

REMEMBERING THE NEW ZEALANDERS IN WALTON-ON-THAMES



LEST WE FORGET



NEW ZEALAND
HIGH COMMISSION

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Introduction

Each year at St Mary's Church Walton-on-Thames, an ANZAC service is held to commemorate the lives of the New Zealanders who died during World War I and who are buried in the Churchyard.

To mark the centenary of their deaths, this booklet, which has been compiled by the New Zealand Women's Association supported by the New Zealand High Commission, gives a short history of those brave men and woman so that we may know more about them and ensure their sacrifices will not be forgotten.

Jenny Meagher President NZWA 2014-2016
Dianne Boaden President NZWA 2016-2018





Remembering the New Zealanders in Walton-on-Thames

by Jane Thomas President NZWA 2012-2014

When Great Britain declared war on Germany on 4th August 1914 the New Zealand Government created the New Zealand Expeditionary Force (NZEF), and during August 1914 thousands of New Zealand men joined up. Over 100,000 New Zealand troops and 550 nurses served overseas during World War I from a population of a little over one million. It is believed that 16,697 were killed and 41,317 wounded - a 58% casualty rate. Over 1,000 died later as a result of their injuries and at least 507 died while training between 1914 and 1918.

Although the exact number is unknown over 2,000 Maori soldiers served with the New Zealand Army along with men from the Pacific Islands. Some took part in the Gallipoli Campaign and later on the Western Front as part of the NZ (Maori) Battalion.

New Zealand soldiers began arriving in Egypt at the end of November 1914 and assisted the British Army in protecting the Suez Canal. In April 1915 the NZEF left Egypt to help the British Army take the Gallipoli Peninsula. The New Zealanders joined the Australian Army as the Australian New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) and on the 25th April they went into battle. At least 2,779 New Zealanders died during the Battle of Gallipoli with 5,212 wounded.

The New Zealand Division arrived in France in April 1916 fighting alongside British troops and they continued to support the British Army in September 1916 at the Battles of the Somme and although they suffered some 8,000 casualties the results overall were successful.

Major operations began for the New Zealanders on the Western Front in Belgium with the capture of Messines (Mesen) Ridge in June 1917. The Battle of Passchendaele took place between July and November 1917 for control of the ridges south of Ypres. The NZ Division fought in the Battle of Broodseinde on 4th October 1917 and the second attack on the 12th October at Passchendaele. By the time they withdrew there were 18,000 casualties and 5,000 deaths with 845 in one day. Three Victoria Crosses were awarded to New Zealanders for bravery. Many soldiers are buried at the Tyne Cot Military Cemetery, the largest Commonwealth War Graves cemetery in the world. The rear wall bears the names of 35,000 British and New Zealand soldiers whose bodies were not recovered. There is also a New Zealand Memorial at Messines commemorating 800 New Zealand soldiers with no known grave.



NZ Memorial Tyne Cot with NZWA wreath September 2013

New Zealand's sick and wounded soldiers were transferred to England on hospital ships to designated New Zealand hospitals set up by the NZEF at Brockenhurst in the New Forest, Walton-on-Thames and Codford in Wiltshire. Once the men had recovered sufficiently to be moved they were either sent to the New Zealand Convalescent Hospital at Hornchurch in Essex before returning to New Zealand or to the Command Depot at Codford to be rehabilitated and assessed before being sent to Sling Camp on Salisbury Plain and back to the Front. Sadly not all survived and these men are buried in Commonwealth War Graves in the United Kingdom including four men from Nuie Island who are buried in Hornchurch.

The No 2 New Zealand General Hospital Walton-on-Thames

The New Zealand Hospital opened at Mount Felix, an imposing house in Walton-on-Thames, on 31st July 1915. Huts and tents were also erected in the grounds but it was not large enough to accommodate all the New Zealand troops and the nearby Oatlands Park Hotel in Weybridge was requisitioned by the War Department in 1916. In total, 27,000 men were treated at the hospital which was renamed the 'No 2 New Zealand General Hospital' in 1916. Funds were raised by the New Zealand War Contingent Association led by the New Zealand High Commissioner, The Rt Hon Sir Thomas Mackenzie, mainly from New Zealanders living in the UK, but also with help from the New Zealand Government.



New Zealand women played an important role at the hospital. Some were trained nurses but others were Voluntary Aid Detachment (VADs) who assisted the trained nursing staff, worked in the kitchens and even drove ambulances. Many New Zealand women from prominent New Zealand families assisted in running the hospital including the Countess of Hardwicke, who was formerly Miss Nellie Russell from Auckland. Lady Hardwicke organised trips for the men on her husband's boat as well as other activities as part of their rehabilitation.



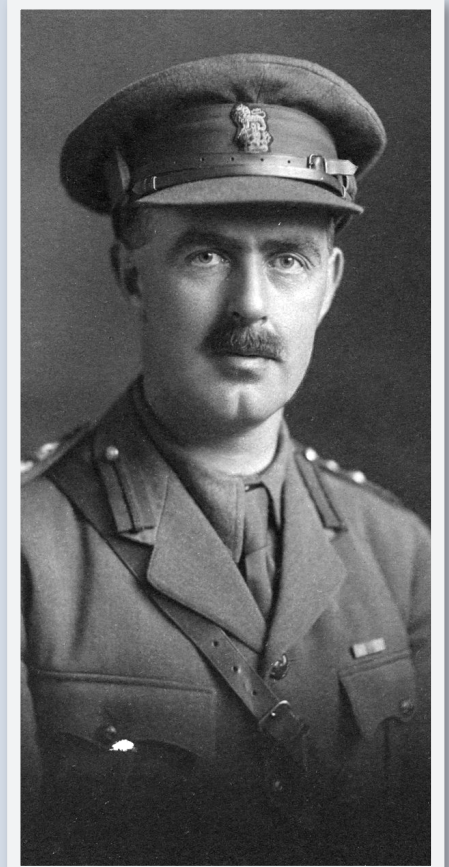
On 13th August 1915 the King and Queen and The Prince of Wales visited the hospital taking time to talk to the staff and patients. Many New Zealand women attended this event including Molly Tripp from Canterbury who was working as a volunteer at the nearby Red Cross Hospital at Hanworth Park House, Feltham, Middlesex

St Mary's Church Walton-on-Thames Roll of Honour

Inside St Mary's Church is a brass plaque listing the names of all those who are buried in the Churchyard together with two further names of men who died elsewhere in the UK but were treated at the No 2 New Zealand General Hospital. The commemoration of the casualties is on Screen Wall monuments rather than individual headstones as some graves contain more than one burial. Two plots containing eight grave spaces are directly in front of the two Screen Walls and the other plots are elsewhere in the graveyard.

Screen Wall 402 10/2846 Private Montrose Arthur Baker from Gisborne was a member of the Wellington Infantry with the 7th Reinforcements. He died from his wounds on 12th October 1916 aged 21. Private Baker was the son of Lionel John Baker and of Esther Hamilton (formerly Baker) of 98 Stanley Road, Gisborne.

Screen Wall 412 3/306 Colonel Charles Mackie Begg CB, CMG, and Croix de Guerre, was a surgeon in the New Zealand Medical Corps. Colonel Begg was born on 13th September 1879. He was educated at Otago High School and studied at Otago Medical School as well as Edinburgh University. He was the son of Alexander and Katherine Begg of Dunedin. Colonel Begg treated over 15,000 men during the Battle of Gallipoli and he was awarded the Order of St Michael and St George (CMG) on 8th November 1915. Colonel Begg then moved with the NZEF to France treating the wounded at the Battle of the Somme being awarded the Croix de Guerre by the French Government and in recognition of his work at Messines and Passchendaele he was awarded the Order of the Bath (CB) on 1st January 1918. He was mentioned in dispatches three times. After over four years on the battle fields Colonel Begg became Director of Medical Services for the New Zealand Expeditionary Force and was the most decorated member of the Medical Corps. He died at his home in Twickenham from influenza and pneumonia on 2nd February 1919 aged 39 leaving his wife Lillian, and two sons, Alexander Charles Begg and Neil Colquhoun Begg.



Colonel Begg - New Zealand Archives

Screen Wall 911 Miss Wilmet Annie Bennett (circled) (known as 'Bob' in her family) was a volunteer nurse with the VAD working at the No 2 NZ General Hospital, Mount Felix, Walton-on-Thames. She was born on 29th August 1885, the daughter of Joseph and Helen Bennett of Otahuao, Masterton. She died of appendicitis on 21st November 1918 aged 32.



Volunteer Ambulance Division at the No 2 New Zealand General Hospital at Walton-on-Thames, England

Screen Wall 912 19109 Private Frederick Robert Black was married to Alice Ann Black from Rarotonga and was an accountant before he joined the Wellington Infantry Regiment. He died of disease on 5th April 1917 aged 36. He was the son of John Alexander and Anne Black and was born in Liverpool, England.

Screen Wall 407 22717 Rifleman Roland George Blinko was a cabinet maker from Hastings. He served with the New Zealand Rifle Brigade and sustained wounds to his face and head on 15th September 1916, in his first and only battle at Flers in France. He returned to England for treatment and convalescence at Hornchurch before being admitted to the No 2 NZ General Hospital at Walton-on-Thames where he died on 6th January 1917 of pneumococcal meningitis. Roland Blinko was also a first class cricketer, representing the Hawkes Bay. He married Annie Manson in Wanganui just before his embarkation to Europe in April 1916.

Screen Wall 408 13/2300 Private John Lewis Boyd, a farmer from Wharepuhunga, Waikato joined the Auckland Mounted Rifles with the 7th Reinforcements. He was wounded by a rifle bullet in France and his injuries left him paralysed from the waist down. He remained in England after being discharged from the NZEF as his mother lived in Ringwood, Hampshire. He died on 29th February 1932 and was buried at Walton-on-Thames, his name being added to the Screen Wall later.

Screen Wall 908 9/903 Sergeant John Brian Dalton. Served in the Hawera Mounted Rifles Volunteer Service but embarked from Wellington on 17th April 1915 to serve with the Otago Mounted Rifles as part of the 4th Reinforcements. He was slightly wounded at Gallipoli but had become seriously ill by the time he reached England where he was admitted to the No 2 NZ General Hospital Walton-on-Thames. He died on 2nd December 1915 aged 35. He was the son of John and Katherine Dalton of Hawera.

Screen Wall 913 4/2083 Sapper Jack Fleming was married to Anne Charleswood and had two daughters, Annie Elizabeth and Nellie. He left his family in Auckland when he embarked in April 1916 with the New Zealand Field Engineers. He died of disease on 8th October 1916.

Screen Wall 913 6/1848 Private William Fox (his name was wrongly recorded as 'Cox'). Canterbury Infantry Battalion with the 4th Reinforcements. He was the son of John and Nellie Fox of Toogoolawah, Queensland, Australia. He died of wounds received at Gallipoli on 26th October 1915 aged 22.

Screen Wall 910 5/236 Alfred Hall was a driver in the New Zealand Army Service Corps. He died of heart failure following an operation at the No 2 NZ General Hospital, Walton-on-Thames on 8th June 1916 aged 32. He was the son of Henry Edgar and Isabella Hall of Warneford, Wokingham, England.

Screen Wall 910 6/16 Private Kingi Hamana was part of the 1st Maori Contingent, B Company, New Zealand Pioneer Battalion. He died of tuberculosis on 3rd October 1916 aged 22. He was the son of Rongo and Pine Hamana of Te Wairoa, Hawkes Bay.

Screen Wall 913 10/727 Corporal Thomas Henry Hudson was part of the Main Body of the Wellington Infantry Battalion which left Wellington in 1914. He died two years later from heart failure following pneumonia on 18th May 1916 aged 21. He was the son of Richard Phineas and Ellen Phyllis Hudson of Marlow, Motueka, Nelson. He was born in Ceylon.

Screen Wall 407 13/728 Corporal Thomas Wallace Phillips, Auckland Mounted Rifles, 2nd Reinforcements from Cambridge, New Zealand. He joined his unit at the Dardanelles on 30th June 1915 and he was wounded on 8th August 1915. He sustained a shattered left arm and shrapnel in his neck, hip and leg and for two days he was looked after by his cousin on the beach at Gallipoli before being transferred first to Malta and then to the No 2 NZ General Hospital, Walton-on-Thames. Corporal Phillips died of pneumonia on 18th October 1915. His parents were Matthew and Mary Phillips of Fencourt, Cambridge, Hamilton. He was born in Dumbarton, Scotland.

Screen Wall 407 8/787 Private James Livingstone Porter, Otago Infantry Battalion. He worked as a moulder before joining up early in the War and departing from Port Chalmers in October 1914. He died from wounds sustained at Gallipoli on 26th October 1915 aged 24. He was the son of William John and Isabella Porter of 1 Lundie Street, Roslyn, Dunedin.

Screen Wall 407 11340 Private William Henry Rishworth of Dunedin was wounded by shrapnel in Etaples on 21st September 1916 whilst serving with the Otago Infantry Regiment in the 12th Reinforcements. Private Rishworth was admitted to the No 2 New Zealand Hospital, Walton-on-Thames on 27th September 1916. He died later of wounds and tetanus on 4th November 1916 aged 25. He was the son of Emanuel and Jane Ann Rishworth of 68 Hawthorne Street, North East Valley, Dunedin.

Screen Wall 913 23/1168 Rifleman Edward Rout was employed as a general labourer by J. Cole of Papatoetoe before joining the 1st Battalion of the New Zealand Rifle Brigade. He died of wounds inflicted to his right shoulder and right leg on 3rd October 1916 aged 22. He was the son of Harry and Lucy Rout of 3 Louvaine Cottages, Wigton, Cumberland, England.

Screen Wall 913 2/2714 Driver William Henry Russell, New Zealand Field Artillery, was born in Wellington on 12th February 1880. His occupation is listed as a 'farmer'. He died of his wounds on 20th September 1916 aged 40. He was the son of William and Jane Russell of Lower Hutt, Wellington.

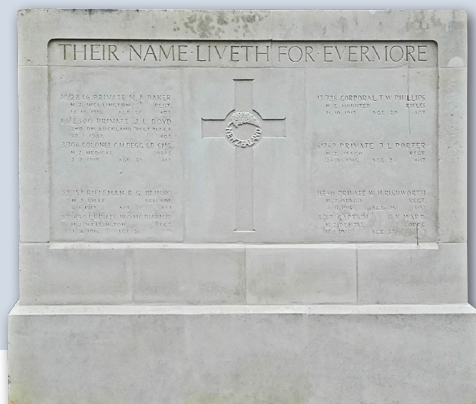
Screen Wall 909 16/1202 Private Terekia Taura from Atiu, Rarotonga, joined the Rarotonga Unit of the 3rd Maori Contingent, despite not being able to speak English. He contracted tuberculosis and died in January 1917 aged 23.

Screen Wall 909 16/779 Private Ramera (Raniera) Wairau embarked from Wellington in September 1915 as part of the 2nd Maori Contingent. He died of tuberculosis 30th October 1916 aged 21. He was the son of Ra and Wahati Wairau of Opoutama, Hawkes Bay.

Also commemorated but not buried in the churchyard.

Screen Wall 10/1890 Private William Orr McDiarmid Wellington Regiment 1st Battalion. Private McDiarmid was treated at the No 2 New Zealand General Hospital but died later on 7th April 1916 aged 26. He was the son of Hugh and Margaret McDiarmid of 74 Bonaly Road, Edinburgh, Scotland. He was born at Shillelagh, Co. Wicklow, Ireland.

Screen Wall 3/71 Captain Charles Kay Ward of the New Zealand Dental Corps, husband of Mrs H.R. Ward of Wellington. Captain Ward was treated at the No 2 New Zealand Hospital but died later on 18th January 1918 aged 33. He was the son of the Rev Charles Ward and Mrs Helen Ward of Wellington.



Son of Cook Islands: Private Terekia Taura's WW1 Story

Compiled from service records by Deborah Ancell

Terekia Taura, born 1894, was a British subject from Atiu, one of the Islands within the Cook Islands in the Pacific Ocean. The Islands were an isolated and tranquil paradise of sunshine, blue skies, white sands and turquoise oceans – a world away from the misery, grey and dampness of the impending First World War.

At 5 feet 9 inches tall and weighing 185 lbs Terekia Taura was fit and healthy when he volunteered for service “for the term of war” to defend the British Empire and a King whom he had never seen and who resided thousands of miles away in England. Initially the British Army would not recruit from the Empire but eventually relented because of the prediction that the War would be lengthy.

In September 1915, 47 Rarotongans enlisted in the 1st Rarotongan Contingent to fight alongside the New Zealanders. One of the volunteers was Terekia Taura. As the recruits left the Islands, their families went into ceremonial mourning for six months as they believed they would never see their sons, brothers, husbands and uncles again.

According to records at the time of volunteering, Taura (he had no first name on the documentation) was unmarried, had never been imprisoned by the Civil power and neither belonged to – nor served in – any military or naval force. He was not registered for compulsory military training and had never been declared unfit for military service. The Army only took the fittest and healthiest to become soldiers. The medical examination certificate noted that Taura had brown complexion and eyes, black hair and he was of the

Cook Islands' Congregational religion. He had neither been ill nor had a fit and his eyes, hearing and colour vision were normal. His teeth were very good, limbs 'well-formed' and all of his joints were full and normal as were his lungs, heart and chest which, at 34 inches, could expand to 39 inches. However, the Medical Examiner noted that "It is difficult to get the natives to properly inflate the chest. Practically all are more than fair divers and all are swimmers. Systematic drill would soon increase the chest capacity." Taura agreed to be vaccinated and since he was illiterate, he signed the permission slip with an 'X'. Like his colleagues, Taura could not speak English but was probably able to communicate with the New Zealand Maori soldiers. It is likely too that Taura, again like his fellow Islanders, was unused to the military uniform (particularly the boots) and the Army diet. On enlistment, he also signed his commission papers with an 'X' "as his mark" since he had not passed the "Fourth Educational Standard or its equivalent". He was given his rank and as "Private Taura" Reg. No. 16/1202 he joined his fellow Rarotongans in the 3rd Maori Contingent of the NZEF. As one of 47 Rarotongans he was sent to Narrow Neck Camp in Auckland for training from 30th September 1915 until 4th February 1916.

On 5th February 1916 the Expeditionary Force embarked on HMNZT Navua bound for Suez, Egypt where they disembarked on 15th March 1916. Following a month in Egypt, on 9th April 1916, Private Taura was posted to the Western Front in France during a particularly harsh winter. Once there, the men dug trenches in the Battle of the Somme while being subjected to heavy shelling, gas attacks and bombing from the air. Six days later, on 15th April 1916, Private Taura made his Last Will and Testament so that in the event of his death, his estate would be inherited by Ua Maratai and Tukuvaive believed to be his parents on Rarotonga, Cook Islands.

In October 1916 Private Taura's casualty form noted that he developed tonsillitis and with hindsight, this probably marked the onset of his fatal illness. He was transferred to England on the hospital ship (HS) St Dennis on 21st October 1916 via Boulogne and admitted to the 2nd New Zealand General Hospital at Walton-on-Thames, England on 8th November 1916. His medical notes recorded that the "Patient cannot speak English but so far as can be ascertained he reported sick with enlarged gland in the neck and cough. He was found to be feverish. The note which accompanied him from France recorded that he had signs of trouble in the left upper chest." This was most likely the first apparent symptom of his tuberculosis. His hospital notes also recorded that he arrived with a cough and a neck wound with accompanying pain in his abdomen and glands. His body temperature fluctuated from 103°F in the evening to 100°F in the morning. However, following the removal of an infected gland and confirmation of tuberculosis, no further operation was offered. The opinion of the Medical Board at an undecipherable date was that he should be returned to New Zealand by special transport as permanently unfit and to be paid a pension owing to his disability as a result of active service exposure. Private Taura was now diagnosed as permanently disabled and the doctor felt he would be unable to earn a living for "six months at least".

By 6th November 1916 he was recorded as "seriously ill". At that time, it would have taken many months for letters from the Cook Islands to have reached him (assuming there was someone literate to write them) and similarly for news

of his condition to have reached his home. Private Taura was just 23 years old when he died on 8th January 1917 at Walton-on-Thames – a very long way from Atiu. There is a note that on 9th January 1917 a telegram was sent but to whom is unknown. Ultimately, of those first volunteers, eight had died from sickness, one from being shot and one from wounds.

After his death, it was noted on 29th August 1919 by the Controller of the Soldiers' Estates Division of the Public Trust Office in Wellington that Private Taura's estate was paid to the widow of his father through the Resident Commissioner, Cook Islands "upon his recommendation". (His father had died intestate on 1st September 1917 – some nine months after his son.)

From 30th December 1922 onwards, Private Taura's plaque, scroll and medals were eventually forwarded to the Resident Commissioner in the Cook Islands "for disposal to next of kin in order of relationship". It would appear that he posthumously received the British War Medal (with red chevrons) and the Victory Medal (with blue chevrons). However, it was not until 1st October 1923 (some six years after his death) that these medals were noted as 'complete' which might mean they were finally given to Private Taura's family.



Pitcher believed to have been engraved by Private Taura from an unused shell casing

Private Taura was buried in Walton-on-Thames Cemetery on 16th January 1917. We do not know who attended his service or burial or when his family discovered the sad news. His name without any initials is engraved on the wall plaque in the Church interior and on the stone memorial in the Cemetery. The inscription reads 'Private Taura'. But behind that simple inscription lies a much deeper story – of the sacrifices made by a family and a nation to preserve freedom under a King they never knew and for an Empire of which their island was a very small and loyal member.



NZ soldiers - George Morice who was treated at Oatlands Park seated front row 2nd from right

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Jane Tolerton

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Tuoro Henry Wichman

SOURCES

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission

Archives New Zealand

Te Papa Museum Wellington

The New Zealand Government War Records

New Zealand and the First World War 1914-1918 by Damien Fenton

All casualty figures in this booklet are approximate as sources vary

Design by Kate Thomas

NEW ZEALAND AVENUE



THEIR NAME LIVETH FOR EVERMORE



1914 - 1918
IN MEMORY OF
NEW ZEALANDERS BURIED
AT WALTON-ON-THAMES

COLONEL C. M. BEGG C.B., C.M.G.
PRIVATE M. A. BAKER
PRIVATE F. R. BLACK
RIFLEMAN R. G. BLINKO
PRIVATE J. L. BOYD
SERGEANT J. B. DALTON
SAPPER J. FLEMING
PRIVATE W. FOX
DRIVER A. H. HALL
PRIVATE K. HAMANA
CORPORAL T. H. HUDSON
PRIVATE W. O. McDIARMID
CORPORAL T. W. PHILLIPS
PRIVATE J. L. PORTER
PRIVATE W. H. RISHWORTH
RIFLEMAN E. ROUT
DRIVER W. H. RUSSELL
PRIVATE TAURA
PRIVATE R. WAIRAU
CAPTAIN C. K. WARD
MISS W. A. BENNETT

THE ISLES SAW... THEY DREW NEAR
AND CAME... AND EVERYONE SAID
TO HIS BROTHER, BE OF GOOD CHEER

New Zealand Memorial St Mary's Church Walton-on-Thames