

Press. 25 September 1914 (Papers Past) [19/12/2023]

THE MAORI CONTINGENT.

TUAHIWI VOLUNTEERS.

A general meeting of the Maoris at Tuahiwi was held on Wednesday evening to consider telegrams received from Mr C. Parata. M.P., regarding the Maori contingents which the Government proposed sending to Egypt and Samoa. The telegrams stated that a contingent of 200 men was to be sent to Egypt, and 300 to Samoa; that the selection was to be made on a population basis; that 40 only were to be taken from the South Island, and seven of that number were to be chosen from the eight kaingas in Canterbury. Mr Tame Karene was in the chair, and Mr Taituha Hape, chairman of the Mahanui Council, was also present.

After considerable discussion, in which the Natives expressed disgust with the statement that seven men only were to be selected from the eight kaingas in Canterbury, it was resolved to ask Colonel Cossgrove to write to the member protesting against so small a number of men being taken from Canterbury. Tuahiwi, as the chief centre of the South Island, was entitled to send more than one man.

The following then gave their names in as volunteers for the Samoan Contingent, and requested Colonel Cossgrove to send them on to Colonel Chaffey: Noble Mark, late W.C.M.R.; E. M. Te Aika, late W.C.M.R.; F. Whitau, late Oamaru Rifles; R. Flutey, late Bluff Rifles; W. Pitama, G. Pitama, **W. Kotua**, H. W. Piper, and Levi Green.

Timaru Herald. 17 July 1919 (Papers Past) [03/08/2014]

MAORI SOLDIERS

HONOURED AT TEMUKA.

A welcome home social and presentation was tendered to Captain Pohio and Private Kotua in the Drill Hall, Temuka, on Monday evening. There was a large attendance, all parts of the district being represented, and the evening was spent in a most enjoyable manner. Excellent music was supplied by Mr Rickus, while extras were played by Mrs McIsaac and Miss Hopkinson, Mr J. T. Lawlor being M.C.

Just before supper the opportunity was taken to present the returned men with handsome gold medals. In making the presentation Mr Gunnion, Mayor of Temuka, referred to the high position held by Captain Pohio. He apologised for the absence of Private Kotua, and called on Mrs Kotua, the soldier's mother, to accept the medal on her son's behalf. Mr Gunnion expressed his pleasure in having the honour of presenting the medals on behalf of the recipients' Maori friends. Cheers were then given for the returned soldiers, and amidst the singing of "For they are jolly good fellows," the medals were then pinned on by Miss Wesley and Miss Phail. Captain Pohio, on behalf of Private Kotua and himself thanked his Temuka friends for the honour they had bestowed on them.

Mr Torepe's company (with Miss Hopkinson at the piano) gave a descriptive Maori haka, which earned an insistent encore and the party gave another item. The National Anthem closed the presentation proceedings.

A nicely laid supper and a dance concluded the evening.

Temuka Leader. 17 July 1919 (Papers Past) [14/02/2017]

WELCOME HOME SOCIAL.

AT TEMUKA.

On Monday evening the Ngati Huirapa Committee (of which Mrs J. Rickus is the hon. secretary) tendered a welcome home social to Captain Pohio and Private Kotua who have just

returned to New Zealand. Unfortunately the restricted train arrangements prevented Private Kotua from reaching Temuka in time for the social. The function was held in the Temuka Drill Hall, and the attendance was large, all parts of the district being represented. Excellent music was supplied by Mr J. Rickus, Mrs McIsaac and Miss N. Hopkinson contributing "extras." Mr W. Lawlor carried out the duties of M.C. in his usual capable and courteous manner, and the floor was in capital dancing order. During the evening a song was given by Miss K. Rehu (Tuahiwi) and was much enjoyed. A splendid supper was provided. This was catered for by Mr Alex. Anderson and laid out in the Volunteer Hall, the tables forming three sides of a square. Strips of red and blue tissue ran along the centre of the tables, and with the white cloths gave the national colours. The Mayor (Mr T. Gunnion) presided, on his right being the Mayoress and on his left Capt. Pohio.

Just before supper, dancing stopped for a few minutes to allow of the guests of the evening being presented with handsome gold medals, this ceremony being performed by the Mayor.

In doing so Mr Gunnion said he felt it a great honour to be called upon to present two more returned soldiers — Captain Pohio and Private Kotua - with medals, denoting the admiration and esteem of their friends. Unfortunately Private Kotua had not been able to get to Temuka, which he very much regretted, and had had to send an apology. But his mother was present, and would receive his medal on his behalf. Captain Pohio was one of the leading men in the Maori branch of the N.Z. Expeditionary Forces. An officer's duty was to command and lead his men, and if Captain Pohio had not had ability above the ordinary he would not have received his stripes as an officer of H.M. Forces. (Applause). His friends were proud of him, more particularly as he was a New Zealander, and most of those present were New Zealand born. On Saturday they were going to celebrate peace, and this peace had been won for them by the men they were honouring and others like them. If it had not been for them the Germans would have been here. Now, however, the war is over, and those who fought for us we have to thank that we are still under the British flag. (Hear, hear). We have nothing to be ashamed of in the way the Allies conducted the war, and as long as we live under the good old Union Jack we shall be all right (Applause).

The Mayor then called on Miss Wesley to pin the medal on Captain Pohio's coat and Miss Rehu to pin Private Kotua's medal on his mother's dress. The medals, he said, were being presented on behalf of their Temuka Maori and Pakeha friends. It was not in the intrinsic words of the medals that their value consisted, but on the feeling that prompted their bestowal, and he hoped the recipients would live long to wear them and enjoy the esteem and affection of their friends. (Applause).

"For they are jolly good fellows" was heartily sung, after which Captain Pohio replied. He said he greatly appreciated the honour that had been paid to himself and his comrade (who was unable to be present), in arranging a welcome social, for the kind words that had been said by the Mayor, and for their very nice present. Personally he felt somewhat embarrassed by the remarks of the chairman, but they were fully appreciated. He would never forget the very pleasant evening they had given him. When the war was a thing of the past it would be nice to remember in the years to come that their relatives and friends in Temuka thought they had done fairly well, and on their return from the front had given them a jolly good time. On behalf of Private Kotua and himself he again expressed his thanks for the kindness they had received. (Applause).

Mr H. Torepe's company (with Miss Gray at the piano) sang a welcome home song very tunefully and gracefully, and had to respond to an insistent recall.

This concluded the presentation ceremony, and dancing was resumed, and with the interval for supper, was kept up for several hours, all appearing to thoroughly enjoy themselves. The social was very successful, the arrangements reflecting much credit on the Ngati Huirapa Committee.