

Temuka Leader. 22 Sep 1914 [30/05/2025]

MAORI CONTINGENT.
FOR SAMOA AND EGYPT.
ACTION IN TEMUKA.

Mr Hoani Kahu has received the following communication from Mr Parata, M.P., which was considered at the Arowhenua Pa, and handed to us for publication by Mr J. T. Pyke: -

“Government want two native contingents infantry for garrison service in Egypt and Samoa — two hundred for Egypt and three hundred for Samoa. The selection is open to Maoris, half-castes, three-quarter castes and quarter castes, allotted on a population basis. South Island is entitled to forty members, age limit 21 to 40 years. Men must be physically fit and of good character. The period of service will be to the end of the war; pay the same as that paid to Expeditionary Force which has already left New Zealand. The provinces of Nelson, Marlborough, Canterbury, Otago and Southland have been allotted seven men each, and Westland five men. Those volunteering should apply to the nearest area officer in the district in which they live.

“All the Maori representatives in Parliament are favourable to the course adopted, and appreciate the Maori Government’s gracious action in giving an opportunity to the Natives to serve their King and Empire.”

As Canterbury’s contingent is only seven men, it is obvious that the force will be a picked one, and represent the best of the Native race. Two suitable young men have already volunteered from Temuka - Tuapaoa Whaitu and H. Wiremu Torepe.

Temuka Leader. 23 Sep 1919 [21/09/2022]

WELCOME HOME.
AT TEMUKA

Yesterday afternoon a large number of returned soldiers who had arrived on the troopships *Ayrshire*, *Horata*, and *Tainui* passed through by the express train from Christchurch. on their way to their homes in the south. As usual, on the arrival of the troops, there was a large crowd at the Temuka railway station to meet them, and as the train came in the Temuka Municipal Brass Band, under Bandmaster W. Benbow, played “Home Again.” The ladies of the Temuka Patriotic Entertainment Committee, distributed fruit and cigarettes among the men, and the Mayor (Mr Gunnion) thanked the soldiers for their services, and called for hearty cheers for them. The men appeared to be well pleased with their reception, and as the train left the station they gave some very hearty cheers for Temuka.

The local men who arrived were: Rifleman P. J. Simpson, Private K. Buckthought, Private Brockie, and Driver W. H. Torepe, and as soon as the train had left they were motored to the Post Office, preceded by the Band, and the customary welcome home was given to them by the several hundreds of people taking part in it.

The Mayor, in welcoming the men on behalf of the town and district, said they were very glad to have them back. They had been away a very long time, as was shown by the chevrons on their uniforms. They went away to help to win the war and the war had been won. These soldiers were deserving of all honour. He had pleasure in extending to them Temuka’s heartiest welcome. He thanked them for all they had done for their country, and for New Zealand in particular. (Applause.)

The men having been heartily cheered, at the call of the Mayor, Mr J. Paiki spoke a few words of welcome, on behalf of the Maoris. He said he was exceedingly glad to see them all home again — not only one, but all. The only thing he regretted was, that the lad from the Pa had left

his bride behind him for he would like to have expressed to her the congratulations of the Pa. He was sorry she had not come, but hoped she would be here soon. In conclusion, he again welcomed the men home, and wished them all prosperity. (Applause.)

Hearty cheers were again given for the men, after which Driver Torepe, on behalf of his comrades and himself, expressed their appreciation of the kindly welcome they had received. He thanked them most heartily.

The men were then motored to their homes, cars being supplied by Messrs C. H. Street, T. Frisby, W. Hally, and J. J. Ellis.

Before the people dispersed, the Mayor announced that three more local soldiers were expected to arrive by a special troop train, which was expected to pass through Temuka at about 1.30 to-day, and he expressed the hope that there would be a large gathering to welcome them. The names of the men expected are: —

Private Norman Granti and

Private Hanifin.

Temuka Leader. 25 September 1919 (Papers Past) [23/09/2022]

WELCOME HOME.

AT AROWHENUA PA.

On Tuesday evening a welcome social was tendered to Driver H. Torepe, (who had returned home on the previous day) and in the course of the evening he was presented with a handsome gold medal by his Maori friends. Although the nature of the function was very short there was a large attendance of the public, visitors from Geraldine, Timaru and intervening districts being amongst those present. The hall was but well decorated and the floor in the best of dancing order. Excellent music was provided by Miss V. Hopkinson and Master S. Torepe, Miss T. Gray kindly contributing extras. Mr Soloman carried out the duties of M. C. in his usual efficient manner, and a first class supper was provided and dispensed by the ladies.

About half past ten o'clock there was a break in the dancing programme to allow for the presentation being made. The Mayor, (Mr T. Gunnion) said they had assembled to honour a lad who had been away fighting for his country. For nearly five years he had been away from his people and home, among strangers, yet not among strangers, for wherever he went he had made friends. It was wonderful what Maori boys had done and Driver Torepe's friends were anxious to show their appreciation that evening. Mr Gunnion then called on Mr A. Wilkinson (Geraldine) to make the presentation.

Mr A. Wilkinson said it gave him very much pleasure to be present, and felt it a great honour to be called on to present a Maori soldier with a medal. It was the first time he had had such an honour, and could say it "was the time of his life." All recognised what the Maoris had done, fighting side by side with white soldiers and were proud of them. They had been our enemies at one time, now they are our friends, and the way they fought was a credit to New Zealand and a credit to the Empire. Addressing Driver Torepe, Mr Wilkinson said he had great pleasure in presenting him with a gold medal from his friends. (Applause.)

The decoration was pinned on the soldier's coat by Miss Wanaka Mihaka amidst applause, after which all joined in singing "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow."

Driver Torepe replied at some length. He thanked the speakers for their kind remarks, and all for the hearty welcome and beautiful medal they had given to him. He would never forget the kindness bestowed upon him. He then gave an interesting little description of his life as a soldier from the time he enlisted 1914-15, including the landing at Gallipoli, where he was wounded, and his subsequent career in France, etc. He then [found] how the Maori company had gone into the fighting at Gallipoli strong, but in two days their numbers were so reduced by casualties that they had only two platoons and had to be mixed up with the other

soldiers. They were like brothers, and so it had been throughout the war. They had gone to France and “carried on” like brothers with the other soldiers until they won and saw the Germans knuckle down to them. (Applause.) In conclusion he said that they had given him a surprise that evening, he laughingly remarked that if he had known all he would have to go through he might have “side tracked.” (Laughter) He thanked them for their welcome home. He was glad to see that his Maori and English friends had got together as one body and “done their little bit,” at home for those who were at the war. He was also very glad that his young Maori and European friends, who could not get to the war, through being unfit, had also tried to help to do “their little bit” in other ways. (Applause.)

Mr H. Torepe’s Company rendered a pretty waiata, and had to respond to an encore. Dancing was then resumed and with an interval for supper, was kept going merrily for several hours. The social was very successful and reflected every credit on the organisers, Messrs J. Paiki and S. Campbell.

Timaru Herald. 23 September 1919 (Papers Past) [26/02/2017]

MORE SOLDIERS RETURN HORORATA AND AYRSHIRE MEN.

By the express from Christchurch yesterday afternoon

FOUR TEMUKA MEN

More soldiers arrived in Temuka by yesterday’s express, these being Privates K. Buckthought and Brooker, Rifleman P. J. Simpson and Driver W. H. Torepe, of the Maori Pioneer Battalion. There was the usual large assembly at the station to greet them, and the Municipal Band was in attendance. The ladies of the Patriotic Entertainment Committee distributed fruit and cigarettes to the soldiers who were going further south. The returned men were motored to the Post Office, preceded by the band, where they were officially welcomed by the Mayor, Mr Gunnion, and by Mr James Paiki on behalf of the Maoris, who extended Temuka’s best thanks for duty well done.

After enthusiastic cheers had been given for the men on the Mayor’s call, Driver Torepe, on behalf of his comrades and himself, cordially thanked those who had given them such a hearty welcome. Further cheers were given and the men were then motored home in cars kindly lent by Messrs C. H. Street, W. Hally, F. Frisby, and J. J. Ellis.

Temuka Leader. 22 May 1920 (Papers Past) [05/12/2023]

WELCOME HOME.

AND PRESENTATION OF ILLUMINATED ADDRESSES.

On Thursday evening a very enjoyable welcome home social was held in the Maori Hall, Arowhenua, to welcome Private T. Whitau, a member of the Maori Pioneer Battalion, present him with a gold medal, and present illuminated addresses to every local Maori soldier who had returned, and to the relatives of two others who had lost their lives in the Great War. The Hall was nicely decorated, and there was a large attendance. Among those present was Mr Pitama (president of the Tuahiwi Patriotic Committee) and Mr Teaika (representing Mr W. H. Uru, member for the Southern Maori District). Excellent music was provided by Misses V. Hopkinson and M. Gray, Mr Jas. Elder rendering material assistance with the “bones.” Mr Joe Solomon carried out the duties of M.C. in his usual capable manner. During the evening Miss Ruby Marsh favoured those present with a song, and had to respond to an encore. Dancing was commenced shortly after 8 o’clock, and was kept going spiritedly until shortly before 11, when there was a break (to allow of

THE PRESENTATIONS

to be made. Mr H. Paiki, having briefly introduced the Mayor (Mr T. Gunnion) and Mr Pitama, the Mayor expressed his regret that he had not been at the Temuka railway station on the previous day to welcome Private Whitau, but he had gone to Timaru with the Renown men, and had overlooked the fact that the returned soldier was expected. He had great pleasure in being present that evening. Private Whitau had gone away with the Maori Pioneer Battalion five years ago and had only just returned. No doubt if Private Whitau liked he could tell a most interesting story and one that would astonish his hearers. As he had said before, the Maoris of Arowhenua could well be proud of the fact they had given to the war as a volunteer every boy capable of bearing arms, and he understood it was the same at Kaiapoi. These were records that the Maoris could justly be proud of. There was a time when the Maoris and pakehas were fighting but that was long ago, and now they were a united people, true and loyal to their King. (Applause) Private Whitau and the other Maori boys who had gone to the war had proved their loyalty. The Mayor then referred to the testimonials to be presented by Mr Pitama, and after thanking Private Whitau for his services, said to him: "On behalf of your Maori friends in Temuka, I have much pleasure in presenting you with this beautiful medal in recognition of what you have done for us."

Miss Taipana pinned the medal on Private Whitau's coat amidst great applause, and the little ceremony was followed with the singing of "For he's a jolly good fellow," and cheers. Mr H. Torepe's company then sang a waiata very sweetly, and had to respond to an encore.

Private Whitau briefly responded, thanking the Mayor and his Maori friends for the evening and medal. He would never forget them. (Applause.) (The medal is very handsome and neatly engraved. On one side is the inscription "16/231 Private T. Whitau. From friends," and on the other the initials "T.W.")

Mr Pitama, chairman of the Tuahiwi Patriotic Committee, said it had been decided to present an illuminated address to each boy in the South Island who went to the war. This should have been carried out twelve months ago, but in compliance with requests from various pas who wanted the presentations to take place at the welcome to the last boy, the ceremony had been deferred. It had been hard to wait for so long. At the end of the great crisis everyone wanted to settle down to work as in pre-war times. At the beginning of the war they had presented each boy with a medal, but it had been found that they did not always keep them, and it was decided to give the addresses, which could hardly be given away, and which, when the boys married and got homes of their own, could be hung on the walls and show the part they had taken in the Great War. The addresses were a mark that the people of Tuahiwi appreciated what the boys had done that those who stayed here, who were unfitted to go, might have good homes.

Amidst applause Mr Pitama then presented addresses to the following: — T. Whitau, Wm. H. Torepe, Wm. Rickus, Thomas Percival Rickus (the two latter were received by Mrs Rickus), R. Nopera, T. Reihana, T. Whaitiri, Jack Rickus, John Koruarua, Leslie Hopkinson, James Hopkinson, William Taipana.

Mr Pitama said during the war some had had a terrible time. Words could not express his feelings. Mothers had had to grieve for the loss of their sons. Some of the boys "went west." In one case here two members of one family had died, and both parents were dead. Their relatives had their deep sympathy. He was not going to say anything further about the boys who made the supreme sacrifice, but would ask all to join in singing a verse of a hymn.

The audience stood, and the verse was sung with bowed heads after which Mr Pitama presented P. Whitau's address to his aunt, Mrs Kemara, and A. K. Whitau's address to L. Whitau, his uncle.

Mr Pitama expressed his thanks for having been allowed to present the addresses, saying the duty had been a great pleasure to him, and Mr W. H. Torepe, on behalf of the boys of the Maori Pioneers, thanked Mr Pitama and the Tuahiwi Patriotic Committee for the beautiful illuminated

addresses. The boys appreciated them very much. Mr H. Torepe's company then sang "Haere tohu Tuahuriri" and "Aroha whenua" ("Till we meet again") very tunefully and sweetly. A nice supper, supplied by the ladies, was then handed round, after which dancing was resumed and kept going for several hours. The successful function reflected great credit on those who arranged it, Messrs H. Torepe, H. Paiki, and K. Kemara.

Timaru Herald. 25 May 1920 (Papers Past) [01/11/2016; 26/02/2017]

AROWHENUA PA

SOLDIERS' SOCIAL AND PRESENTATIONS.

A successful welcome home social and presentation was tendered to Private T. Whitau, of the Maori Pioneer Battalion, in the Arowhenua Hall last week. The Tuahiwi Patriotic Committee also presented framed and illuminated addresses to all the Maori soldiers who have returned, and to the next of kin of two others who made the supreme sacrifice in the late war. The building, which was filled to its utmost, was beautifully decorated. Among the visitors were Mr Pitama (president of the Tuahiwi Patriotic committee), and Mr Teaiki, representing Mr W. H. Uru, M.P. The dance music was supplied by Misses V. Hopkinson and V. Gray, assisted in the "effects" by Mr J. Elder. Mr J. Solomon was M.C. Two songs were capitally sung by Miss Ruby Marsh.

The presentations were made by the Mayor of Temuka and Mr Pitama.

Mr Gunnion said that he was pleased to welcome home one of the first boys who went away from the pa, and saw almost five years service. The Arowhenua Maoris' record was a proud one, every eligible lad had been a Volunteer – it was a credit to the native race.

Mr Guinon presented the medal to Private Whitau, and amidst cheers, Miss Taipani pinned it on. "For he's a jolly good fellow" was sung, and Mr H. Torepe's company sang a waiata, and had to repeat it.

Private Whitau suitably expressed his thanks.

Mr Pitama said that about a year ago the Tuahiwi Patriotic Committee decided to present an illuminated address to all the native boys who had returned, but at the request of the various pas it was decided to delay the presentation until the last man had returned. During the early part of the war medals were given to each boy, but in many cases they were not kept. The framed address could be retained for all time, and could be hung up on the wall at home to show the part they had taken in the great war.

The following were presented with addresses: — T. Whitau, W. H. Torepe, W. Rickus, T. P. Rickus, R. Nopera, T. Reihana, T. Whaikiri, Jack Rickus, J. Koruarua, L. Hopkinson, J. Hopkinson, W. Taipana.

Mr Pitama then made feeling references to those mothers who had lost sons in the war, in one instance in Temuka two sons of one family had died, and both parents were dead. Their relatives had his deepest sympathy. At his request the audience stood and sang a verse of a Maori Hymn, after which Mr Pitama presented Private Whitau's address to Mrs Kemara and A. K. Whitau's address to Ti Whitau, his uncle.

Mr W. H. Torepe on behalf of the Maori Pioneer Boys thanked Mr Pitama and his committee for their handsome presents.

Mr Torepe's company then contributed several Maori items, after which a dainty supper was handed round by the ladies. Dancing was then resumed and kept going until an advanced hour. The function was one of the most enjoyable held at the pa, and much of its success was due to the excellent arrangements made and carried out by the promoters, Messrs H. Torepe, H. Paiki and K. Kemara.