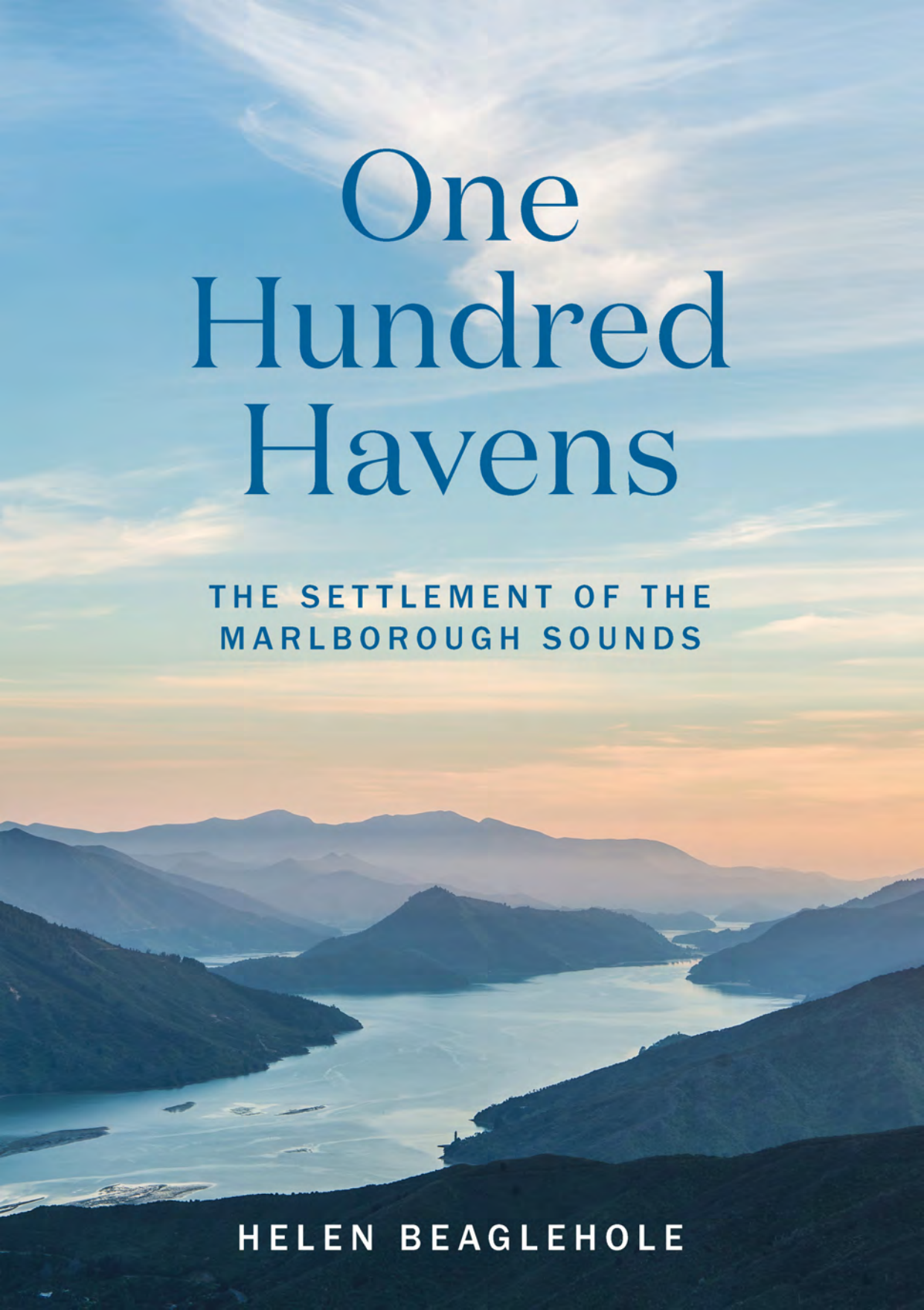
# One Hundred Havens

## THE SETTLEMENT OF THE MARLBOROUGH SOUNDS



HELEN BEAGLEHOLE

# One Hundred Havens

## THE SETTLEMENT OF THE MARLBOROUGH SOUNDS

HELEN BEAGLEHOLE

MASSEY UNIVERSITY PRESS

# Contents

# 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.

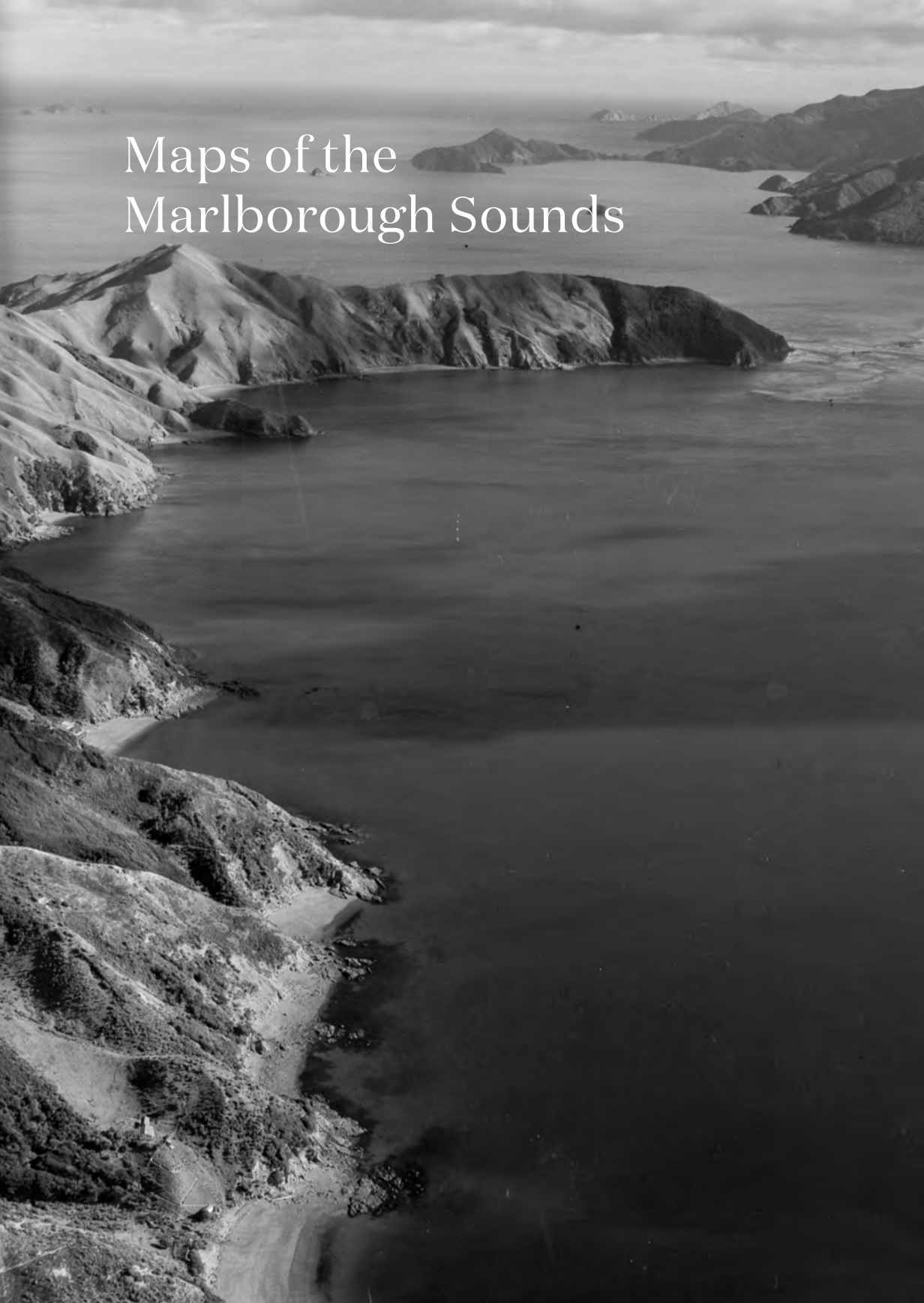
## A word about place names

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

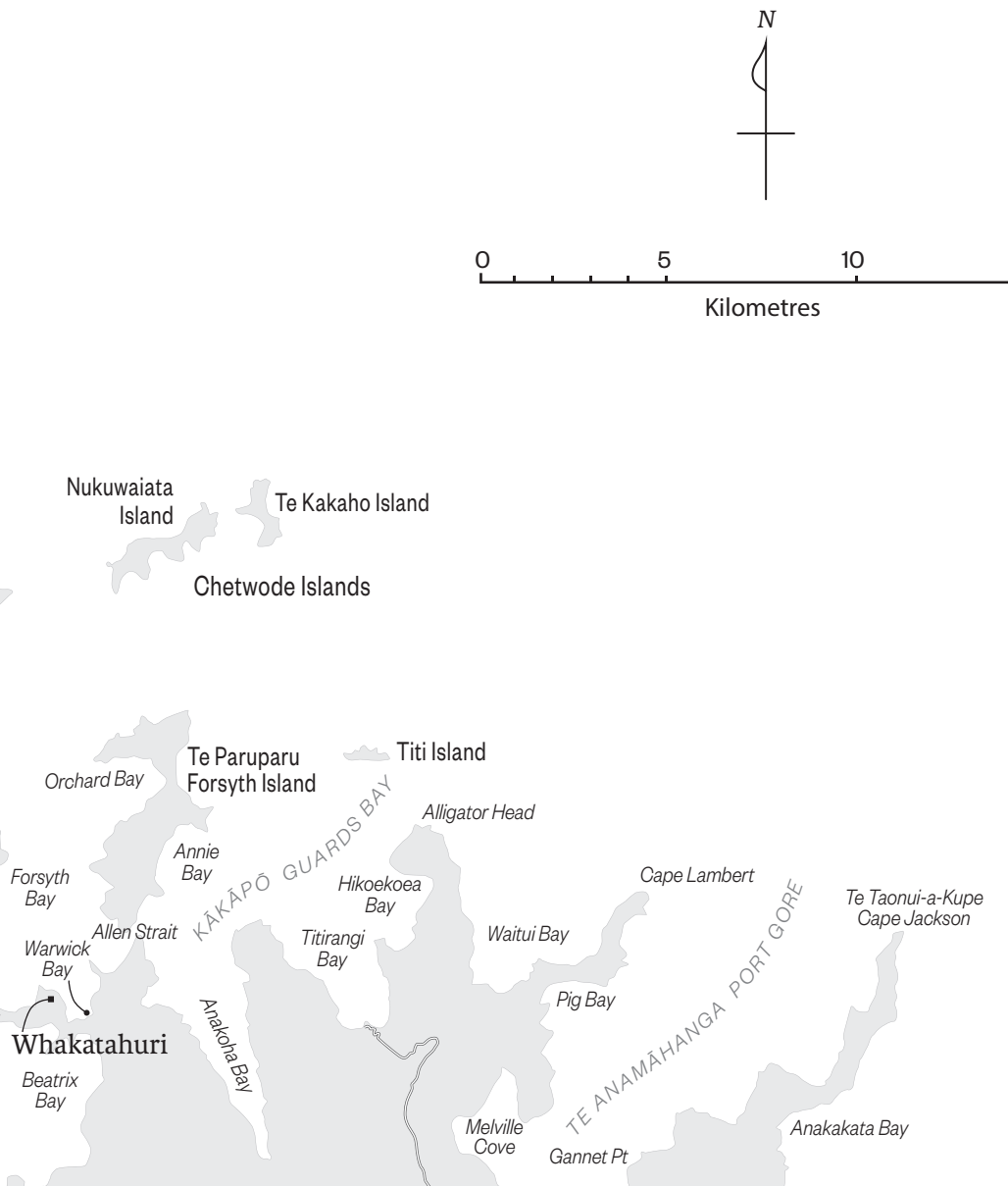


# Maps of the Marlborough Sounds


Marlborough Sounds
N
Takapourewa Stephens Island
Nile Head
Port Hardy
South Arm
East Arm
Rangitoto Islands
Whareātea Bay
Rangitoto Ki Te Tonga D'Urville Island
Orville Harbour
D'Urville Peninsula
Clay Pt
Nukuwaiata Island
Te Kakaho Island
Chetwode Islands
TE AUMITI FRENCH PASS
Anaru French Pass
Port Ligar
Bulwer
Sauvage Pt
CURRENT BASIN
ADMIRALTY BAY
Pukatea Bay
Wahiriou Bay
Te Akaroa West Entry Pt
Orchard Bay
Te Paruparu Forsyth Island
Titi Island
Alligator Head
KĀKĀPO GUARDS BAY
Waitata Bay
Okuri Bay
Hamilton Bay
Te Towaka Bay
Kaitu Bay
Forsyth Bay
Annie Bay
Hikoekoea Bay
Cape Lambert
Te Taonui-a-Kupe Cape Jackson
Allen Strait
Warwick Bay
Titirangi Bay
Waitui Bay
Richmond Bay
Fitzroy Bay
Te Pākekā Maud Island
Whakatahuri
Beatrix Bay
Aotakota Bay
Pig Bay
TE ANAMĀHANGA PORT GORE
Elaine Bay
TAWHITINUI REACH
Brightlands Bay
Kauauroa Bay
Melville Cove
Gannet Pt
Anakakata Bay
CROISILLES HARBOUR
TENNYSON INLET
Tawero Pt
Miro Bay
Tiri Ora Bay
Marys Bay
Opani-aputa Pt
Penzance Bay
Tuna Bay
North West Bay
Ngawhakawhiti Bay
Okiwi Bay
Te Mako Bay
Tennyson Inlet
TE HOIERE PELORUS SOUND
Anaho Cannibal Cove
Meretoto Ship Cove
Motuara Island
Hopai Bay
Ova Bay
Manaroa
Fairy Bay
Crail Bay
Elie Bay
Long Island
Resolution Bay
Penguin Bay
Wet Inlet
Four Fathom Bay
Crail Bay
Nydia Bay
Matapara Pickersgill Island
EAST BAY
Nikau Bay
Waihara Bay
Kenepuru Head
Dryden Bay
Ōruawairua Blumine Island
HIKAPU REACH
St Omer
SOUND
KENEPURU
Portage
ARAPĀOA ISLAND
Ōkukari Jackson Bay
Te Awaiti Bay
Whekenui Bay
Mud Bay
Putanui Pt
Black Pt
Kaiuma Bay
MAHAU SOUND
Mōetapu Double Bay
Cullen Pt
Anakiwa
Okiwa Bay
GROVE ARM
Onehiau Bay
Lochmara Bay
Torea Bay
Kumutoto Double Bay
Tāhuahua Bay
Pukaka Bay
Wedge Pt
Karaka Pt
PICTON HARBOUR
Curious Cove
TOTARANUI QUEEN CHARLOTTE SOUND
KURA TE AU TORY CHANNEL
Tipi Bay
Hitaua Bay
Onapua Bay
Te Pangu Bay
Te Rua Bay
Oyster Bay
Havelock
The Grove
Waikawa
Canvastown
Linkwater
WAITOHI PICTON
Opaki Bay
Kaparoa Bay
TE WHANGANUI PORT UNDERWOOD
TE KORO-O-KUPE CLOUDY BAY
0
5
10
15
Kilometres

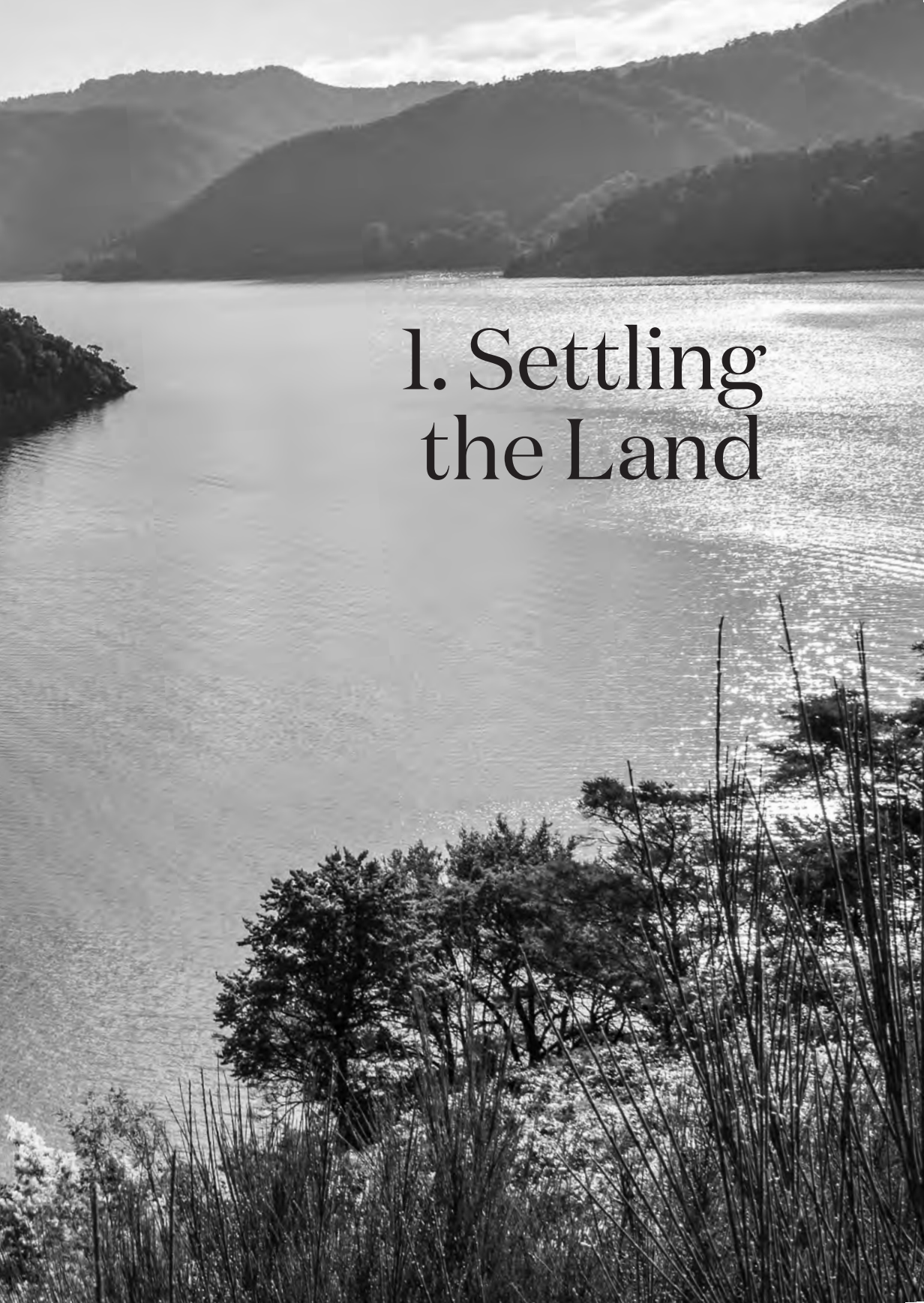

Takapourewa Stephens Island
Nile Head
Port Hardy
Rangitoto Islands
East Arm
South Arm
Greville Harbour
Whareātea Bay
Rangitoto Ki Te Tonga
D'Urville Island
D'Urville Peninsula
Clay Pt
TE AUMITI FRENCH PASS
Anaru French Pass
Port Ligar
Bulwer
Sauvage Pt
CURRENT BASIN
ADMIRALTY BAY
Pukatea Bay
Waihinou Bay
Te Akaroa West Entry Pt
Waitata Bay
Okuri Bay
Hamilton Bay
Ketu Bay
Te Tōwaka Bay
Richmond Bay
Fitzroy Bay
Te Pākekā
Maud Island
Elaine Bay
TAWHITINUI REACH
Brightlands Bay
Kauauroa Bay

# Marlborough Sounds (detail)




CROISILLES HARBOUR
TENNYSON INLET
Brightlands Bay
Kauauroa Bay
Tawero Pt
Miro Bay
Tiri Ora Bay
Marys Bay
Opani-aputa Pt
North West Bay
TE HOIERE PELORUS SOUND
Penzance Bay
Tuna Bay
Okiwi Bay
Ngawhakawhiti Bay
Te Mako Bay
Tennyson Inlet
Hopai Bay
Crail Bay
Elie Bay
Fairy Bay
Penguin Bay
Wet Inlet
Four Fathom Bay
Crail Bay
Nydia Bay
Nikau Bay
HIKAPU REACH
St Omer
KENEPURU
Mud Bay
Putanui Pt
Lochmara Bay
Black Pt
Kauiima Bay
MAHAU SOUND
Onahau Bay
Cullen Pt
Mōetapu Doub/e Bay
Anakiwa
GROVE ARM
Okiwa Bay
Mahakipawa Arm
Havelock
The Grove
WAITOHI
PICTON
Canvastown
Linkwater
6
1


# Marlborough Sounds (detail)



# 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