

MAORI WARS 1845-1872

The New Zealand Wars, which were long known as the Maori Wars, were a series of armed conflicts that took place in New Zealand from 1845 to 1872 between the New Zealand government and indigenous Maori. Though the wars were initially localised conflicts triggered by tensions over disputed land purchases, they escalated dramatically from 1860 as the government became convinced it was facing a united Maori resistance to further land sales and a refusal to acknowledge Crown sovereignty.

The government summoned thousands of British troops to mount major campaigns to overpower the Maori King Movement and also acquire farming and residential land for English settlers. Later campaigns were aimed at quashing the so-called Hauhau movement, an extremist part of the Pai Marire religion, which was strongly opposed to the alienation of Maori land and eager to strengthen Maori identity.

At the peak of hostilities in the 1860s, 18,000 British troops, supported by artillery, cavalry and local militia, battled about 4000 Maori warriors in what became a gross imbalance of manpower and weaponry.

Although outnumbered, the Maori were able to withstand their enemy with techniques that included anti-artillery bunkers and the use of carefully placed pa, or fortified villages, that allowed them to block their enemy advance and often inflict heavy losses, yet quickly abandon their positions without significant loss. Guerrilla-style tactics were used by both sides in later campaigns often fought in dense bush. Over the course of the Taranaki and Waikato campaigns the lives of about 1800 Maori and 800 Europeans were lost and total Maori losses over the course of all the wars may have exceeded 2100.

Violence over land ownership broke out first in the Wairau Valley in the South Island in June 1843, but rising tensions in Taranaki eventually led to the involvement of British military forces at Waitara in March 1860. The war between the government and *Kīngitanga* (King Movement) Maori spread to other areas of the North Island, with the biggest single campaign being the invasion of Waikato in 1863–64, before hostilities concluded with the pursuits of warlord Riwia Titokowaru in Taranaki (1868–69) and guerrilla fighter Te Kooti Arikirangi Te Turuki on the east coast (1868–72).

Although Maori were initially fought by British forces, the New Zealand government developed its own military force, including local militia, rifle volunteer groups, the specialist Forest Rangers and pro-government Maori.

The government also responded with legislation to imprison Maori opponents and confiscate expansive areas of the North Island for sale to settlers, with the funds used to cover war expenses punitive measures that on the east and west coasts provoked an intensification of Maori resistance and aggression.

Camden Remembers - Maori Wars 1845-1872

GIBSON, James

Born: 1816 Dromore, Tyrone, Ireland
Spouse: Margaret Birmingham
Married: 05-February-1838 Ireland
Occupation: Chief Constable Camden
Unit: 99th Regiment of Foot (Lanarkshire)
Arrived: 16-August-1842 "*Kandahar*"

Notes:

Gibson arrived in Hobart, Tasmania with his wife and young son as part of the 99th Regiment of Foot on the convict transport "*Kandahar*" (also spelt "*Candahar*"). After disembarking the convicts the ship travelled on to Sydney where Gibson settled his family in Parramatta. In 1845 he joined his regiment in New Zealand during the first Maori War. After the regiment returned from New Zealand he resigned from the regiment and was appointed as the Police Constable in Camden.

The family were living in Camden until 1858 before moving to Lismore. James Gibson was a member of the Regiment that took part in the Hutt Valley Campaign at the Battle of Battle Hill

POOLE, John William, Private #551

Birth 1808 Carnew, Wicklow, Ireland
Parents George Poole & ?
Spouse Susannah Richardson
Marriage 14-June-1843 All Saints C/E Great Oakley, Essex, England
Occupation Soldier
Service British Army 58th Regiment of Foot (The Black Buffs)
80th Regiment of Foot (South Staffordshire)
Arrived Van Dieman's Land (Tas.) Convict Ship "*Maria Somes*"
free 30-July-1844
Death 1849 Sydney, NSW

Until the 1850's it was customary for the British Army to send various regiments to the colonies for garrison duties. In 1843 it was decided that the 58th Rutlandshire Regiment of Foot (known as the Black Cuffs because of the facings on their uniforms) should take over garrison duties in New South Wales from the 80th Regiment of Foot which was going to Madras. The 58th provided the guards for 19 convict ships that left London and Ireland for Tasmania. One such soldier was Private 551 John Poole. John was born c.1808 in County Wicklow, Ireland and enlisted in the British Army c.1826.

On 14th June 1843 in the parish church at Great Oakley, Essex, England John married Susannah Richardson, daughter of William Richardson and Mary Emily Collings. Susannah had been born at Great Oakley in 1822. When John was given escort duty on the convict ship 'Maria Somes' Susannah sailed with him. The ship arrived in Hobart on 30th July 1844.

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The 58th Regiment then saw service in NSW. In 1845 NSW reluctantly gave permission for the 58th to go to New Zealand because of the unrest with the Maori in the Bay of Islands. John was mustered with the main part of the Regiment which left for New Zealand. He and Susannah arrived in Auckland on 28th March 1845 on the ship 'Velocity'. Susannah must have been pregnant during this voyage as she gave birth to their son George on 30th June 1845 in Auckland.

The Regiment took part in actions at Okaihau, Ohaeawai, Ruapekapeka, Boulcott's Farm, Horokiri and St. John's Wood. It is not certain which of these engagements John took part in.

John, Susannah and their young son George returned to Sydney in April 1847. John was attached to the 99th Regiment on furlough during 1847 and 1848 while awaiting his final discharge. He qualified for a Military Pension but died in Sydney in 1849. The couple had another son John William born 14th October 1849 in Sydney.

Susannah Poole then married James Butler in Camden 24th March 1851 and had six children all born in Camden. Susannah died 15th July 1898 at Waterloo, Sydney and is buried at St. John's Churchyard Cemetery, Camden.

John and Susannah's two sons remained in Camden and married local girls. George married Esther Thorn, born 22nd March 1850 Camden, daughter of Elias Thorn and Sarah Lane, on 2nd September 1875 at St. Paul's Church Cobbitty and had seven children. George died 23rd November 1899 at Brownlow Hill and is buried in St. John's Churchyard Cemetery. Esther died 25th December 1923 in Camden and is buried at St. John's.

John William married Fanny Wheeler, born 1st November 1856 Camden, daughter of John William Wheeler and Fanny Hopson, on 13th October 1880 at St. John's Church, Camden and had four children. John William died 24th August 1925 in Camden and is buried in St. John's as is his wife Fanny who died 7th March 1916 in Camden.

John Poole's grandson [John Lambert Richardson POOLE](#) (son of George Poole and Esther Thorn) died from wounds received in France in WWI.

Additional Names will be added when information found and confirmed.