial farm settlement site is also likely to be in the this area, probably in vicinity of the grove of olives.

All of the evidence of European occupation on the northwest point has been recorded under a single archaeological site number, R11/1784.

The site has been little disturbed by more recent activity (toilet facilities, septic tanks & soakage field, rubbish dump).

Tabulation of cultural significance, European features (preliminary)

	Hist/Ass	Fun	Aes	Arch	Her
Water Tower	3	2	3	0	3
Concrete building	1	1	1	0	1
Sea Cadets building	1	1	1	0	1
Wharf shed	2	1	1	0	2
Wharf and sea walls	2	2	2	0	2
Cemetery	3	3	2	0	3
Cemetery headstones	0	2	1	0	0
Gun emplacement	3	3	1	0	3
Olive grove	3	3	3	0	3
Other original plantings	2	2	3	0	2
Terracing, roads, paths etc	2	3	3	2	3
Archaeological deposits pre 1872	0	0	0	3	3
" " 1872 - 1935	0	0	0	2	2
" " after 1935	0	0	0	1	1
Rubbish dump	neg	neg	0	neg	
Soakage field	int	int	int	0	int
Toilet block	0	0	0	0	0

Hist/ Ass Historical or associational value. Whether the particular element has clear association with events, individuals, or periods of history of the site.

Fun Functional significance. Whether the particular element helps to explain the use of the site.

Aes	Aesthetic significance. Whether the element has aesthetic significance due to its contribution to the overall unity and appearance of the site.	
Arch	Archaeological significance. Potential to reveal, through archaeological techniques, information concerning the history of the site not otherwise available from alternative sources.	
Her	The degree to which the element can be said to have heritage value comprised of the above qualities	
3	Exceptional	Items which must be preserved and protected at all costs.
2	Considerable	Items which should be preserved/protected where they do not conflict with the conservation of a feature of higher heritage value.
1	Slight	Retention may be justified where there is no conflict with items of higher heritage value.
0	Not relevant	May be retained for functional reasons where there is no conflict with items of significance
int	Intrusive	Should be replaced or concealed if practicable, where this will assist with interpretation
neg	Negative	Should be removed or replaced

2.1.3 Statement of significance

Historical

The area is remarkable for the number of phases and intensity of past human activity in what is now an isolated and relatively deserted location. It has had multiple periods of significance beginning with pre-European Maori occupation and extending through to HMNZS *Tamaki* period (1941-63). At the time of closure of HMNZS *Tamaki* there were more than 70 buildings at the site.

Count Felix Von Luckner (the 'Sea Devil') was a heroic and colourful character, and his internment and subsequent escape from the internment camp during WW I was a sensational event at the time.

Archaeological

This end of the island is almost entirely occupied by archaeological features and deposits, representing all periods of human occupation on the island. Archaeological remains include the sites of two out of three Maori pa sites on the island, and the probable site of the initial European farm settlement on the island.

Social

Human quarantine stations were established at a time when incurable and potentially fatal infectious diseases were a major threat, and strict isolation of the passengers and crews of affected ships was the only way of preventing epidemics spreading to New Zealand.

The area has played a role in three periods of human conflict (pre-European, WW I, WW II).

Maori traditional

The island in general has traditional significance for Marutuahu and Ngai Tai iwi. There are a number of specific places, including two battle sites, at this end of the island which feature in Maori legends or traditional accounts of the history of the island.

Landscape

The landscape is dominated by features that give clues to the long human history of the place. These include the paths, earthworks and terraced areas, the mature exotic trees, and the water tower, which has for the last 50 years been a familiar marine landmark. There is considerable potential to interpret the site to the visiting public.

2.2 The south-east end of the island

2.2.1 Places of Maori cultural significance

There are a number of places of traditional significance on this part of the island. One of these, *Te Rae-o-Kahu*, is a substantial pa site with a defended area of 4500 m².

There are 32 other recorded sites on this end of the island. These include middens, pits, and terraces, and complexes of different site types. There are also a significant number of unrecorded sites, including the burial/midden on the sand tombolo, and a number of mostly indistinct pit/terrace sites. Many Maori sites in the interior of the island have probably been damaged or destroyed by European farming practices.

2.2.2 Places of European cultural significance

Little is known about the early European history of this part of the island. During Brown and Campbell's period of ownership a number of trees were planted in this area. Although no attempt has been made to identify these, it appears that at least some of these remain on this part of the island (eg the ngaio tree on *Te Rae-o-Kahu* pa).

Historic places associated with the quarantine period include the site of the existing farm building complex, and the orchard to the south of this. Both were associated with the Agricultural Department quarantine. It is not known when the farm settlement was initially established, but there was a cottage there in 1918. The orchard was also in existence by this time (see SO 25853). Both the orchard and the settlement site could be significantly older.

The orchard contains a range of early varieties of pears, which still fruit heavily, but most other types of fruit trees have died. There is also a range of other exotic trees associated with the quarantine period, including some relatively uncommon varieties of pines eg aleppo pine.

There is reputed the ruins of a chimney on the west side of the island. It is not known which period of occupation this relates to.

A place of considerable historic interest, which has yet to be relocated is the site of Von Luckner's dugout, at the south end of the island.

Places associated with the HMNZS *Tamaki* base include a parade/sports ground in the vicinity of the concessionaire's dwelling, and a gun emplacement to the southeast of the kiosk. The gun emplacement is likely to be one of the 4" gun emplacements constructed as part of the WWII coastal defence system.

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Figure 1. Plan of Motuihe quarantine station, December 1882. Pt SO plan 3172A.

Figure 2. Motuihe in April 1918, showing the cottage and orchard administered by the Department of Agriculture. Pt SO plan 25853A.

Figure 3. The quarantine station

Figure 4. HMNZS *Tamaki* in 1958. Whites Aviation.

Figure 5. HMNZS *Tamaki* and the water tower in 1961.

Chronology

1907 Contract for new wharf

(The photos were missing from the emailed report I received. I asked DoC for the photos but did not receive them.)

Fiona Alexander, Heritage Co-ordinator Motuihe Trust