

## TEACHER NOTES

# Porirua Anzacs – WW100 Exhibitions



**2014-2018**

During World War One (1914-1919) Porirua was a quiet village, situated alongside the railway line and main road north, servicing its rural and seaside communities and a large mental hospital established on the hills above it. The volunteers who quickly enlisted for military service came from the surrounding farming settlements but also included groups of medical attendants from the asylum. These sons, brothers and fathers from local families and businesses feature in a sequence of PĀTAKA exhibitions which honour and tell their stories from the trenches of Gallipoli to the Western Front. The exhibitions also explore the events of the Great War and how it affected our region (and nation) 100 years ago.

Education resource compiled by Linda Fordyce, Education, Pātaka Museum of Arts and Cultures, 2015. Pātaka Education programmes are supported by LEOTC (Learning Experiences Outside The Classroom) and funded by the Ministry of Education.

# Porirua Anzacs

## Gallipoli Exhibition

[2 April – 3 May 2015]

WW1 Hand-coloured slides, PĀTAKA Coll.



*A hundred years ago New Zealand was involved in the Great War - “the war to end all wars” from the capture of Samoa in 1914 until fighting ceased on Armistice Day in 1918. New Zealand Forces fought at Gallipoli, on the Western Front and in the Middle East and the names of the 18000 who died, as a result of the war, are recorded on around 500 civic memorials throughout the country.*

*PĀTAKA was proud to feature the Gallipoli stories of some of the men (and women) from the Porirua area, in collaboration with historian Allan Dodson (Plimmerton Community website) and the Porirua RSA. The exhibition honoured the memories of those who served on the Gallipoli Peninsula in Turkey between April and December 1915. We remember the landings at Anzac Cove each April 25 when New Zealanders, most of whom had never left home before, faced enemy fire for the first time and blood was shed.*

The soldiers’ stories featured in this resource are based on research by local historian Alan Dodson - ‘<https://poriruawarstories.com>’.

A series of WW1 exhibitions at Pātaka during WW100 included:

**PORIRUA ANZACS AT GALLIPOLI:** April 2015

Paul McLachlan – **HOME GROUND** : February – May 2015

Kingsley Baird - **GALLIPOLI & SERVE** -a new recipe for sacrifice: May – September 2015

Laurence Aberhart – **ANZAC** : September – November 2015

**YOUR FRIEND THE ENEMY** : November 2015 – February 2016

**FRONTLINES: FROM PORIRUA TO PASSCHENDAELE** – October 2017

## New Zealand's entry into WW1

WW1 was the result of a number of political forces and conflicts that had been simmering in Europe for many years. By 1914, the main European powers had set plans to mobilise armies and it took only a small incident to set Europe ablaze.

On 28 June 1914, the Archduke Franz Ferdinand – heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne (supported by Germany) was assassinated by Serbian nationals (supported by Russia). This ignited a chain reaction that converted a local conflict into general war because of pre-arranged alliances between countries. A month later, Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia and suddenly Europe was divided into two armed camps: the British, French and Russian empires called the Triple Entente (or Allied Powers) against the German, Italian and Austro-Hungarian empires who were called the Central Powers. Other countries aligned themselves at later dates with the two sides, until around 30 nations were involved. Within months of the outbreak of war a line of trenches stretched from Switzerland to the Belgian coast.



New Zealand got involved because Britain got involved. Britain declared war on Germany on the 4th August 1914. Germany had marched through Belgium to invade France and Britain was committed to help Belgium defend its neutrality. Within days of Britain's declaration, the New Zealand government pledged its loyal support (as a member of the British Empire) and agreed to equip and send a New Zealand Expeditionary Force (NZE) overseas.



Thousands of men of military age rushed to enlist - most of whom had never left home before, anticipating a great adventure. From August 1916 conscription was introduced which forced all non-Maori men aged between 20 and 45 to enlist unless they were medically unfit, married with young children or working in certain vital jobs. As a result 32,000 conscripts served overseas with the NZEF, alongside 71,000 volunteers. Reinforcement drafts left New Zealand at regular intervals during the war years.

The main body of the NZEF, with over 8500 men and 3000 horses, left Wellington on the 16th October 1914 - the largest single group ever to leave these shores at one time. Australian troops joined the convoy in Western Australia. Most of the troops thought they were heading to England for training and then on to fight in France. But while the convoy was sailing, the Ottoman (Turkish) Empire entered the war with the Central Powers and the troops disembarked in Egypt to complete their training. While the men trained in Egypt, British leaders planned their campaigns. A combined Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (known as Anzacs) became part of a larger Mediterranean Expeditionary Force which was sent to help capture the Gallipoli Peninsula in Turkey. It is now believed that over 12,000 New Zealanders in total (including Reinforcement units) served at Gallipoli during 1915.



*New Zealand, with a population of a million in 1914, sent 103,000 troops (and 550 nurses) abroad during World War One. About 18,000 troops died and more than 40,000 were wounded. New Zealand had one of the highest casualty and death rates per capita than any other country involved. This headstone marks the former grave of an unknown New Zealand soldier who became the Unknown Warrior at the National War Memorial in Wellington. The Unknown Warrior represents one of almost 9,000 men who have no known grave.*

## The Samoan Advance Party 1914

New Zealand's first military action in World War 1 actually took place in the Pacific not long after war was declared. The first troops to leave New Zealand were part of the Samoan Advance Party – an expeditionary force that seized Samoa from the Germans in August 1914.

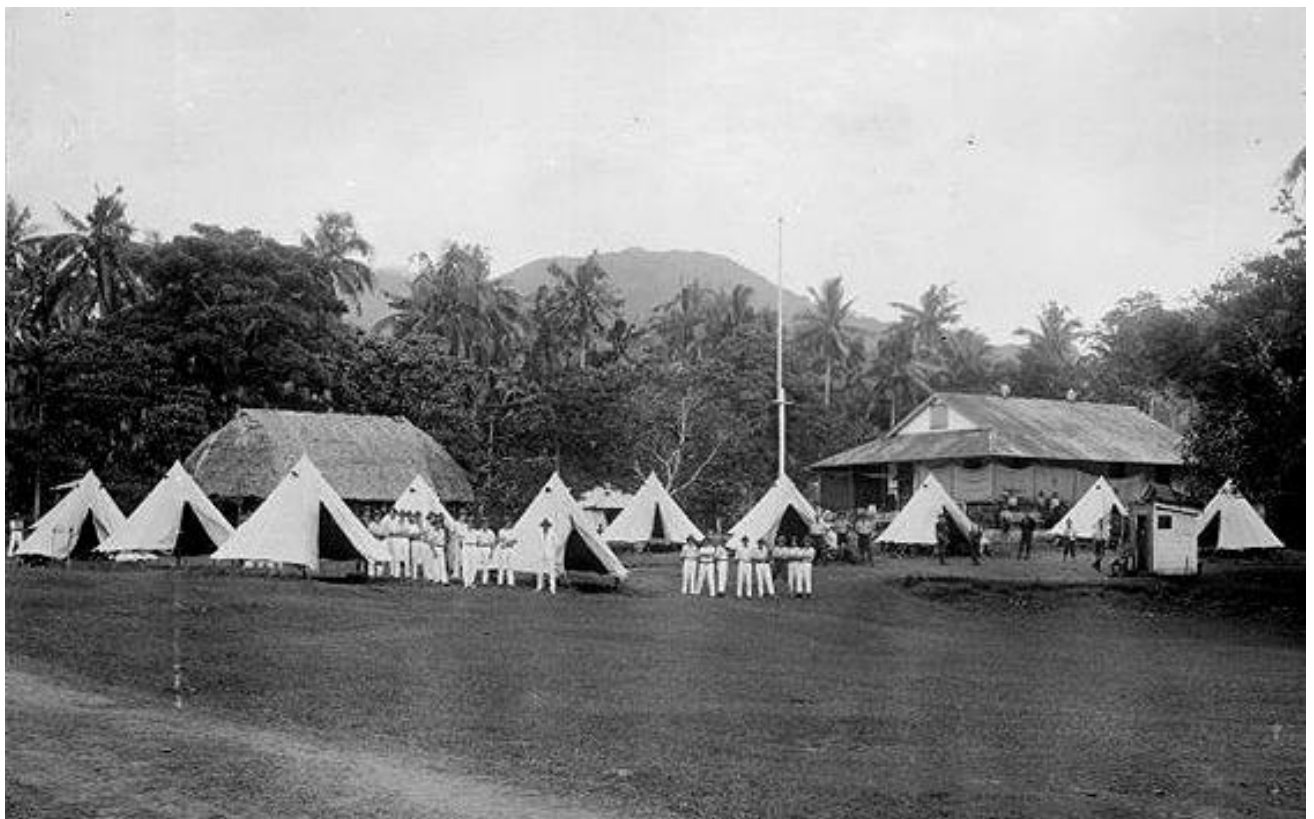
On the 7th August 1914 Britain asked New Zealand to undertake 'a great and urgent imperial service' and capture a German radio station and transmitter – capable of sending signals to Berlin and Germany's East Asia Naval Squadron – in the hills above Apia. Germany had governed Samoa since 1899 and Britain needed the threat of the German Squadron in the Pacific removed. The New Zealand government readily agreed and on the 15th August over 1300 soldiers of the Samoan Expeditionary Force, led by Lieutenant-Colonel Robert Logan, sailed from Wellington and landed at Apia on the 29th August. German opposition had been expected but the local German authorities in Apia offered no resistance. An armed party was sent to capture the radio station and again met no resistance. The Union Jack was raised outside the Courthouse building in Apia and Colonel Robert issued a proclamation. All firearms were ordered to be handed in, no public meetings were allowed and a curfew was introduced.



*Hoisting the Union Jack outside the Courthouse in Apia. Photographer A. J. Tattersall, ATL Ref: PA1-q-107-32-1.*

Patrols, guard duties and routine marches were carried out until the threat of attack from German ships had passed. Less than two months later, a considerable number of men returned to New Zealand showing signs of ill health from tropical fevers and diseases and the tedium of garrison life. In April 1915, a relief force arrived from New Zealand enabling men from the original occupation force to re-enlist and serve in other campaigns.

Samoa remained under New Zealand military control until 1920 - with disastrous results in 1918 when Colonel Robert Logan failed to quarantine a ship carrying sick passengers suffering from pneumonia influenza. The infectious disease spread quickly through the islands killing over 22% of the population. This incident started an ongoing resentment against New Zealand, which governed Western Samoa (part of the 1920 League of Nations Mandate followed in 1946 by the United Nations trusteeship) until 1962 when Western Samoa became independent.



*Part of NZ Expeditionary Force camp at Malifa, Samoa 1914. Photographer P.V.Hackworth, ATL Ref: PA1-q-107-36-2.*

## ANZAC DAY – Why Gallipoli?

The invasion of the Gallipoli Peninsula was the idea of Winston Churchill - the First Sea Lord of the British Admiralty who declared: ***“A good army of 50,000 men and sea power- that is the end of the Turkish menace”***. His plan was to capture the Turkish defences (guns and forts) of the straits of the Dardanelles, break through to Constantinople (Istanbul), and force Turkey, Germany’s ally, out of the war. Britain and France could then send supplies safely through Turkish waters to their Russian ally via the Black Sea. It also meant they could open up a southern front to attack Austria-Hungary.



The failure of British ‘sea power’ –the naval bombardment of the Turkish defences in February 1915 - resulted in a new hastily developed plan to send ‘a good army’ - the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force, made up of British, Australian, New Zealand, Indian and French troops - to invade and cross over the Gallipoli Peninsula and overcome the Turkish defences in the Dardanelle Straits.

A combined force of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (**ANZAC**) - was to make the first landing on the peninsula shortly before British troops were to make the main landing further south at Cape Helles. The ANZAC force was told to capture the heights of the hills and press inland to cut off Turkish reinforcements heading to Cape Helles.

At dawn on the 25th April 1915 Australian soldiers followed by the NZ Infantry Brigade began landing at the beach we now call Anzac Cove. As the first groups of men landed on the narrow strip of beach they were faced with having to clamber up steep scrub-covered cliffs exposed to gunfire from Turkish soldiers positioned along the hilltops. Turkish reinforcements during the day meant that many ANZAC soldiers landing later in the day were killed even before they made it to the beach.



WW1 Hand-coloured slides, PĀTAKA Coll.

# 1915 Gallipoli Timeline

- 18 January: New Zealand and Australian Division established
- 3 February: Ottoman (Turkish) forces attack Suez Canal
- 11 March: Lieutenant-General Sir Ian Hamilton given command of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force (MEF)
- 18 March: Failed naval attack on the Dardanelles; battleships *HMS Queen*, *HMS Irresistible* and *HMS Bouvet* sunk
- 15 April: New Zealand troops join the MEF at Lemnos to prepare for the invasion of the Gallipoli Peninsula
- 25 April: Gallipoli landings; the ANZACs land near Ari Burnu Bay (now known as Anzac Cove)
- 27 April: Battle for Walker's Ridge involving Wellington and Canterbury battalions
- 28 April: First Battle of Krithia at Cape Helles
- 2-3 May: Otago Battalion's attack on Baby 700 fails
- 5-6 May: NZ Infantry Brigade sent to Cape Helles
- 6 May: 3rd NZ Reinforcements arrive at Anzac; sent to Cape Helles
- 8 May: NZ Infantry Brigade takes part in Second Battle of Krithia; attacks defeated
- 12 May: NZ Mounted Rifles Brigade arrives at Anzac from Egypt; they fight as infantry for the remainder of the campaign
- 19 May: Major Turkish attack at Anzac defeated; NZ Infantry Brigade returns from Cape Helles
- 20 May: Otago Mounted Rifles arrives at Anzac
- 24 May: Armistice at Anzac to bury dead
- 7 June: 4th NZ Reinforcements arrive at Anzac
- 29-30 June: Major Turkish attack on Anzac perimeter fails
- 3 July: The Native (Maori) Contingent landed at Anzac to join NZ Mounted Rifles – they were a great boost to morale



- 6-7 August: British attack at Cape Helles; Australians attack at Lone Pine, Quinn's Post and Russell's Top at The Nek; Old No. 3 Post retaken and Table Top and Bauchop's Hill taken by NZ Mounted Rifles Brigade
- 7 August: British land at Suvla Bay; Rhododendron Ridge taken by New Zealanders; Auckland Battalion attack on Chunuk Bair fails
- 8 August: Wellington Battalion captures Chunuk Bair; reinforced by Auckland Mounted Rifles and two British battalions during the day; relieved by Otago Battalion and Wellington Mounted Rifles that night. The 5th NZ Reinforcements reach Anzac and go into the firing line
- 9 August: Gurkha battalion reaches saddle between Hill Q and Chunuk Bair; New Zealanders holding Chunuk Bair are relieved at night by British units
- 10 August: British troops driven from Chunuk Bair by Turkish counter-attack
- 21 August: Canterbury and Otago Mounted Rifles take part in attack on Hill 60
- 26 August: New Zealand hospital ship *HMNZS Maheno* arrives off Anzac
- 27-29 August: Renewed fighting for control of Hill 60
- 14 September: NZ brigades evacuated to rest camp at Sarpi on Lemnos
- 16 October: Lieutenant-General Sir Ian Hamilton relieved of command of the MEF
- 30 October: Hamilton's replacement, Lieutenant-General Sir Charles Munro, arrives at Gallipoli
- 8-9 November: New Zealand brigades return to Anzac Cove
- 28 November: Big snowstorm hits Anzac
- 8 December: Munro orders Lieutenant-General William Birdwood to evacuate Anzac and Suvla
- 10-11 December: Sick, wounded and surplus troops and valuable stores removed
- 15 December: Detailed orders issued for evacuation
- 20 December: Evacuation of Anzac and Suvla completed successfully by daylight; troops disembarked at Lemnos
- 21-31 December: Troops transferred from Lemnos to Egypt

[nzhistory.net.nz]





## WW1 FACTS AND FIGURES

NZ Forces were involved in the capture of Samoa in August 1914, at Gallipoli, in the Middle East and on the Western Front until the end of fighting on Armistice Day in November 1918.

More than 18,000 NZ soldiers died as a result of the war and over 40,000 wounded. 2779 soldiers died at Gallipoli and around 12,000 on the Western Front.

More than 2,200 Maori and around 500 Pacific Islanders served overseas with NZ Forces.

11 Victoria Crosses were won by soldiers serving with the New Zealand Forces.

Of the 250,000 men of eligible age living in New Zealand in 1914; 120,000 enlisted for the war.

In all, 550 nurses served overseas with the New Zealand Army Service.

The names of those who died are recorded on approximately 500 civic war memorials throughout the country.

Five New Zealanders were executed by firing squad during WW1 mainly for 'evading service' and/or desertion.



## **Local Boys**

### **2/289 - Gunner Charles (Charlie) Daryl Boulton**



The Boultons were a well-established family in the Paremata/Pāuatahanui area. Edward Boulton, Charles' grandfather, was a whaler in the Cook Strait area as early as 1837. He built one of the first hotels in the area and was the district's first Postmaster. Charles was born on 20th October 1891, the third child (of six) and oldest son of Edward (Jnr) and Matilda Boulton.

Charlie was quick to sign up on the 20th August 1914. He was working as a carpenter for G E Odlin and gave his home address as Golden Gate, Paremata. On the 16th October 1914, Gunner Boulton, 1st Battery New Zealand Field Artillery (NZFA), sailed with the main body of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force (NZEF) for Egypt. Following months of training in Egypt, Charlie sailed for the Dardanelles and landed late in

the day on the 25th April 1915 at ANZAC Cove. The 1st Battery was quickly into action to support the troops already landed.

Gunner Boulton was at Gallipoli for three months until July 1915 when he was evacuated to Malta with dysentery. Dysentery was rife amongst the men caused by the filthy conditions they were living in. Rubbish and dead corpses lay just metres away from where ANZACs ate and slept. Flies and rats swarmed everywhere, spreading germs and carrying diseases and soon nearly every man had enteric fever (dysentery), jaundice or typhoid fever.

From Malta, Gunner Boulton was transferred to the 5th South General Hospital at Portsmouth, England, in September 1915. After two weeks he was then sent to the Castle Hospital, Isle of Wight which had been set up to deal with enteric cases. By early November his condition had stabilised and Gunner Boulton was admitted to the Canadian Convalescent Hospital at Woodcote Park in Surrey along with other sick and wounded ANZAC troops from Gallipoli. It is possible that Charles met his future wife, a Canadian, at that Convalescent Hospital.

Charlie was discharged from Woodcote Park after about three weeks and ended up at 'Longleat' – an English stately home in Wiltshire, which was being used as a temporary hospital. In January 1916 it was decided that he was not fit for active service and should be returned to New Zealand. When he returned to New Zealand and was reassessed at Trentham in July 1916, the sciatica was bad enough for him to be discharged from the NZEF.

Charlie Boulton returned to the family home at Paremata and worked on farms in the Pāuatahanui area until he married Miss Lottie May Trimbee, who arrived from Canada in October 1918. On the 12th November 1918, Charles married Lottie at St Alban's Pāuatahanui - the first 'peace-time' wedding after Armistice Day - making it a double celebration for those attending. The couple left for Canada in 1919 and later lived in Los Angeles where Charles worked as a carpenter. Both are buried in the USA.



### **8/809 - Private Kenneth (Ken) Henry Boulton**

Private Kenneth Boulton was the middle son of Edward and Matilda Boulton of Golden Gate, Paremata – and brother of Charles. He attended Plimmerton School and then went to Wellington Technical College where he received certificates in engineering from 1909 -1911.



Kenneth enlisted on the 14th August, 1914, ten days after war was declared. At the time he was working as a storeman for S & W Mackay – booksellers and stationery suppliers in Wellington. Although Kenneth had done compulsory military training with the 5<sup>th</sup> (Wellington) Regiment for three years, he was attached to the 14<sup>th</sup> South Otago Company, part of the Otago Infantry Battalion when the NZEF sailed for Egypt on the 16th October 1914.

Kenneth landed at Gallipoli within hours of his older brother Charles, on the 25th April 1915. On the 3rd May, the Otago Battalion spearheaded an Anzac attack against the Turks to take Baby 700 (a strategic hilltop) but, due to a number of delays, they attacked in broad daylight with disastrous results and were forced to retreat. The *War Diary* records five officers wounded, eight missing, 11 men killed, 174 wounded and 208 missing, leaving a strength of 365 out of 800 who went into the attack. Private Boulton was one of the men 'missing' and his family in Paremata would have received a telegram from the government to this effect.



Later on the 19th May 1915, Turkish forces attacked in the same area - this time against alerted Anzac forces - and it was a disaster for the Turks with 3,000 of them killed. The number of casualties in the area resulted in an armistice day, 24th May 1915, to enable the dead to be buried. Private Boulton's service record lists that he was missing between 1 and 23 May 1915 and it was not until a Court of Enquiry was held in Egypt in 20 January 1916 that Private Boulton and many others from the Otago Infantry were declared '*missing believed to be killed.*' Kenneth Boulton is remembered at the Lone Pine Memorial at Gallipoli, on the Pāuatahanui War memorial and on the grave of his parents at the Pāuatahanui Public Burial Ground.



### 6/2530 - Private Robert Auty

Private Robert George Auty was born on the 22th August 1889 in Lyttleton, the eldest son and child of Robert and May Auty. His parents had moved to Porirua by 1898 and in May 1899 they purchased a general store in Porirua which also operated as the Post Office (until the new Post office opened in 1912). Robert Auty (Snr) died in 1903 as a result of falling from the Wellington & Manawatu Railway train between Johnsonville and Tawa but May Auty continued to run the store up until the start of the war. By 1916 she had moved into Wellington.



Robert Auty attended Porirua School and played for the Porirua Rugby Club. When he enlisted in 1915 for the NZEF, he was working as a blacksmith on a farm in Kaikoura.

Private Auty was attached to the C Company, 6th Reinforcements of the Canterbury Infantry Battalion when it sailed for overseas service on the 14th August 1915. The 6th Reinforcements joined their Battalion on Lemnos on the 30th September 1915 where the Canterbury Infantry Battalion had been withdrawn from Gallipoli for rest, recuperation, reinforcement and training. The Canterbury Battalion (with the Auckland Battalion) had been the first NZ unit to fight at Gallipoli, joining the struggle on 'Baby 700' around midday on the 25<sup>th</sup> April. Reinforcements were badly needed. Private Auty stayed on Lemnos until the Canterbury Battalion returned to Anzac Cove in November 1915.



ATL Ref: PAColl-3604-03

By this time General Ian Hamilton had been relieved of command of the Gallipoli Forces and replaced by General Charles Munro. During the bitterly cold months and snow storms of November and December Munro ordered the evacuation of Anzac Cove and Suvla Bay.

The evacuation operation was the most successful part of the whole campaign without a single life lost. Private Auty was evacuated from Gallipoli along with the rest of the Allied troops during the night of the 19th December. By daylight on the 20<sup>th</sup>, the Turks awoke to find the beaches empty. Private Auty arrived back in Egypt on the 27th December 1915.

The New Zealand Expeditionary Force then started to train for its next operations in France and Private Auty left Egypt, with his Battalion, for France on the 6th April 1916. In France on the 1st May 1916, Private Auty was transferred from the 1st Battalion, Canterbury Infantry Regiment to the New Zealand Machinegun Corps. The New Zealand Machinegun Corps was moving forward into the Armentieres sector taking over trenches on the 13th May when Auty was killed. Private Auty is buried in grave I.A.28, Cites Bonjean Military Cemetery, Armentiers, France. He was the first New Zealander killed in France.



## 1314 Private Harold George Beaumont

### AIF (Australian Imperial Force)

Private Harold George Beaumont was born in Palmerston North on the 2nd December 1892. He and his father Frank Beaumont moved to Porirua, where Beaumont attended Porirua School.

Beaumont enlisted on the 17th November 1914 in Australia, aged 21. His record shows he was a labourer by trade, and he attested that he was discharged from the New Zealand Infantry because he left New Zealand for Australia. He joined the 2nd Reinforcements of the 13th Battalion of the AIF and embarked from Sydney for Gallipoli. The 13<sup>th</sup> Battalion took part in the landing at Anzac Cove arriving late on the 25<sup>th</sup> April 1915.

Private Beaumont was killed in action on the 28th April 1915 during the chaos of the first three days of fighting at Gallipoli. He is buried at the Lone Pine Memorial in Turkey.

7681 AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES. D7681

**AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.**

Attestation Paper of Persons Enlisted for Service Abroad.

No. 1314 Name BEAUMONT, Harold George  
Unit 2nd Reinforcements 13th Battalion A.I.F.  
Joined on 17th 11th 1914

Questions to be put to the Person Enlisting before Attestation.

1. What is your Name? Harold George Beaumont.
2. In the Parish of ... in or near the Town of ... in the County of ...  
Salisbury, New Zealand.
3. Are you a natural born British Subject or a Naturalized British Subject? (N.B.—If the latter, papers to be shown.) Natural.
4. What is your age? Twentyone years.
5. What is your trade or calling? Labourer.
6. Are you, or have you been, an Apprentice? If so, when, to whom, and for what period? No.
7. Are you married? No.
8. Who is your next of kin? (Address to be stated) Father, Mr. F. Beaumont, Porirua, N.Z.
9. Have you ever been convicted by the Civil Power? No.
10. Have you ever been discharged from any part of His Majesty's Forces, with Ignominy, or as Insubordinate and Worthless, or on account of Conviction of Felony, or of a Sentence of Penal Servitude, or have you been dismissed with Disgrace from the Navy? No.
11. Do you now belong to, or have you ever served in, His Majesty's Army, the Marines, the Militia, the Militia Reserve, the Territorial Force, Royal Navy, or Colonial Forces? If so, state which, and if not now serving, state cause of discharge. 2nd Inf. leaving Dominion.
12. Have you stated the whole, if any, of your previous service? Yes.
13. Have you ever been rejected as unfit for His Majesty's Service? If so, on what ground? No.
14. (For Married Men and Widowers with children)—Do you understand that no Separation Allowance will be issued to you either before or after embarkation during your term of service? No.

I, Harold George Beaumont, do solemnly declare that the above answers made by me to the above questions are true, and I am willing and hereby voluntarily agree to serve in the Military Forces of the Commonwealth of Australia within or beyond the limits of the Commonwealth.

\* And I further agree to abstain from any use of the pay payable to me from time to time during my service for the support of my wife and children.

Date 18. 11. 1914. Harold George Beaumont.  
Signature of person enlisted.

This clause to be attended where necessary and should be struck out in the case of married men or widowers without children under 18 years of age.

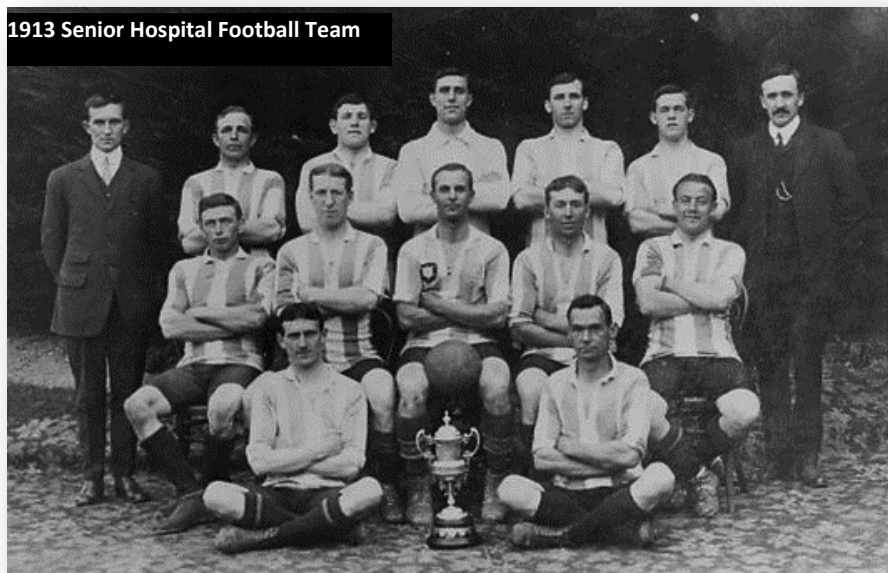
National Archives of Australia NAA: B2455: BEAUMONT H G



## The Hospital Team

In 1914, with the outbreak of war, many of the Porirua Hospital attendants left to join the expeditionary forces. By 1915 11% of the male staff were either fighting at the front or in training. Some of the men working at the hospital had come from Britain as part of a large recruitment program for young single men to work in psychiatric institutions in New Zealand.

Nine hospital men enlisted together on the 21st September 1914 for the New Zealand Medical Corps in the New Zealand Expeditionary Force. They joined the 2nd Reinforcements and were trained at Trentham Camp by Major Alexander McKillop, formerly a Doctor and Superintendent of Porirua Hospital



Seven of the nine men who enlisted together were a group of football teammates who played for the Hospital Association Football Club. The club was formed in 1906 and became affiliated to the Wellington Football Association. The club colours were white and blue. The Hospital senior team entered First Division competition in 1911 and won the Senior Championship in 1912. The 1913 senior team won the Charity Cup (pictured) and were runners up in the Wellington Championships. The captain was Sydney Roots (seated in middle) and other players in the team included Henry Heath, George William Hughes, William Skinner and Walter Cobb (the goalie). Other hospital football players included: Joseph Alexander, Wilfred Singleton, Archibald Foley, Francis Walsh, John Simpson, John Gillet, Wilfred Singleton, Herbert Foster and Dr Alexander McKillop. These men were listed as 'Footballers at the Front' in an article written in March 1915.



## **The Pā Boys [Takapuwahia]**

### **The Katene Brothers –**

#### **The Pioneer Battalion**

The first Māori Contingent of volunteers sailed from Wellington aboard the *SS Warrimoo* in February 1915. Although the Contingent received military training, there was an 'Imperial policy on native peoples fighting' offshore which meant that Māori troops were not to be used for frontline fighting but as a military labour force; digging trenches, building roads and other engineering tasks. The contingent was sent from Egypt to Malta for further training and garrison duties. The mounting losses at Gallipoli and the need for reinforcements forced a swift change to the Imperial policy, and the contingent landed at

Anzac Cove in July 1915 and joined with the New Zealand Mounted Rifles. Their arrival provided a huge boost to the morale of the Anzac troops there. Fifty members of the Māori Contingent lost their lives in the Gallipoli Campaign. The gaps in the ranks were filled by men from the 2nd Contingent which included the three Katene brothers: Rangī, Taku and Frederick Bennett Wi Katene of Ngāti Toa Rangatira descent.



*(L-R) Taku, Rangī (seated), Frederick c1920.*

Private Rangī Wi Katene (16/636) with his two younger brothers Taku (16/635) and Frederick (16/792), left New Zealand on the 28th September 1915 heading for Egypt. They were all sent to France in 1916 with the Pioneer Battalion which was responsible for digging trenches, building roads and other duties behind the front lines. The unit's duties constantly placed the men under fire in the trenches and their casualty rate was as high as other fighting units. Rangī had continuing health problems which saw him return to New Zealand in 1917, having been diagnosed with TB in England. Taku, born in Porirua in 1895, remained at the Western Front in France until the end of the war. He was promoted to Lance Corporal on the 28th April 1918. Frederick was probably under age when he enlisted but he served in France and was promoted to Corporal on the 1st November 1918 – days before taking part in capturing the French town of Le Quesnoy from the Germans right at the end of the war. Delayed because of illness, he was the last brother to return home and was discharged on the 7th June 1919.

### **391 Lance Corporal John Jogles Naylor AKA Hoani Te Okoro Wineera**

Lance Corporal Hoani Te Okoro Wineera was born in Porirua in 1888. His parents were Wiremu Wineera and Hanna Cootes, and his secondary education took place at Te Aute College in Hawkes Bay.

He moved to Australia where he was employed as a labourer, and enlisted - using an anglicized version of his name (John Naylor) - on the 17th May 1915 in Sydney. He joined A Company, part of the 18th Battalion of the Australian Imperial Forces.

The 18th Battalion sailed for Gallipoli and it is presumed that Wineera was wounded between late August and early October 1915. On the 18th November 1915, the Evening Post reported that 'Lance Corporal J J Naylor had been admitted to hospital in London.' During his convalescence in London he met Gertrude Victoria Kemp, and they were married on the 27th November 1915. Their son, Stanley H Naylor, was born in London and registered during March 1917.



Wineera/Naylor returned to serve with the 39th Battalion in France. He was wounded in action and evacuated to the 2nd Casualty Clearing Station, and on the 11th February 1918 he died of his wounds. He was thirty years old. Wineera/Naylor is buried in the Trois Arbes Cemetery in France.

At the end of the war Gertrude and Stanley travelled to New Zealand. She married her late husband's brother, Kanawa Iti Wineera, on the 4th September 1919.



## WW1 Fighting Families

During the course of the four years of the Great War - an era of large families - it was common for families to have several sons serving overseas or in training. The term 'fighting families' was generally used in newspapers at the time to describe these families and the Auckland Weekly News had a section called Fighting Families which featured related soldiers 'in khaki'. Typically there were several fighting families in the Porirua region. Some are remembered below.

The **Boulton family** of Paremata/Pāuatahanui waited for news about two brothers, Charles and Kenneth. Both men had landed at Gallipoli on the 25th April 1915 with different battalions but only one returned home. Kenneth was killed when his Otago Battalion was ordered to attack Baby 700, a strategic hilltop, in broad daylight. His body was never found.



Ken and Charlie's cousin, Corporal James Gardner (17/64), was also killed while serving overseas in France. There were several members of the **Gardner family** living around Pāuatahanui in the 1890s. James was born in Pāuatahanui on the 10<sup>th</sup> November 1887, the eldest child of five of James Gardner (Snr) and Elizabeth Anne Gardner (née Boulton). James left Wellington on the 14th December 1914 with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Reinforcements for the NZ Veterinary Corps (NZVC) and arrived in Egypt in January 1915. By April 1916, James had trained as a machine-gunner on the Lewis Gun and was posted to the Auckland Infantry Regiment, which was part of the New Zealand Division fighting in France at the Somme battlefield. He died of multiple gunshot wounds on the 9th July and is buried in the military cemetery at Armentieres. He was 28 years old.

Rifleman Edward Kenneth (Ken) Gardner (14607) was the younger brother of Corporal Gardner. Ken enlisted in March 1916, and after training, left New Zealand in June 1916 in B Company, 14<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements, Wellington Infantry. He was posted from England as rifleman in September 1916 to B Company, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion of the New Zealand Rifle Brigade at the Western Front and was part of the 7<sup>th</sup> June 1917 assault at the Battle of Messines where he was wounded. Ken was evacuated back to England to recover but a month later he was declared unfit for service and left England for New Zealand in November 1917. He died in 1953 at Shannon.



The **Thomson Family** shifted to Plimmerton at the start of the war and Frank Thomson and his eldest son Leslie Thomson enlisted within months of each other in 1916. Leslie Thomson was a 16 year old shop assistant who said he was 20 when he enlisted. In order to protect his son, Frank Thomson (#27993) enlisted two months later.

Both embarked with the New Zealand Rifle Brigade and were shipped at different times to the Western Front. Frank was first posted to the NZ Tunnelling Company based in Arras. Father and son took part in the Battle of Messines and Passchendaele. Frank was wounded and evacuated twice but Lance/Sergeant Les Thomson (#18719) was killed on the 16th July 1918 and buried in the Hebuterne Military Cemetery. He was 18 years old. Frank returned to Plimmerton in 1919 to his wife and three remaining children.



The large extended **Sievers family** from the

Makara/Porirua region saw as many as ten 'extended' family members serve in the New Zealand Expeditionary Force; with two cousins killed in action. Alfred and Elizabeth Sievers of Makara had three out of their four sons enlist. Private Louis William Sievers (#30649) and Albert Henry Sievers (#30648) left in December 1916 with the 20<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements, Wellington Infantry Battalion. They were separated into different battalions after training in England but both, at some stage, were attached to 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, Wellington Infantry Regiment in France. Private Louis survived Passchendaele but was killed near Ypres in November 1917. His brother Albert survived and was part of the Allied Occupation of Germany, returning in May 1919. The third brother, Rifleman Arthur Sievers (#51543), was sent to France in October 1917 until he was wounded in action on the 10th July 1918 and shipped back to New Zealand.

The **Bennett family** of Plimmerton - William and Margaret - had two sons and a daughter involved in the war. Private Hubert Bennett (10/1416) left in February 1915 with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Reinforcements of the Wellington Infantry Brigade, which landed at Anzac Cove on the 25th April. He remained there for a couple of weeks until his Brigade was transferred south to the Cape Helles area. The Brigade was in action from the 8th May in the chaotic Second Battle of Krithia. Hubert was wounded and evacuated to Malta where he met up with his sister, Nurse Ina Bennett (22/14), there with the New Zealand Army Nursing Service (NZANS). Hubert was sent back to Gallipoli in July but was wounded for a second time in August. He returned to New Zealand to convalesce and was discharged.

Nurse Bennett had left with the first contingent of nurses in April 1915. Initially based in Cairo, she also worked on Malta and at Amiens, France. While at Amiens she heard about the death of her younger brother, Rifleman Oswald Bennett (#2338), who had been transferred to the Auckland Infantry Regiment in the NZ Division that saw action in France in the Battle of the Somme. He was killed on the 27th September 1916. He was buried but his grave was never found. Hubert, Ina and Oswald Bennett had five cousins who also served in France. Those cousins were from the **D'Ath family** and the Otaki-based Francis (Frank) Bennett family.



The Pāuatahanui **Harris family**, like many established families in the district, had expanded to such an extent that 29 Harris children attended Pāuatahanui School between the years 1891 and 1911\* resulting in several cousins being of military age during the course of WW1. Eric, Walter, Herbert, Charles and John Harris all served in the New Zealand services and sadly Private Walter Harris was killed at Passchendaele (see below). Eight out of the thirty-eight soldiers from Pāuatahanui did not return from the Great War. A memorial which was officially unveiled on the 18<sup>th</sup> January 1922 contains the names of six of the men.

\*Reilly, Helen. Pāuatahanui - A Local History (2013), p240



Names on the Pāuatahanui War Memorial.  
Allan Dodson



## Our Boys at the Western Front 1916-1918

In terms of loss of life and disastrous conditions and campaigns, it seems hard to believe that the European 'theatre' of war, at the Western Front, could be any worse than the Gallipoli Campaign – but it was. It was at the Western Front that most New Zealanders saw action and where most of them died – almost 12,500 in total. Indeed the single worst day/disaster in New Zealand's history took place on the 12<sup>th</sup> October 1917 when New Zealanders were trapped and cut down by German machine-gun fire while trying to capture Passchendaele in Belgium - taking the lives of 845 men and wounding another 2700 in just a few hours.

The New Zealand Division's first major experience fighting against the Germans in Europe had taken place between September-October 1916 at the Battle of the Somme where nearly one in seven soldiers were killed and four out of ten wounded. The British and French needed to break through German lines into German-held territory along the river Somme in northern France. However the relentless artillery fire from the Germans in heavily fortified bunkers, their poison-gas shells and the deep mud everywhere quickly took a heavy toll on New Zealand soldiers who had experienced very different battles at Gallipoli the previous year.

Of the 15,000 New Zealand troops who were sent to the Somme battlefields in 1916, more than 2000 were killed and nearly 6000 were wounded. One New Zealand soldier killed in 1916 now lies in the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior at the National War Memorial. Some of the bells of the Carillion at the National War Memorial bear the names of the places along the Somme where the New Zealand Division fought and fell in 1916: Flers, Longueval, Delville Wood and High Wood.



*Troops were sitting ducks when they were delayed by barbed wire that their artillery had failed to cut during the Battle of the Somme. [HQ NZ Defence Force Library]*

On the 7<sup>th</sup> June 1917 the New Zealand Division was selected for an assault on the Messines ridge and village. The attack needed to remove the Germans from the ridge and stop them being able to observe preparations for a major assault on the Passchendaele Plateau and the town of Roulers – an important transport hub in that area.

## **First at the Front – The New Zealand Pioneer Battalion**

The Katene Brothers, from Porirua, were part of the New Zealand Pioneer Battalion which was the first unit of New Zealanders to be sent to the Somme battlefield. The Somme Offensive had already begun on the 1<sup>st</sup> July 1916 with horrendous losses, especially among the British. The Pioneer Battalion was sent ahead of the main body of New Zealand troops to dig trenches and lay cables (under heavy fire) in readiness for the arrival of the New Zealand Division (part of XV Corps of the British Fourth Army) in September 1916. Their 8km communications trench, called 'Turk Lane' – along with 'Fish Alley' played a vital role in allowing soldiers to move to and from the front line under cover. On the first day of the New Zealand attack on the Somme, 12 Pioneers were killed and 40 wounded. The Pioneer Battalion was also used during the Messines Offensive to dig crucial communication trenches to the front line. In September 1917 the Battalion became a full fighting unit known colloquially as the Māori Battalion - participating at Passchendaele and the successful liberation of the walled French town of Le Quesnoy (just a week before the war ended). The Māori Battalion sailed for New Zealand in March 1919 and was the only battalion of the MZEF to return as a complete unit.

## **Reinforcements at The Front**



### **41542 Private Walter Harris**

Private Walter Harris' grandparents had arrived in Wellington from Britain in 1840 on the *George Fyfe* and eventually settled on 100 acres at Pāuatahanui in 1858 to raise their nine children. Walter Harris was born in Pāuatahanui in 1891, the second of three sons to Mary and David Harris who also had nine children. He attended the local school with his two brothers (Charlie and Herbert), six sisters and numerous cousins.

Walter enlisted in 1916 and after basic training at Trentham left for the Western Front on the 5<sup>th</sup> April 1917 in the D Company, 24<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements, Otago Infantry Regiment. Private Harris received more advanced training at Etaples before joining his unit in August 1917. His regiment was positioned in front of the Passchendaele Ridge and Walter was part of the



first assault on the Gravenstafel Spur on the 4<sup>th</sup> October where there were over 1700 casualties. Rain had turned the low lying land in front of the ridge into a bog and when a second assault was launched on the ridge at Bellevue Spur on the 12<sup>th</sup> October, the battlefield was a boggy morass and large areas of barbed wire had not been cut. The Division lost 645 men that day with 2100 wounded. The Otago Regiment alone had 259 men killed in action including Private Harris. His body, like many others, was not identified and he is commemorated on the Tyne Cot Memorial, Tyne Cot Cemetery, Belgium and the Pāuatahanui War Memorial. Walter's younger brother Herbert (Herb) also served overseas and his elder brother Charles (Charlie) enlisted but served in New Zealand.



### **20166 Rifleman Norman Keith Jones**

Rifleman Norman Keith Jones belonged to a long established family which had farmed in the Horokiwi valley since 1847. Norman was born in 1887, the second child and eldest son of George and Jane (Jeannie) Jones. He attended the local school and worked as a blacksmith and farmer before enlisting and leaving for England in August 1916 as a Rifleman in the 10<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements, F Company, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, New Zealand Rifle Brigade.

Private Norman Jones was sent to France in December 1916 and was initially put into B Company, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion of the Rifle Brigade but was then attached to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Light Trench Mortar Battery in February 1917. He advanced with this unit on the 6<sup>th</sup> June 1917 at the Battle of Messines. On the 7<sup>th</sup> June 1917 Norman Jones was reported killed in action (this was the same assault day in which his boyhood neighbour Ken Harris was wounded). Rifleman Jones was buried three quarters of the way up Messines Ridge but his remains were never positively identified when bodies were being reburied and he is 'believed to be buried' in the Messines Ridge British Cemetery. Norman Jones was thirty years old when he was killed. He is remembered on his parents' grave in the Pāuatahanui Public Cemetery. Norman's younger brother, Sydney George Jones also served in the NZEF in 1918.



## Pre and Post Visit Suggested Activities

- VISIT the local war memorial to discover how a community displays its Roll of Honour
- FIND OUT from your students if they have any relatives, stories and connections to WW1 – and whether there are people in your community who can talk about these stories.
- LOCATE on a world map the different countries and ‘theatres’ of WW1 – Turkey, France, Palestine, Egypt etc. to gauge just how far away from NZ the troops were and felt
- INVESTIGATE the origins of the use of the red poppy as a symbol of war commemoration
- COLLECT examples of letters, diaries and postcards sent to and from soldiers during WW1
- DESIGN and CREATE a class memorial [e.g. out of painted boxes] to soldiers -unknown or known- involved in WW1
- RESEARCH and PUT TOGETHER parcels sent in boxes to WW1 soldiers from NZ containing items made by womenfolk at ‘home’. What would a soldier need and want from ‘home’?
- INVESTIGATE the role of animals used in the services and why. What happened to most of them? Did any of them become famous and receive recognition for their ‘work’?
- LOOK INTO how the families of soldiers found out about the fate of their loved ones. Find out what a Dead Man’s Penny or Next-of-Kin plaque was. Draw your own design for one!
- WATCH the Auckland Museum animated video for teachers and students ‘Fast Facts – New Zealand: The First World War’. Use the link below to access the video and YouTube access to ‘Fast Facts – World War One: Trench Life’:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i9hPEwXMGfk&feature=player\\_embedded](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i9hPEwXMGfk&feature=player_embedded)  
DRAW your own graphic cartoons about a day in the life of a soldier at Gallipoli
- WRITE your own glossary of military terms like – Battalion, Infantry, Private, Regiment etc

**QR Links to other ‘local’ servicemen:** <http://plimmerton.org.nz/history/anzac-stories/>



Anzac Cove House in Plimmerton



Lieutenant Victor Abbott



Rifleman Alfred Death



Private Carter

## Digital resources:

[www.anzac.govt.nz](http://www.anzac.govt.nz) - a guide to Anzac day for New Zealanders

[New Zealand WW100](#) – Remembering and covering many facets of WW1

[Online Cenotaph](#) – Biographical and service details for NZ servicemen and women

[NZ History](#) – History website produced by professional historians – search under New Zealand at War

[Plimmerton Community Website](#) – Search for /anzac-stories/ under History

**Acknowledgments** to the contributors of photographs used in the Plimmerton Community website and Allan Dodson for his photographs and research. Photographs, unless individually acknowledged are from the PĀTAKA Collection and the Plimmerton Community website.

