

LIVING THROUGH HISTORY

**NATIONAL
ARMY
MUSEUM**
TE MATA TOA

NZ History
Pukehinahina: Battle of Gate Pā



He waka eke noa

We are all in this together

History isn't something that happens to someone else. Right now, you are living through an extraordinary event that is changing the New Zealand way of life: the COVID-19 pandemic. Future students might look back on this moment and ask: how did they feel? How did they make it through?

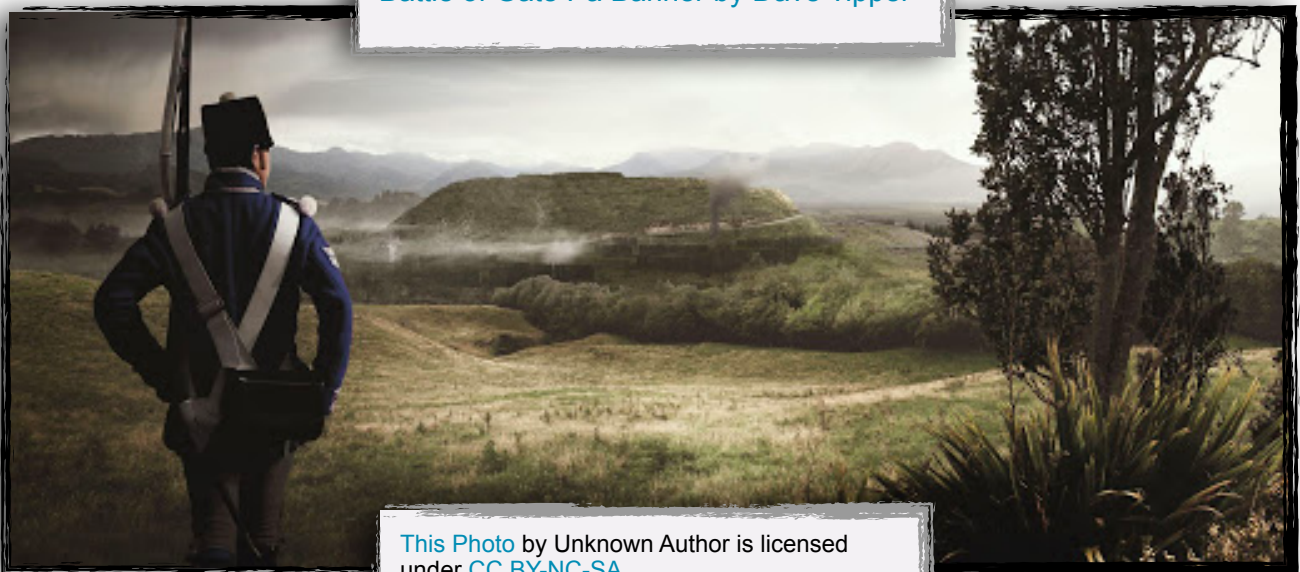
We can ask the same questions about another generation of Kiwis who lived through extraordinary times: **The Battle of Gate Pā**. Then, like now, events were reshaping the way people were living. New Zealand was undergoing a process of colonisation, and Māori were forced to defend what they believed to be an attack on their land and their continued existence. They didn't know whether the future would be good or bad – but they tried their best to defend themselves and uphold their mana.

For each of the activities below:

- **Read** about what happened.
- **Reflect** on how people may have been feeling.
- **Respond** to the questions or instructions at the end of each activity.

Share your answers with your classmates and teacher! We'll all have our own unique experiences, and we can all learn just as much from each other as we can from our nation's history.

Battle of Gate Pa Banner by Dave Tipper



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Activity 1: What was going on?

The common theme in the New Zealand Wars, (the reasons for these battles) was land ownership and sovereignty. The colonial government wanted land for British **immigrants** to settle on and make productive, e.g .farming. During 1863 the colonial government had led an invasion into the Waikato – the stronghold of the Kīngitanga movement.

The war continued into 1864 and in the early months Governor Grey assigned British Regiments to Tauranga to **intercept** any support being given to Waikato from their allies in Tauranga. This caused worry to some Ngāi Te Rangi (Tauranga iwi) leaders who supported Kīngitanga and they decided against sending further aid to the Kingitanga to avoid **retaliation** by the government which would mean fighting in Tauranga and land loss.

This did not prevent aggression on the part of the government who sent a British force of 700 men by sea from Auckland to Tauranga. **Redoubts** were built and occupied by the British soldiers and the British Light Infantry Regiments. By the end of April there would be more than 1700 soldiers in Tauranga.

immigrant

A person who comes to live permanently in a foreign country.

interception

To cut off people or things from the line of movement.

retaliation

To fight back.

redoubt

A fortified trench system that offers protection,.

1a In a paragraph, summarise why you think land is important to people.

1b Why do you think the colonial government acted aggressively toward Ngāi Te Rangi?

1c During this pandemic, our Police have emphasised 'educating' people who break the lockdown rules. What are the rules for Alert Level 4? Make a list of ways you can encourage people to stick to them.



Henare Taratoa: a chief of the Ngāi Te Rangi

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Activity 2: The Ngāi Te Rangi Response

Once the military arrived in Tauranga, Ngāi te Rangi leaders prepared for battle. Pā sites across the area were rebuilt and reinforced. A code of chivalry was drawn up and agreed upon by rangatira (the iwi chiefs). This was a set of battle rules which all fighters should follow.

Decisions were made to construct a fortified Pā site at Pukehinahina, later to be known as Gate Pā . The construction of Gate Pā was headed by Pene Taka Tuaia and began on April 3rd. The use of anti-artillery trenching was an advantage for Māori. The trenches were widened, covered over with timber and piled with soil to conceal the Māori warriors. An adjoining, smaller redoubt with the same style of covered trenches gave protection to the remainder of the Māori warriors. The defences appeared flimsy but they had very strong earthworks.

A redoubt in action



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chivalry

Acts of courage, courtesy and honour.

fortified

A place that is protected by defences.

trenches

Ditches dug into the ground to hide and protect warriors.

2a Why do you think the rangatira drew up a code of chivalry?

2b How do you think Ngāi Te Rangi people felt when they heard troops had arrived in Tauranga?

2c When people feel under threat or are uncertain about what is happening around them they may respond in different ways. Make a list of ways you can help your 'bubble' get through Alert level 4.

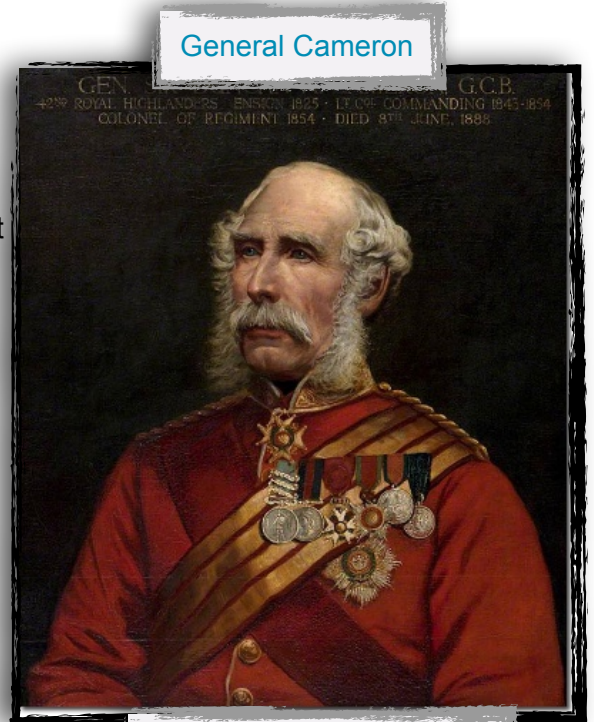
2d Once New Zealand moves out of Alert Level 4 what are some of the ways neighbours and communities can show support for each other? Draw a map of your community, and the people and places that are important to you.

Activity 3: The Battle

On 29 April 1864, the British forces were ready - they set up regiment lines in front of the Pā and to the rear. Soon after, the order was given for artillery bombardment. The weapons that were used included 110 pounder guns, 40 pounder guns and 24 pound Howitzers. This bombardment lasted for a couple of hours as General Cameron's men were sure that this would blow the pā sky high. It was noted by accounts from soldiers at the rear, that shots were being missed and that there was a greater risk of them being hit than the Māori defenders.

By late afternoon the boundaries of the Pā were breached during the bombardment and Lieutenant-Colonel Henry Booth led the 43rd Regiment into the Pā. The forces were able to enter but before long they were met by sharp firing from the Māori in their concealed trenches (rua). The Māori were able to inflict great casualties and, although being outnumbered by the British, the lives of Booth and many of his soldiers were claimed.

The Māori **contingent** consisted of around 250 warriors from local iwi, **reinforcements** from Waikato, Te Arawa and iwi supporters from the east coast. The Pā was split into two redoubts with the main one sheltering the greater number of defenders. Less than 20 were killed by the shell fire. Cameron realised it was too late in the day to be rethinking further attack **strategies**, and noted the British had more than 30 deaths and about 80 wounded.



General Cameron

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contingent

A quota of troops that provide and supply support.

strategies

A plan or method of fighting tactics.

reinforcements

Something that reinforces or strengthens.

3a. Using google maps, search the location of Gate Pā to get an idea where this battle took place.

3b Strategy plays an important part in warfare. What were some of the strategies that Māori had used which gave them the upper hand?

3c New Zealand has clear strategies to deal with the COVID-19 crisis. Name three of them.

Activity 4: What next?

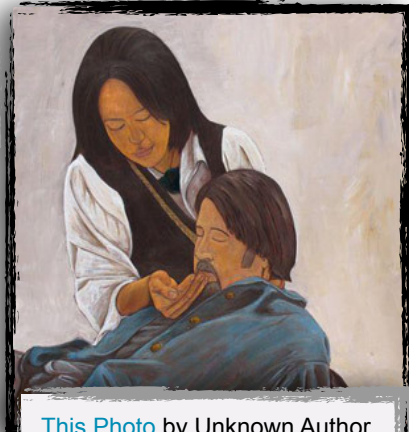
During the night Māori evacuated the Pā with their wounded. They had honoured the Code of Chivalry, providing water to the wounded opposition soldiers who were left behind. Hēni Te Kiri Karamū was the last woman left in the redoubt. She had refused to leave the Pā and fought alongside her brother. When she was leaving, she heard the cries from a mortally wounded Colonel Booth and gave him and other wounded soldiers water, before departing. The Ngāi Te Rangi code of chivalry pre-dated the Geneva Convention (international rules around conduct in war).

Gate Pā was not the last battle for Tauranga. The British struck again at Te Ranga and inflicted heavy losses on its defenders.



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Photo and painting of Hēni Te Kiri Karamū



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inflict

To deal or deliver as a blow.

conduct

Personal behaviour, a way of acting.

4a Link the Māori words to their English translation below. Use www.maoridictionary.co.nz to check your work

Rangatira

Pā

Pū

Kāinga

gun

home

chief/leader

fortified village

4b Kindness is essential in times of crisis. Why do you think it is important during a pandemic?

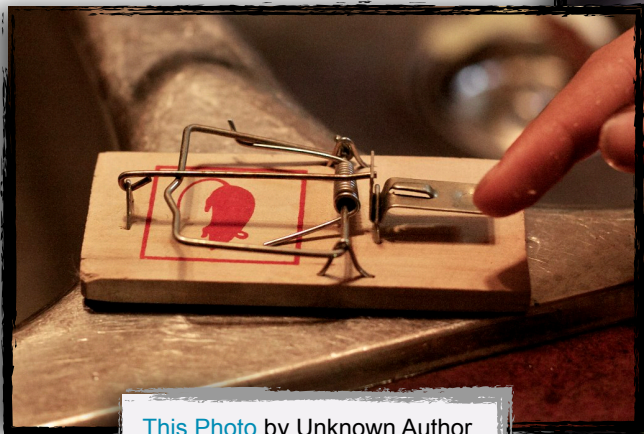
4c Think of a way to show kindness in your household. Bake/cook, draw a picture or pick some flowers if you have them. These are just a few ideas.

4d Find a calendar to write on or make one, and for each day of the week write a message of encouragement. Do this every day until you return to school!

Beyond the Worksheet

These activities have shown you just a few examples of how past New Zealanders kept up with a national crisis and came through it. But history doesn't stop happening, and there's more you can do to understand.

- **Games** are a great way to learn strategy. Card games and board games require strategy, not just luck. Play a game in your bubble and see if you can figure out the winning strategy.
- **Weaving.** Give this old tradition a try! Youtube tutorial here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9svkmhvckWc&feature=share>
- **Build your own trap.** New Zealand hunters are unable to get outside for the roar season this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. "The Great NZ lock up mouse hunting comp" has sprung up in replacement. Create your own mousetrap!



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References

Check out the websites below to understand more:

www.battleofgatepa.com
www.nzhistory.govt.nz
www.teara.govt.nz
www.ranginui.co.nz