



Carved archway forming the entrance to Gate Pa (Pukehinahina) Battle site.



The information plaques are displayed along the pathway to the left. From St George's Anglican Church on the top of the Pa site, at left Mt Maunganui in the distance



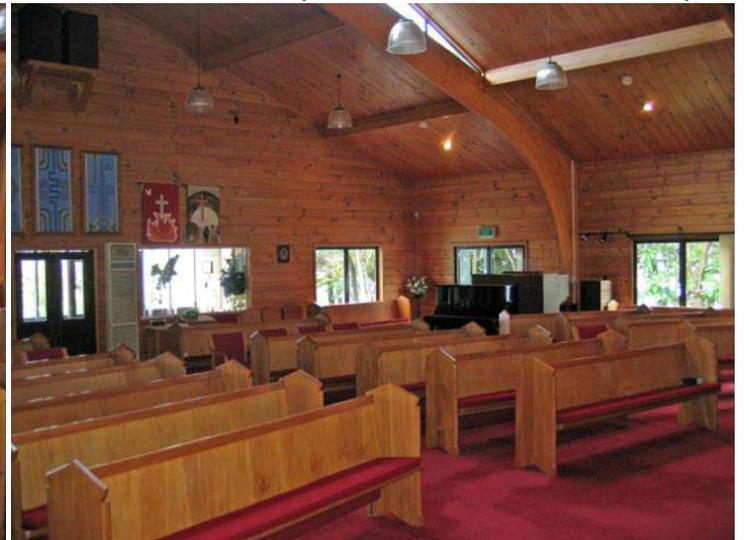
From the church yard on the top of the Pa site, the information plaques are positioned along the pathway. Through the trees can be seen Tauranga and the Harbour



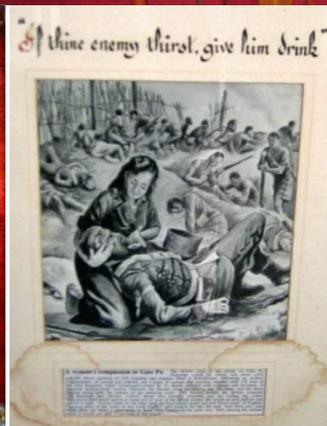
Acknowledgements and special thanks to Jill Straker and Cliff Simons St Georges Anglican Church, Gate Pa.



Images inside St George's Anglican Church built on the summit of Pukehinahina (the Historic Gate Pa Battle Site)



THE BELL OF H.M.S. ACHERON
 THROUGH THE GOOD OFFICES OF MR. G.A. WALSH, M.P.,
 THIS SHIP'S BELL WAS OBTAINED FOR SAINT GEORGE'S CHURCH,
 AND WAS PRESENTED BY
 REAR ADMIRAL J.G. ROSS, C.B., C.B.E.
 ON
 SUNDAY JUNE 4th 1907
 THE BELL IS DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF THE OFFICERS AND MEN
 OF THE
 NAVY AND ROYAL MARINES, WHO PAID THE SUPREME SACRIFICE HERE
 ON
 APRIL 29th 1864
 "FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS"
 IT ALSO COMMEMORATES THE PART PLAYED BY THE
 BRITISH NAVAL BRIGADE IN THE HISTORIC ENGAGEMENT AT GATE PA
 AS WELL AS IT IS A REMINDER OF THE
 ROYAL NEW ZEALAND NAVY'S ASSOCIATION
 WITH THE TAURANGA DISTRICT
 STANLEY BULL - VICAR
 P.J. YOUNG & C. JAMES - CHURCH ORGANIST

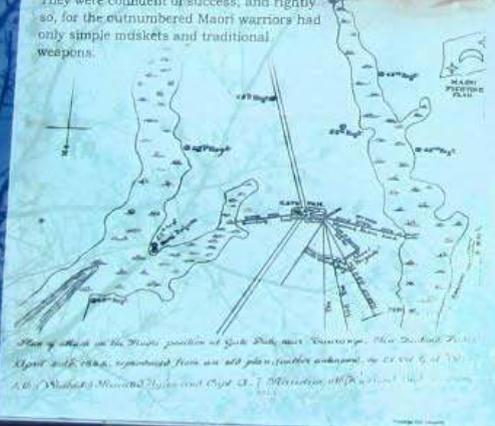


By the end of April about 2000 imperial troops had assembled at Camp Te Papa.

BRITISH ATTACK!

General Duncan Cameron, after whom Cameron Road is named, arrived to lead the campaign.

Overwhelming fire power
The British had howitzers, mortars and naval cannons as well as the latest technology, rifled Armstrong guns that could fire accurately over long distances. They were confident of success, and rightly so, for the outnumbered Maori warriors had only simple muskets and traditional weapons.



FRIDAY, 29 APRIL 1864

THE BATTLE OF GATE PA

Under cover of darkness on 28th April, some groups of the 68th Durham Light Infantry stationed themselves behind the pa to cut off any Maori retreat.

By daybreak every third of an hour the British drizzle the guns began to roar. The Maori first they overshot, but when the range shortened, the guns inflicted damage on the eastern corner of the large pa.

By mid afternoon the 110 pound Armstrong gun had used up 100 rounds of ammunition. At four o'clock the first assault party of 500 men prepared to storm the pa, while 170 soldiers stood by to cover any fire.

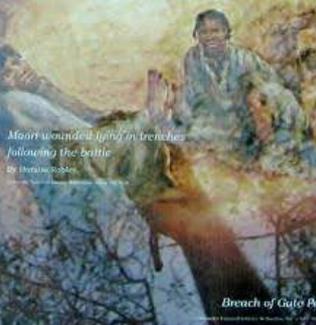
The first assault

The first assault party was made up of 150 seamen led by Commander Hay and 150 of the 3rd Marine Battalion Regiment led by Colonel P. O'Connell. Captain P. Hamilton (after whom the city of Hamilton is named) followed them in with another 300 men. None of these three men survived.

Surprise for the attackers

The assault party was completely unprepared for the ferocity of the Maori defence. All of the commanders and captains leading the assault were killed or mortally wounded. The attack failed.

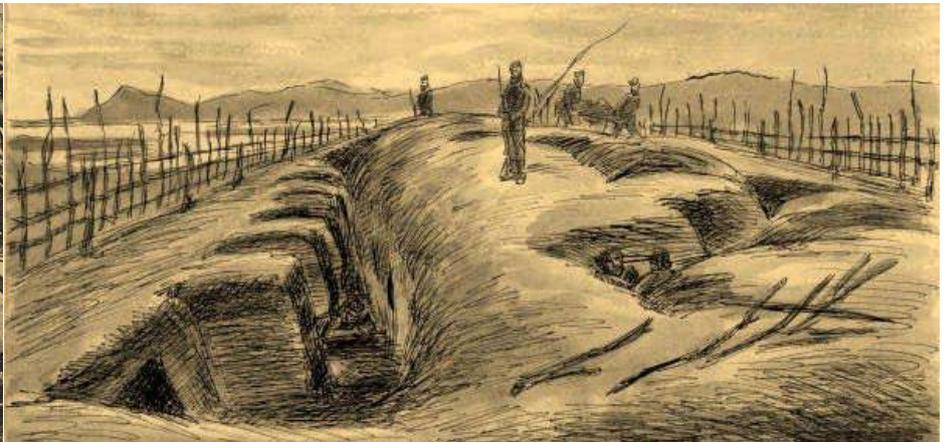
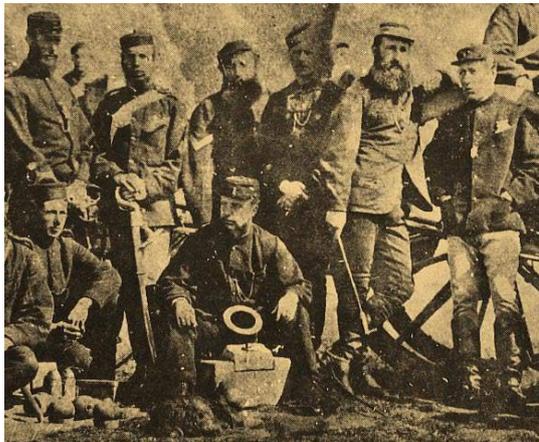
In these crack regiments the defeat was completely unexpected, and totally humiliating.



Maori wounded lying in trenches following the battle by the artist.



Breach of Gate Pa



Left image: 4.5" caliber Coehorn Mortar with bomb shells on sabots at the Battle of Gate Pa April 1864. Lt. General Cameron leaning on the wheel of a 24 pounder smooth bored Howitzer field gun. Courtesy Alexander Turnbull Library.

Right Image: From a Sketch by Lt H G Robley early morning 30 April 1864 the day after the battle. The view is inside Gate Pa looking east from the breach. British soldiers from the 68th Regiment are standing guard while stretcher bearers to the right are taking out wounded. There are 2 wounded Maori in the right hand ditch. To the left can be seen a covered passage leading to the rifle pits and the pekerangi (light fence). Tauranga harbour can be seen in the background. Courtesy Alexander Turnbull Library.

Maori defenders - Ngaiterangi warriors, arms consisted mainly of old flint tower (Brown Bess) muskets, Brummagem (Birmingham made) smooth bored double (Tupara) and single barreled guns and short and long-handled tomahawks – war hatchets (toki patiti).

British Forces small arms employed mainly; single shot rifled percussion muzzle loading 25bore (.577" caliber) Enfield Rifles, Carbines and Bayonets, Officers with swords and 54bore (.44" caliber) P1851 Adams, and P1856 Beaumont Adams percussion 5 chamber muzzle loading revolvers

British Artillery employed; one 110-pounder rifled breech loading Armstrong two 40-pounder Armstrong pivot Royal Naval guns (from HMS Esk) and the Royal Artillery two 6-pounder Armstrong field guns; two smooth bored 24-pounder howitzers; two, 8-inch mortars; and six Coehorn mortars.

THE PA, BUILT UNDER THE DIRECTION OF PENE TAKA, HAD BEEN CLEVERLY CONSTRUCTED USING A SYSTEM OF TRENCHES AND BUNKERS SIMILAR TO THOSE LATER USED IN WORLD WAR ONE.

MAORI DEFENCE

PLAN of the GATE PA and breach

Early on the 30th April 1864.

Trenches in water 150 yds

PENE TAKA who planned the defence

Front View (Mission Lane)

Section of work - front

white cross has marks and stars on red placed outside rear

*length of the large Pa 90 yards
small - 36 "
breadth about 18 "
levelled Waipa 1811 - Roof 1855*

1855 gateway at the Pa, 1855 night 1840 fuel

used in Proc 417 Vol 1 Zealand Wars, issued from the Internal Affairs Wellington 1922 - Sp. R. Robley 21.06.21

Maori man with rifle

The Maori warriors showed immense physical and mental toughness as they lay concealed in the trenches. They withstood over twelve hours of relentless bombardment on a cold, damp day, after which they were still ready to deal with the British assault.

In a clever strategy, Maori placed their flagpole well behind the centre of the pa, causing the British gunners to overshoot their target. They also accounted for the eastern part of the pa to be breached when the gunners finally adjusted their aim. When the assault party arrived through the breach, the warriors were waiting.

The assault left 25 British troops dead and 73 wounded. The pa was evacuated under cover of darkness. True to the code of conduct, the warriors did not kill wounded soldiers lying in the pa, and even gave them water to ease their suffering.



Maori flag with traditional red, white and green stripes

Maori losses were estimated at 45. Twenty dead were found in the pa and ten more close by. They lie in unmarked graves in the wooded gully to the east.

1860.
FOR
the Musket/53
bullet .55 I
**ANOTHER
BATTLE**

AFTER GATE PA



Colonel H.H. Greer, after whom Greerton is named.

Two months after Gate Pa, on 22 June 1864, another battle at Te Ranga resulted in a victory for the British regiments.

Colonel Greer, on patrol south of the Gate Pa site, came across a force of 500 Maori who were fortifying a position between the Waimapu River and the Kopurererua Stream.

Under attack from the British, the Maori fought bravely in their unfinished pa. It was written that "they stood the charge without flinching, and did not retire until forced out at the point of a bayonet."

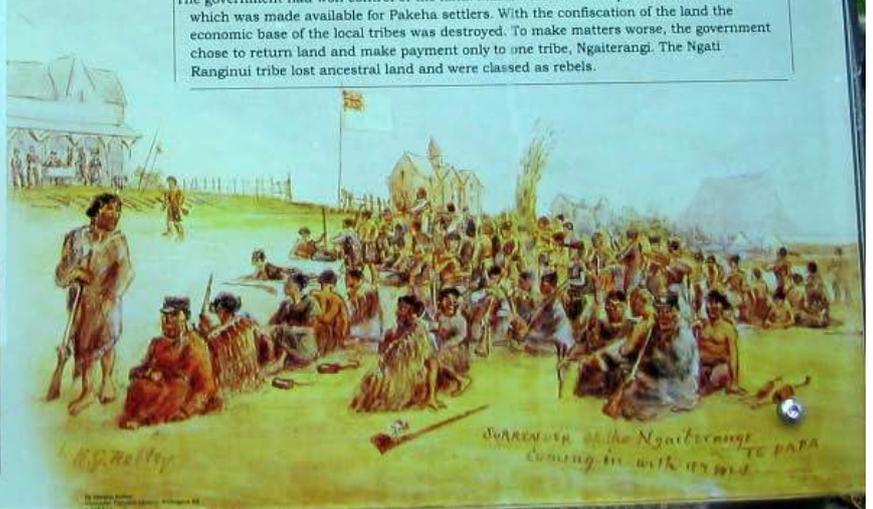
Raupatu: seizing the land

The government had won control of the land. Maori were forced off productive land, which was made available for Pakeha settlers. With the confiscation of the land the economic base of the local tribes was destroyed. To make matters worse, the government chose to return land and make payment only to one tribe, Ngaiterangi. The Ngati Ranginui tribe lost ancestral land and were classed as rebels.



Battle site at Te Ranga

One hundred and eight Maori were buried in the rifle pits they had been preparing. Among them were their leader, Rawiri Puhirake, and the man who had written the code of conduct, Henare Taratoa.



These Information Plaques are installed beside the pathway at Gate Pa (Pukehinahina) Historic Battle Site. Courtesy Tauranga City Council

NGA TANGATA IROTOI TE PAKANGA PEOPLE IN BATTLE



Pene Taka Tuia
The engineer of Gate Pa, Pene Taka was an experienced warrior. He fought in the Waikato but returned to Tauranga in 1864 to help defend his tribal land. He was responsible for the clever construction of the pa, with rifle pits set within a maze of covered trenches.

Trenches continued to be dug to oppose Pakenham's settlement on tribal land. He died at Te Papa in 1888.

Rawiri Puhirake
Ten years after he was killed during fighting at Te Ranga in June 1864, the Maori leader's remains were exhumed. He was reburied in the mission cemetery at Otamatapu. In 1914, to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Puhirake's death, a red granite monument was erected on his grave.



Henare Wiremu Taratoa
Taratoa was responsible for writing both the challenge to Colonel Greer and the Code of Conduct. He survived the battle of Gate Pa and was credited with giving water to the dying Colonel Booth.

Taratoa was killed during fighting at Te Ranga in June 1864. A copy of the code of conduct was found on his body. On the same page was written "If thine enemy hanger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink." (Mataiā 12:20)



Heni Pore
Around the year 1900 a Maori woman called Heni Pore (also known as Jane Foley) claimed she had given water to the dying Colonel Booth at the battle of Gate Pa. Her story captured the public imagination and was often used to represent the chivalrous treatment of wounded troops by Maori.

Heni was born around 1840. Unusually for a woman, she took part in several campaigns against the British. She died in Rotorua in 1933.



Lieutenant General Cameron
Lieutenant General Sir Duncan Cameron, after whom Cameron Road is named, was Commander in Chief of the British troops in New Zealand from 1861.

It is said that after the battle of Gate Pa the General dashed his field-glass on the ground, turned his back and retired to his tent to conceal his emotion.



Christopher Faulkner
Occasional trader, John Lees Faulkner, took three of his sons by his Maori wife, Ruawahine, to watch the battle. A 1934 article in the Bay of Plenty Times said that "one of 12 year old Christopher's clearest recollections as a boy was being taken out in the direction of Gate Pa by his father in company with his brothers Jarvis and Alfred." He returned home with his father, then later his two older brothers came running to say that troops were being slaughtered.

Victoria Cross awards



Samuel Mitchell, captain of the foretop on HMS *Havoc*, (pictured wearing his medal), was awarded the Victoria Cross for risking his life to carry mortally wounded Commander Hay from the pa during the battle. His medal is now in the West Coast Historical Museum in Hokitika.

Doctor **William George Nicholas Manley** was one of the last officers to leave the pa during the battle. He was awarded the Victoria Cross for his bravery in tending the wounded under fire.



Background: Siege of Otamatapu in 1864



68th Durham Light Infantry officers (Lt Colonel Greer standing 5th from left) at Te Papa, Tauranga April 1864. Courtesy Alexander Turnbull Library.

I am researching all arms used by British and New Zealand Forces in the Tauranga Campaign 1864 and by the Maori Kingites, information or copies of contemporary photographs showing arms would be much appreciated. Please send to jcosborne@xtra.co.nz or P O Box 52, Kaitia, 0441, New Zealand.