

28th Māori Battalion

Home Front

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"No infantry had a more distinguished record, or saw more fighting, or alas, had such heavy casualties."

*Lieutenant-General Bernard Freyberg, Commander of the 2 NZEF,
commending the 28th Māori Battalion.*

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[28th Māori Battalion \(28maoribattalion.org.nz\)](http://28maoribattalion.org.nz)



On the Coast During the War Years

MEMORIES OF TE AO WIREMU, HE KUIA O NGATIPOROU. HE HOA PONO IA NO NANCYE YATES, O TIKITIKI, RUA MATE ATU NEI.

When the declaration of World War II was heard it struck the people of Ngati Porou like a thunderbolt, this terrible realisation that soon one was to be involved in the killing of others. All Ngati Porou was shrouded by a pall of impending disaster . . .

Te taetanga o nga rongo o te whawhai tuarua penei tonu i tetahi paku repotanga nei ki roto o Ngati Porou, tera mea te pakanga . . . te pakanga hoki e haere ana koe ki te patu tangata. Ka tau mai te pouri i te iwi whanui tonu o Ngati Porou katoa, kaore ki roto anake o Waiapu. Ka hui te iwi i raro i taua whakaaro, whakaaro pouri mo tera take kua paku ki te ao — he pakanga!

Mohio tonu hoki ratou akuni ratou ka uru ki roto i taua ahuatanga. Ka huihui nga pa katoa o Ngati Porou. I taua wa kua noho wehe-wehe hoki te Maori, kare i te noho pa haere tonu, ka huihui nga tangata ki nga pa, whakatakoto whakaaro, whakawhitiwhiti whakaaro e pehea ana ratou mo tera take taumaha kua paoho ra ki te ao, he pakanga nui kei te ao.

Ka hui to matou nei rohe, te rohe o roto o Waiapu ki te pa o Te Rahui. Ko o matau matua, morehu tipuna mai o te Pakanga

Tuatahi ka hui. Ka mutu nga karakia nga karakia e tono ana ki to ratou nei Atua e whakapono ai ratou mai i o ratou tipuna, kia hikina tera mea kua uwhi ra ki runga i a ratou ki te iwi penei i te Ao Pango e tau-uwhi nei ki runga i a ratou, kia hikina tera ahuatanga. Ka mutu nga karakia, ka haere nga whaikorero. Ka tu nga pakeke ki te korero ano te ahua, karetahi ke i te hikina taua Ao Pango e tau-uwhi ra i runga i a ratou. Ta ratou titiro, ka haere tonu tera ahua pera i te Pakanga Tuatahi.

They met and the most powerful statement expressed in our house Rongomaianiwiwa was that no one should agree, or sign up or go to war — absolutely no one. Some were of the opinion that

whatever was decided by government, that would settle it — just as it was in World War I.

Ka hui ratou, nga tino korero i korerotia i roto i to matou wharenui a Rongomaianiwiwa kia kua rawa atu tetahi hei whakaae mo te haina, mo te haere kia kua rawa atu! Ka ki ano etahi, ahakoa ra pehea, te mea oti mai i te kawanatanga ka pera tonu, pera atu hoki i te Pakanga tuatahi. Ehara i te mea na te Maori i noho, ka haere. Na te ture kua noho te Maori ki raro i te Karauna, he aha te mate e pa ki te Karauna ka awhina te Maori. Kei te noho tonu taua kaupapa.

It was not that the Maori stayed out of World War I for they were involved, but rather that European Law obligated Maori people to serve the Crown. Whatever issue affected the Crown, Maori people were expected to rally to its support. That principle applies today.

Ka tangi nga pakeke to ratou kore kare whakaae, kei heipu ano ka taua mai ki runga ki a ratou mokopuna enei — ara hoki nga matua, te nuinga mate atu ki tua o nga ngaru, te pakanga tuatahi. Nga mea i hoki mai ki te wakainga i hoki tao tu mai. Kare ratou i pirangi kia pera.

Koia nei nga korero i korerotia i taua wa, te taetanga mai o nga rongo he pakanga kei tua i nga ngaru. Ka uru te iwi o teneki whenua ki roto i taua pakanga.

The elders wept because of the lack of consensus and that their grandchildren, now potential soldiers, would be inescapably involved (bearing in mind that most of their fathers and uncles were killed overseas in World War I). Those who returned home were maimed, shell-shocked and disorientated. The elders did not wish a repetition.

These were the thoughts discussed at that time when it was known that the fighting had begun. The tribes of this region (East Coast) were at war.

