

the dementia wing of history

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In the middle of 2004, my father Leo and his aunty Leah attended the opening of the ‘Village at the Park’, a retirement community being built by the Maori-run Wellington Tenth Trust on the grounds of what used to be New Zealand’s most famous rugby field, Athletic Park. Of particular interest to them was the Rawinia Buchanan Dementia Wing, a 30-bed facility built over the old heaving, sweating, scrummaging, linement-infused 25-yard line. Rawinia was my dad’s mother, Leah’s sister. As the name Rawinia suggests—to New Zealand readers at least—my grandmother had what is sometimes described as Maori heritage. The dementia wing was named after Rawinia for two reasons. First, it recognised her influence at Athletic Park through her many decades of services as the assistant secretary of the Wellington Rugby Football Union. ‘Ra’ or ‘Mrs B’ (as she was known in rugby and business circles) allocated seats for test matches, a position that gave her unrivalled power and status. Second, it acknowledged her identity as a descendent of Hemi Parai (Parae), a Te Ati Awa and Taranaki man who was one of the founding fathers of Te Aro, the pa (settlement) that used to exist in the pocket of land in central Wellington now occupied by a pigeon park, an opera house, a motorway, a disused ambulance building and a glittering harbour foreshore.¹

It is very appropriate that my grandmother’s name has been coupled with a home for people suffering from memory loss. In my family, ‘Maori-ness’, for want of a better term, is something that has been remembered and forgotten, an ancestral push-me-pull-you influenced by private and public, local and national forces. Memories are maleable possessions, things we can hoard or share or reshape.² They are, as Susannah Radstone has put it, ‘complex products shaped by diverse narratives and genres and replete with absences, silences, condensations and displacements’, products that are ‘related, in complex ways, to the dialogic

moment of their telling'.³ My moment of telling is now. My grandmother had been given an obviously Maori first name, Rawinia. Her second name, the royal Queenie, is also popular in Maori communities (Kingi is the equivalent for boys) but it is normally spelt Kuini. Her names suggested Maori-ness but she rarely, if ever, used them in full. I never heard her describe herself or my dad as Maori. I never even called her by her real name; she insisted her grandchildren address her as Flossie. Flossie's fair skin meant she could easily pass as Pakeha. In his recent memoir-autobiography, Kim Scott has described how his Aunty Hazel and her brother Uncle Lomas talk about 'the difference between being a Noongar with white skin and one with black skin. Not because of anything inherent, but because people treat you according to the degree to which you are recognisably "Aboriginal". That was true in the past, and still is'.⁴ In New Zealand, if you are not recognisably Maori, the default setting is Pakeha.

The dementia wing is an unlikely monument to my family's Maori past and present, a place for remembering that cares for those who have forgotten. Like a headstone in a graveyard, the dementia wing memorialises a dead individual but it also serves to recall others that died before her, deaths that stretch back to the wars of colonisation in Aotearoa New Zealand—when one strand of my grandmother's family were the invaders and the other the invaded—and beyond that to the countless generations of family deaths that predate colonisation all together and go way back to the time of creation. My grandmother was no soldier but our dementia wing is a kind of war memorial, one of the most flexible and surprising kind: it commemorates victory and defeat, assimilation and resistance to assimilation, white power and black power, war and peace. For my white-skinned family, the dementia wing is a place where we can recall and foreground the brown-ness that lies beneath, behind or in front of us. It is a place that darkens our family name.

More than this, the dementia wing of our family history is a metaphor for the dementia wing of national history, for the way separate and intertwined Maori and Pakeha histories have been remembered and forgotten and reinvented, in complex cycles, since settlement of Aotearoa began. Only a few months after our modest, demented memorial was unveiled, tens of thousands of people attended the internment and unveiling ceremonies for the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior at the National War Memorial in Buckle Street, Wellington. The first memorial to an unknown World War I soldier was erected in England after that war and Australia's unknown soldier was interred in 1993 in Canberra. New Zealand's memorial also contains the remains of an unknown World War I soldier but its extravagantly bicultural form and title—it contains a warrior rather than a mere soldier—makes it different from other foreign tombs. The dead New Zealand man is purposefully without ethnicity. While my family is exploring the deep connections, privileges, responsibilities, silences, losses and gains accorded to us by our current re-engagement with our indigenous history, the Tomb

of the Unknown Warrior seeks to erase or collapse historical difference. It represents an escalation of the process by which non-Maori New Zealanders look to Maori culture for globally-recognisable makers of national cultural difference, a process that might be described as a case of kiwi (the flightless bird that is the national faunal emblem and a colloquial term usually associated with a white male New Zealander) robbing iwi (tribes) for a bright new set of feathers.⁵ The haka performed before All Black games is the most obvious example of this. Just as the haka lends both fierceness and mystery to all the rugby players who perform it, the tomb adds a mythic, noble-Maori-warrior strand to the memory of dead Pakeha soldiers, enhancing and enriching the hard man stereotype most often associated with the Pakeha at war, the image of a fighter who is a 'strong and versatile pioneer with gentlemanly morals'.⁶

The wisdom or justice of this masculine enhancement can be debated but what is clearly troubling about the memorial—to me at least—is the way this overtly bicultural tomb ignores New Zealand's wars of foundation, wars in which the supposedly superior fighting skills of the white male were radically undermined by the superior military strategies and fighting skills of their Maori opponents and by the fierceness of their Maori allies, the so-called 'kupapa' neutral or friendly troops who were at the forefront of many Crown attacks against Maori.⁷ Memories of these complicated foundational wars, including war stories associated with the site on which the tomb has been built, nibble away at this elegant new memorial, diminishing its mana (status) and power.

This article explores the competing and overlapping desires at work in the Rawinia Buchanan Dementia Wing and the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior. It has been argued that all memory work starts with 'the local' and the 'subjective'.⁸ This article uses stories connected with a family memorial—an almost private, very local and discrete site—to critique a public, national and very prominent monument. It argues that whakapapa (genealogy), the stories recovered from the dementia wing of my own family's Maori past, offer new possibilities for memorialising national foundations in a settler nation such as New Zealand. The conflicting actions of members of my own family in New Zealand's wars of foundation provide a pathway towards increasing the complexity and richness of memorialising all wars, both at home and overseas. Beyond military history, the dementia wing also contains stories of peace, non-violence, cooperation and love.

— DEATH MASKS

How is identity made? When I was a child, being Maori was not part of my identity. It had not been part of my father's identity when he was young either.⁹ When I was little, Maoriness was not hidden or secret—indeed my father used to enjoy telling stories about our supposed connection to Te Rauparaha, a legendary nineteenth-century Maori warrior—but

it was not significant either. In life, Flossie did not seem particularly Maori to me. I would say that, first and foremost, my grandmother was concerned with her version of good manners and good taste. She was someone who cared very much about appearances, someone who was secretive about her age and vain about her looks. When a person asked how old she was Flossie would say 'twenty one and holding' (with a straight face). She kept fit by riding her three-wheeler bike with a large, sheepskin-covered seat; an oversized toddler with a bedazzled chiffon scarf knotted under her neck to keep her dyed hair neat. She played hymns on an organ imported from Germany. She cooked with margarine instead of fattening butter. A cup of tea was sweetened with two Sucrose pills shaken from the white canister Flossie kept in her handbag. At least once a year, Flossie would holiday in Rotorua with her girlfriends. They spent their afternoons immersed in the hottest pool at the mineral baths, winding down afterwards with a couple of gin and tonics mixed with devil swizzel sticks. Sometimes, I would attend rugby matches with my grandparents and on those occasions I would hear Flossie's special 'lady' voice, a plummy, ornate voice that she used for conversations with important people she met at the Athletic Park, people like ex-All Blacks or ex-All Black coaches.

These are some of the things I remember about my grandmother in life but in death people can become something quite different as those who knew them imagine all sorts of other identities for them or the masks they have worn in life slip away, replaced by masks made by the living. Flossie's mother, Hannah Bramley (nee Wallace), became recognisably Maori for me in death because after her funeral mass we went back to her house in Johnsonville and watched a group of old Maori women with greenery in their hands and hair sing Maori songs outside the house and inside. A similar thing happened at Flossie's funeral. After everyone had received communion, an old man leaning on a tokotoko stick walked up the aisle, stood next to my grandmother's coffin, and spoke to her in Maori. That old man was Sir Makere Ralph Rangiatea Love, the one who lodged the first Maori land claim in Wellington way back in 1987. Sir Ralph has also passed away since then and the Port Nicholson Block claim, as it is now known, is still not resolved.¹⁰

Stephen Muecke has observed that death is central to the formation of the nation. 'A surplus of social significance or power is transferred to the dead so that their fixed and symbolic narrative can control us', he writes.¹¹ Families also need the 'magical or spiritual agency' of death to create new foundation stories or reinforce old ones. My grandmother died in 1992. When she was a girl, being Maori was something to play down or hide away. This was especially so for someone growing up in the city, as she did. A metaphor for this, perhaps, is the dozens of letters regarding various Maori land trusts—including Wellington Tenth, Pol Hill Gully and PKW Incorporation—that my grandmother had tucked away at home, letters and receipts discovered only when she died.

Children were strapped for speaking Maori at school. Assimilation was the dominant ideology. But by the time Flossie reached old age, in the 1970s and 1980s, things had changed. Maori staged land rights protests, urban marae were built, Maori kindergartens opened up and Maori and Pakeha—including my dad and me—started to try to learn the Maori language. Rather than being something to hide, Maori-ness was something to be proud of. This cultural shift has changed the way I think of my grandmother. Of course she is still the eccentric ‘Flossie’ I knew, the character I have sketched here, but she has also become a link between me and radically divergent pasts: one Maori, one Pakeha. My father has done a lot of work to research the Maori side of our family and his labours in the archives and in conversation with Maori relatives such as Auntie Agnes Broughton and her daughter, family-history researcher Raumahora, have restored our family’s whakapapa (genealogy), making possible the kind of observations that opened this essay. His work has also allowed our family to be registered members of the Port Nicholson Block Claim, a process that requires ‘whakapapa verification’.¹² This recovery has led to my father becoming a member of the Maori Doctors Association, a role that has given him immense satisfaction personally and professionally. Further, he is now an active participant in the Wellington Tenth Trust and was on the board that helped develop ‘The Village at the Park’ with its Rawinia Buchanan Dementia Wing.

My doctoral research represents my most serious engagement with what I earlier described as the ‘connections, privileges, responsibilities, silences, losses and gains’ of an indigenous history.¹³ My thesis examined the history of history-making about Parihaka, a pioneering pan-tribal pacifist village in the North Island province of Taranaki. In 1881, Parihaka, the largest Maori settlement in New Zealand, was invaded by 1500 colonial troops and its two leaders, visionary chiefs Te Whiti o Rongomai and Tohu Kakahi, were arrested. In the weeks that followed, most of Parihaka’s 2000 residents were evicted and their houses and crops destroyed. The invasion is often described as the final military action in the nineteenth-century wars of colonisation.

I knew our whakapapa linked our family with Taranaki and Te Ati Awa iwi, two of the tribes most closely associated with Parihaka. That was one of the reasons I felt able to take on such a topic.¹⁴ Influenced by Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s writing on decolonising history, I wanted to work on stories that were related to me through place, through genealogy and through life experience. At the start of my research Auntie Agnes and Raumahora had told me that they believed my great-grandmother Hannah’s father, Charles Wallace (also known as Tare Warahi) had lived at the village for a time. Even though I had been given this information, it did not occur to me until I was well into the archival research that what I was actually doing in my thesis was a kind of family history, a history I felt obligated to pursue. I was startled and then thrilled to discover further unexpected links between my family and

Parihaka through our ancestor Hemi Parai. For example, Parai was a regular actor in the Appendixes to the Journals of the House of Representatives.

Parai, who had led one of the great hiko (migrations) from Taranaki to Wellington, never fought against the Pakeha. Indeed, some evidence suggests he was considered a friend of the Government. In 1866, he was one of four absentee Taranaki chiefs awarded land under the Confiscated Lands Act. He was awarded '100 acres ... in consideration of his having remained in Wellington at the insistence of the government when he might have returned to Taranaki' during the wars of that decade.¹⁵ Parai was promised that land as a reward for his 'loyalty' but the government did not honor its promise and by 1872 Parai and other 'loyal' chiefs were holding public meetings and writing petitions to demand the return of other Taranaki and Te Aro lands. It is impossible to know whether Hemi would have eventually joined the prophetic community at Parihaka because he died in about 1877 but two of his sons, Mohi and Te Awhi, were there when the village was invaded and had participated in the non-violent ploughing and fencing protests that made Parihaka infamous in New Zealand. I could not find any evidence relating to the whereabouts of Charles Wallace in 1881 but our family is in possession of a photograph of Charles' mother, Arapera Ronguaroa, and in that photograph Arapera wears a raukura in her hair. The white feather was worn by followers of Te Whiti.

For Parai and his immediate descendents, neither loyalty nor war nor non-violent protest had succeeded in regaining stolen family land. What did work was inter-marriage. Charles Wallace's marriage to a white woman, Margaret O'Toole, earned him respect in the eyes of a government-appointed commission and allowed him, in 1880, to claim the 100 acres that had been promised to his grandfather. The commission wrote that Wallace was 'educated, he speaks English perfectly, lives in a European fashion, has married an English-woman and was capable of using the land for himself and his family'. His uncles, Mohi and Te Awhi, were not considered capable because they were 'whole blood Maori and entirely habituated to Maori life'.¹⁶ Charles was allowed to make his home in the new New Zealand because he 'lived in the European fashion'. His relatives were not nearly so welcome.

— TOMB OF THE UNKNOWN WARRIOR

Within my family the dementia wing of our Maori history has been cracked open and the inhabitants are now free to wander around as they please. The slow-growing dementia about our Maori past (and present) has been halted. The knowledge lost or suppressed as each generation in my branch of the Wallace family became whiter and whiter by following Charles' lead and marrying people who were not Maori is being regained. Demented patients forget most of the things they once knew whereas my family has started to slowly remember or relearn. As these small war stories I have shared demonstrate, we may be in a recovery ward

for families leaving the 'dementia wing' of their own history but nationally quite a different process is at work.

Writing about the ever-growing cult of Anzac worship in Australia, Marilyn Lake has recently argued that 'national memory has been powerfully influenced by the militarisation of history through the construction of war memorials and the annual commemoration of Anzac and Remembrance days'.¹⁷ In her work on public memory in post-Apartheid South Africa, Annie Coombes has observed that monuments and memorials are 'animated and reanimated' by performance.¹⁸ In Australia and New Zealand, the rituals associated with annual Anzac and Armistice Day commemorations enliven war memorials, making them potent sites for public memories of masculine sacrifice, in particular. The internment and unveiling of the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior are believed to have been the largest commemorative project ever in New Zealand. It is now the site for annual commemorative ceremonies.

On one level, the tomb continues New Zealand's long tradition of excessive war memorialisation. Every conflict that New Zealand has ever been involved in, including the nineteenth-century wars of foundation, has been documented in official histories commissioned by the state, paper monuments to the sacrifices of the dead. The memorialisation of foreign wars reached a stupendous apex with 48 volumes and 24 booklets produced on World War II.¹⁹ More recently, it could be argued that the work of the Waitangi Tribunal, the permanent commission of inquiry set up to investigate contemporary and historical breaches of the 1840 Treaty of Waitangi, constitutes another form of military history, a memorialisation of the many types of Crown violence against Maori. The tribunal's report on Taranaki tells a story of 'never-ending war' in that province, a war whose climax was the invasion of Parihaka. As a researcher, I found the massive written archive generated by twelve hearings held over five years to be a painful memorial of the ongoing trauma caused by the wars of colonisation in Taranaki.

But the tribunal archives are hidden inside storage boxes, accessed only by a few researchers. Tribunal reports make the news for a day or a week then they too are relatively hidden from public view. Aside from initial ceremonies to honour the publication of a tribunal report and Crown-iwi rituals that mark the settlement of a claim (should such a settlement be achieved), there are no ongoing, national annual rituals of commemoration to specifically mark New Zealand's wars of foundation. The fragility of national remembrance of foundational wars was demonstrated, perhaps, by the popularity of the conservative National Party's promise in the 2005 election campaign to govern for 'kiwis' rather than 'iwis' by ending all Treaty of Waitangi claims by 2010 and so wiping out any 'special treatment' for Maori.²⁰ The absence of any reference to New Zealand's first wars at the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior or at the National War Memorial that looms up behind it, suggests that these wars are

moving even further from the centre of national collective memory. The wars of foundation are certainly not forgotten but they remain peripheral, problematic and contested, unable, somehow, to be integrated into popular, bicultural rituals of commemoration.

This ongoing marginality of foundational wars is particularly incongruous since New Zealand is often held up—in relationship to Australia at least—as a place that has a superior record in remembering the wars of colonisation and in honouring the sacrifices made by indigenous and non-indigenous dead in the formation of the nation. For instance, Australian historian Ken Inglis has contrasted the absence of memorials to Australia's wars of foundation with the supposed proliferation of such memorials in New Zealand, a nation that was able, at least, 'to legitimate the racial wars by commemoration, and with ever more confidence as memories faded'.²¹ Inglis, Henry Reynolds and artist Richard Franklin are among the many who have called for the Australian War Memorial to include some form of commemoration of people killed in wars fought on Australian soil. As many have pointed out, the absence of any acknowledgment of foundational wars in Australia is particularly cruel when the participation of white Australians in the wars against Maori is commemorated there. In the work of Inglis, Australia's forgetting is contrasted with New Zealand's superior remembering. Inglis' work suggests that the New Zealand countryside is awash with bicultural monuments to the wars of foundation and that brown and white war dead have equal significance. This has not been my experience either as a historian or as a citizen. The first Crown memorial to Maori war dead (rather than Pakeha soldiers killed by Maori or Maori who died fighting for the Crown) was not erected until 2002.²² This unveiling, in a tiny coastal settlement close to Parihaka, attracted a few dozen spectators, nothing compared with the thousands who attended the preparation and internment ceremonies for the Unknown Warrior.

More than a year and a half of thick bicultural ritual accompanied the creation of the Tomb. For instance, Te Ati Awa kaumatua (elder) Sam Jackson, blessed the tomb site at the beginning and end of construction in May 2003 and November 2004 respectively. The warrior was accompanied from Longueval, France to New Zealand by members of the New Zealand Defence Forces Maori Cultural Group, an escort that was 'in keeping with Maori protocol' that the dead should never be left alone. In France and again in New Zealand, a piper played a special lament for the unknown warrior. The Tudor Consort performed a four-part choral composition at the 11 November internment. The ceremonies indicated a respectful blending of Maori and Pakeha tradition. The title of the tomb is highly suggestive. While Australia's monument is the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, New Zealand's commemorates a 'warrior' a word that evokes stereotypes about Maori as warrior resisters in the nineteenth-century and warrior gang members in the twentieth.²³

I visited the tomb in January 2005 and I was moved and repelled in equal measure. As I have reflected on this memorial, it has become clear that my repulsion was caused, at least

in part, by the way it gestures towards difference on the surface while deep down—in its very bones—the monument seeks to erase historical specificity, to create, through the bones of one of 30 000 Maori and Pakeha soldiers who died in service in overseas wars, a nation founded on the sacrifices of a generic, non-threatening ‘New Zealander’. The tomb contains the remains of one of the 9 000 New Zealand soldiers who are buried in unmarked graves or whose remains could never be recovered. The bones, which belong to a man, were ‘chosen by the Commission from the First World War Caterpillar Valley Cemetery in the Somme region of France as this was the area where the greatest number of various New Zealand regiments and battalions are known to have fought’.²⁴

The bones are purposefully bleached of all identifying markers, including race. The absence of race in the unknown warrior is especially significant. On the War Memorial web-site, a list of answers is provided to Frequently Asked Questions. One is: ‘Why not pick one Maori and one non-Maori to return?’ The answer is: ‘Because the body is unknown, we will not know who he is except that he is a New Zealander. We will not know his name, rank, regiment, religion or any other detail of his life. The term “Warrior” incorporates all these unknown details. He could be anyone and so represents everyone’.

Being a ‘New Zealander’, by this definition, seems to involve an erasure of all markers of cultural or ethnic identity. While the contents of the tomb are supposedly blank, the exterior is a gorgeous patchwork of extremely specific references to place, language, culture and race, references that are drawn almost exclusively from Maori culture. The tomb is embedded in the final flights of marble steps that lead to the National War Memorial carillon and hall of memories, an imposing singing tower that was opened on Anzac Day, 1932. Its design references the Southern Cross and ‘the choice and treatment of materials, the use of symbols and language, strongly reflect the unique cultural identity of this land and its people’.²⁵

The tomb is made from shiny black granite and its sides are etched with dozens of marks that could be crosses or stars. The internment booklet explains: ‘The Warrior will be guided by the stars of the Southern Cross on his journey back to New Zealand. The distance of the foreign land he leaves behind is represented on the base of the Tomb by a night sky of black granite inlaid with light grey Takaka marble crosses’. The tomb is covered by a bronze ‘mantle’ or ‘cloak’ inlaid with four pounamu (greenstone) crosses.²⁶ The crosses reference the Southern Cross on the national flag but the use of the word cloak to describe the bronze tomb top recalls tangi (funeral) rituals in which a feather cloak would be laid over the body of a dead person. The word cloak also suggests the precious ceremonial garments worn by Maori men and women of high standing. Further, the symbolism of a warrior’s body being guided home by a compass of stars links the journey of this anonymous serviceman with the great foundational migrations of Maori from Hawaikinui to New Zealand many thousands of years ago, epic journeys by waka (canoe) guided only by stars.²⁷ Chiefly mana (status), celestial

guides, physical strength, tenacity and endurance as well as ancient funeral rituals, not to mention the coveted title of warrior ... this unknown 'New Zealander' appears to have gained most of his 'unique cultural identity' from Maori history and tradition.

The karanga (call) inscribed around the base of the tomb also gains its potency from the way it brings to mind the wailing karanga sung by kuia (old women) to call manuhiri (visitors) on to a marae, a practice most New Zealanders would either have heard in person or seen on television at official events. I have heard many karanga and these calls, sung in a single breathe often by a woman who is very elderly, never fail to send shivers through my whole body. The tomb's karanga says:

Te mamae nei a te pouri nui
The great pain we feel
Tenei ra e te tau
Is for you who were our future
Aue hoki mai ra ki te kainga tuturu
Come back return home,
E tatari atu nei ki a koutou
We have waited for you
Nga tau roa
Through the long years
I ngaro atu ai te aroha
You were away. Sorrow
E ngau kino nie i ahau aue taukuri e
*Aches within me.*²⁸

The Maori and English words, so perfectly chosen and composed, evoke the same ache contained in painter Ralph Hotere's Sangro paintings and the poetry of Cilla McQueen that is incorporated into these works. The art of Hotere and McQueen mourned the death of Hotere's brother who was killed on the Western Front in World War I and the pain they continued to feel at his distant burial place, his far-ness from his place and his people.²⁹ This pain of distance is felt by Maori and Pakeha whose loved ones died while serving in overseas wars but it is especially acute in Maori communities where the two world wars claimed the lives of so many young men who had been ordained as future tribal leaders.³⁰ It is appropriate that the distant deaths of so many young Maori and Pakeha people be commemorated through a beautiful and poetic monument such as the new Tomb. It would be an unfeeling visitor, indeed, who could fail to be moved by the sentiments expressed in the tomb's karanga. But my sadness was not so much for what was there but for what was not. There are many other bodies—brown and white—waiting to be called home to the centre

of national remembrance, waiting to be tracked and treasured and honoured with a mantle of bronze and greenstone, a skirt of stars.

— THE UNKNOWN ‘WARRIORS’ HAVE NAMES

The Tomb of the Unknown Warrior was unveiled in the very year when the linking of my grandmother’s name with a Maori-land trust development had shifted our family, quite irrevocably, from a state of uneasy kiwi-ness to one much closer to the more difficult but satisfying position of iwi-ness. My doctoral research on Parihaka has contributed, in small part, to this process. Many of the men who lived at Parihaka had been famous military adversaries of the Crown. Titokowaru, in particular, routed Colonial troops in a series of battles in Taranaki between 1868 and 1869. But at Parihaka residents had rejected violence as a way of fighting colonisers. The community’s non-violent strategy was partly pragmatic—by the 1870s Maori were massively outnumbered by Pakeha so military victory was unlikely—but it was also ideological, growing from a sophisticated pacifist culture developed by Parihaka leaders. Drawing on both Maori and Christian beliefs, residents used non-violent techniques to oppose the theft of their land.

The men and women and children expressed resistance in a firm but gentle manner, through actions that are the opposite of the Maori ‘warrior’ mystique embedded in phrases like The Tomb of the Unknown Warrior. The non-violent techniques—which were by no means unique to Taranaki Maori—included pulling up surveyors’ pegs, ploughing Maori land that was being occupied by settlers, mending fences that had been pulled down by road-makers and long hikoi (marches) around the boundaries of confiscated land. In the twentieth century, there has been a noble tradition of ‘non-warrior’ behavior amongst both Maori and Pakeha. For instance, poet James K. Baxter’s father Archie was a conscientious objector who was tortured for refusing to join up in World War I. In 1977, Ngati Whatua and their Maori and Pakeha supporters invoked the non-violent legacy of Parihaka during their 507-day occupation of Bastion Point, Auckland. Protestors ploughed land at the site and when the army was called in to break up the camp, one of the leaders yelled: ‘At no time will we resort to violence, our stand is one of non-violence’.³¹ The tradition has continued. Under the leadership of Labor’s Helen Clark, New Zealand has shifted its military spending from war to ‘peace-keeping’ operations and it has occurred to me that New Zealand could express its cultural difference in a radical way now—before a local and global audience—by erecting a bicultural ‘Tomb of the Known Non-Warrior’ at its national war memorial.

My ancestors, Mohi and Awhi Parai, could be named on such a memorial. They were ploughmen protestors at Parihaka. Like hundreds of others, Mohi and Awhi were arrested and sent, without a trial, to prison-exile in the South Island. Mohi and Awhi went to Lyttleton (near Christchurch) where they helped build roads and a sea wall. Prisoners en route from

Taranaki to the South Island were held in Wellington while they waited for their transport ship to arrive. The men were locked up in the barracks built by Governor Hobson in the 1840s on Te Ati Awa land at Pukeahau (which he called Mt Cook).³² The barracks, which could house 200 troops, was built to withstand a Maori attack that never came.

The barracks was demolished in 1882 and replaced with a prison built by prisoners from bricks made from clay taken from Pukeahau. In 1894, another smaller red-brick barracks was built. This building still stands, an office for a kitchen design firm. Five cells, with grill doors and prison bell, remain intact but disused at the rear. This building is at the corner of a large pohutukawa-covered rectangle of land between Tasman and Taranaki Streets. The site, fronted by Buckle Street, is a palimpsest of competing histories and uses. Most of it is occupied by the National War Memorial—an enormous carillon housing 52 inscribed bells of varying shape and weight built atop a ‘hall of memories’—and the former National Art Gallery and Museum, which is now leased by Massey University from the Wellington Tenth Trust and used as a design and art school. My brother-in-law teaches there.

The Tomb of the Unknown Warrior is on the steps in front of the carillon. After lying in state at the Beehive, the remains of the unknown soldier were put in the tomb in a bicultural ceremony that began with the carillon’s largest bell—Peace Rangimarie—being tolled eleven times (to mark 11th November, Armistice Day). Rangimarie is the heaviest of the four new bells cast to mark fifty years since the end of World War II. Indeed, it is the heaviest bell to be cast anywhere in the world since 1934. Peace is three metres wide and it weighs 12.25 tonnes. It was hung, in 1995, along with the Grace Aroha, Hope Tumanako and Remembrance Whakamaharatanga. Peace, hope, grace and remembrance toll for all the newly unknown warriors of New Zealand’s foreign wars but for the participants in the wars of colonisation they remain silent. There are many other war stories connected with the site on which the ‘unknown warrior’ is buried. In my family, those stories concern ‘warriors’ or ‘non-warriors’ called Awahi and Mohi and their father Hemi. They concern Hemi’s daughter Arapera who married a Pakeha settler William Eilerslie Wallace (who sailed from Birmingham into Te Aro lands in 1840 on a New Zealand Company ship called the Aurora). They concern Charles (Tare) and his European wife Margaret. They concern my great-grandmother Hannah and her daughter Rawinia. They concern my dad and me. In 1987, I learnt to do the karanga in a prefab polytech building on Buckle Street, opposite the war memorial.

Even so, I can’t argue that Hemi and Mohi and Te Awahi and their descendents are totally forgotten at the National War Memorial. Up the back of the site, far from the magnificent and ostentatious tomb, is a modest memorial erected in 2001 by the Wellington Tenth Trust. The memorial depicts a prisoner standing with his head bowed, wrapped in a blanket. It is made from grey stones and white pebbles. The grey stones, gathered from Taranaki streams, represent each of the prisoners who passed through Wellington in the late nineteenth century

on their way to prisons in the South Island. The pebbles refer to 'the "lost genealogy" of the men taken who died in prisons'. My family's 'hall of memories' shows that what was lost can be found, what was foreign can become familiar. New Zealand's unknown warriors have names, ranks, regiments, religions and race. They died in the back paddock, not some foreign field. They do not need pipes and stars to guide them home. They are already there, waiting to be released from the dementia wing, the bony archive beneath our feet.

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1. Hemi Parai is one of the seven signatories of an 1844 'Deed of Release' for Te Aro Pa. The New Zealand Company paid each of the men 300 pounds in 'full payment and satisfaction for the absolute surrender of our title to all our claims in all our lands which are written in the document attached to this ... on the other hand, the pas, the cultivations, the sacred places and the places reserved will always remain all for us ... the only lands left for us are the aforementioned'. See 'Deeds of Release Port Nicholson (Te Aro pa)', 6 February 1844, National Archives, Wellington, New Zealand.
2. The idea of memories as possessions, things we 'keep' and 'preserve' is explored in Elizabeth Hallam and Jenny Hockey, *Death, Memory and Material Culture*, Berg, Oxford and New York, 2000, p. 3.
3. Susannah Radstone, 'Working with Memory: an Introduction', in Susannah Radstone, ed., *Memory and Methodology*, Berg, Oxford and New York, 2000, p. 11.
4. Kim Scott and Hazel Brown, *Kayang & Me*, Fremantle Arts Centre Press, Fremantle, 2005, p. 19.
5. See Graeme Davison, 'The Great Voyage: National celebrations in three new lands' in Davison, *The Use and Abuse of Australian History*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney 2000, pp. 76–7.
6. Jock Phillips, *A Man's Country? The Image of the Pakeha Male*, Penguin, Auckland, 1987, p. 151.
7. Phillips, *Man's Country*, pp. 134–35. See also James Belich, *The New Zealand Wars and the Victorian Interpretation of Racial Conflict*, Auckland University Press, Auckland, 1986 and James Belich, *I Shall Not Die: Titokowaru's War New Zealand 1868–1869* Allen & Unwin, Wellington, 1989.
8. Radstone, 'Working with Memory', p. 12.
9. For an interesting recent account of indigenous identity formation in an Australian context see Jim Everett, 'Dispossession' in Marilyn Lake (ed), *Memory, Monuments and Museums: The Past in the Present*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 2006, pp. 215–27.
10. Ngatata Love, 'Port Nicholson Block Claim Report Back Hui', Melbourne Business School, 10 November 2004. For more information on this claim see *Te Whanganui a Tara Me Ona Takiwa: Report on the Wellington District Waitangi Tribunal*, Wellington, 2003.
11. Stephen Muecke, *Ancient & Modern: Time, Culture and Indigenous Philosophy*, UNSW Press, Sydney, 2004, p. 65.
12. Aroha Bradley (for Port Nicholson Block administration team) to Rachel Buchanan, 23 February 2004. 'This letter is to confirm that your application for registration to the Port Nicholson Block Claim has been **verified** by the Register Validation Committee ...' [Bold text in original.]
13. Rachel Buchanan, 'Village of Peace, Village of War: Parihaka Stories 1881–2004', PhD thesis, Monash University, 2005.
14. In taking on a topic with which I had a family connection, I was influenced by Linda Tuhiwai Smith's recommendations that researchers pursue topics related to their iwi. See Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, Zed Books and University of Otago Press, London, New York and Dunedin, 1999.
15. 'The Government Awards', Appendixes to the Journals of the House of Representatives (AJHR), vol. II, 1880, G-2, p. xxxviii.

16. 'Special Grants—West Coast Land District', No. 7, (2) Charles Wallace, Appendixes to the Journals of the House of Representatives (AJHR), vol. II, 1882, G-5, p. 30.
17. Marilyn Lake, 'Introduction', *Memory, Monuments and Museums*, p. 5. In the same collection see Lake, 'Monuments of Manhood and Colonial Dependence: The Cult of Anzac as Compensation', pp. 43-57.
18. Annie E. Coombes, *Visual Culture and Public Memory in a Democratic South Africa*, Duke University Press, Durham and London, 2003, p. 12.
19. Roberto Rabel, 'War History as Public History: Past and Future' in Bronwyn Dalley and Jock Phillips (eds), *Going Public: The Changing Face of New Zealand History*, Auckland University Press, Auckland, 2001, pp. 155-73.
20. The National Party website described New Zealand as a nation drifting to 'racial separatism'. This process would be halted by, among other things, 'returning the seabed and foreshore to clear Crown ownership on behalf of all New Zealanders' and by 'abolishing the separate Maori seats in Parliament', <<http://www.national.org.nz/images/ecards/IwiKiwiContent.gif>>, accessed 30 September 2005.
21. Ken Inglis, *Sacred Places: War Memorials in the Australian Landscape*, Miegunyah Press, Melbourne, 1998, p. 23.
22. The first memorial erected by the Crown in honor of Maori who fought against it in the New Zealand wars was unveiled at Oakura, Taranaki in 2002. The rather ugly concrete slab honored twenty Maori killed at Fort St George in an assault by 873 colonial troops backed up by artillery from HMS Eclipse. This slaughter was enacted in revenge for the death of one white soldier who had been ambushed by Maori some days earlier. At the unveiling, one Maori kaumatua (elder) Te Ru Wharehoka said the fact that it had taken 139 years for the Crown to acknowledge the wrong it had done was a sign that there was no genuine partnership between Crown and Maori. 'Why did it take so long? It's not historical, it's hysterical', Wharehoka was reported as saying. See *Daily News*, 17 June 2002, p. 3. The same day this Taranaki newspaper carried a story (on page 2) and photograph of the blessing of a stone to commemorate the death of Private Richard Absolon, a local man who was killed in 1982 in the Falklands War. The stone would be sent to England where it would be placed in a cairn for all those killed in the war. A memorial to Absolon was built in 1988 in New Plymouth.
23. Aside from the pre-match haka, the most potent contemporary Maori warrior imagery has been produced by Alan Duff in his novel *Once Were Warriors*, Tandem Press, Auckland 1990 and in director Lee Tamahori's 1993 film of the same name.
24. Tomb of the Unknown Warrior, Background Information, National War Memorial <<http://www.nationalwarmemorial.govt.nz/unknown/index.html>>, accessed 30 September 2005.
25. 'Tomb design', Tomb of the Unknown Soldier souvenir internment booklet, p. 14.
26. The pounamu crosses were formed by my cousin Maryanne's husband Steve Myhre. Maryanne is a Wallace, like me. Steve, a carver, is Pakeha.
27. For a discussion of how the 'great voyage' myth works in New Zealand, Australia and the United States see Davison, 'Great Voyage' in *Use and Abuse of Australian History*, pp. 56-79.
28. Words of karanga in 'Tomb of the Unknown Warrior Design' in the National War Memorial website.
29. Gregory O'Brien, *Out the Black Window: Ralph Hotere and New Zealand poets*, Godwit in association with City Gallery, Wellington, 1987, p. 108.
30. For a Te Ati Awa example relating to World War II, see Susan Love de Miguel, 'Eruera Te Whiti O Rongomai Love 1905-1942', *The Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*. <<http://www.dnzb.govt.nz>>. Love was the first Maori to command the Maori battalion. He was killed in El Alamein. 'The loss of Eruera was a tremendous blow to his family, and the ramifications were to be felt for generations ...', Miguel writes. Accessed 14 March 2003.
31. Mereata Mita, director, *Bastion Point—Day 507*, Awatea Films, 1980, New Zealand Film Archive.
32. Chris Maclean, *For Whom the Bells Toll: A History of the National War Memorial*, Heritage Group, Department of Internal Affairs, Wellington, 1999.