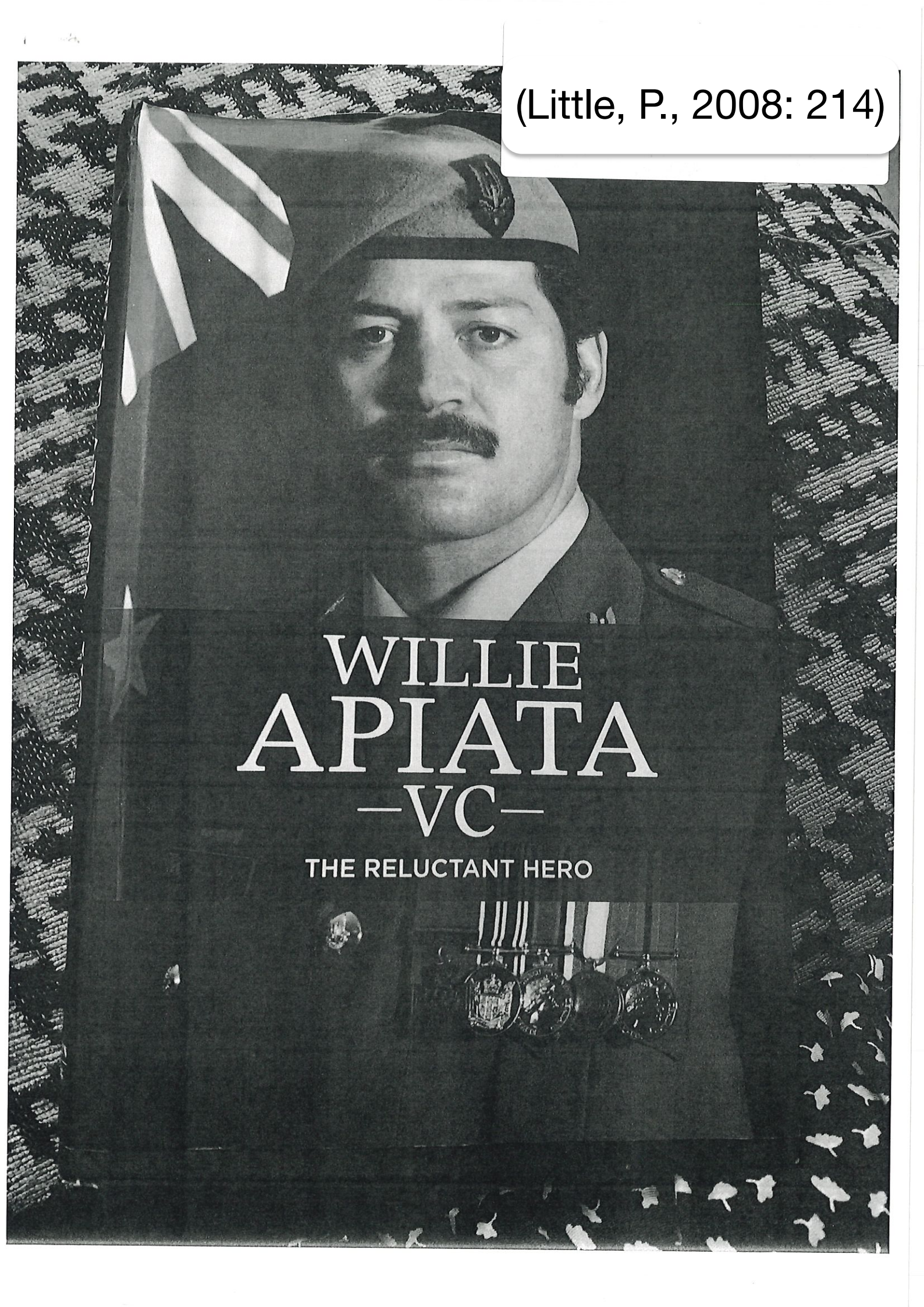


(Little, P., 2008: 214)

A black and white portrait of Willie Apiata, a man with a mustache, wearing a military uniform and a beret. He is looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. A flag is visible behind him on the left side. On his chest, several military medals are pinned to a ribbon. The background is a dark, textured fabric.

WILLIE
APIATA
—VC—

THE RELUCTANT HERO

VIKING

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Dave Woods: Insert 1 page 8 (below)

1NZSAS: Insert 2 pages 3, 4 (above), 5, 6 (above), 7 (above);

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NZDF: Insert 2 pages 7 (below), 8; insert 3 pages 1, 2, 6 (below)

Willy Sussman: Insert 3 pages 3 (below), 4

Palmerston North Boys' High School: Insert 3 page 5 (above)

area and not offend anyone. But I only took out of what he wrote for me what I thought was applicable, because I knew that both peoples wanted to hear something – not just Maori. And it came out how I felt they wanted to hear it. I think you can prepare for these things too much. The best thing is to feel what everyone's feeling, and then what you want to say will come to you. Everything I said came from my heart. I don't rehearse a speech or write anything down. I like to absorb the atmosphere, feel what people are feeling, listen to what they are saying, because then you can reply in a manner that you know they will be able to appreciate.

A lot of what Maori say in speeches are poems, and I finished with a small poem that went: 'Pull out the centre of the flax bush and where will the bellbird rest?' Meaning, I say, what is the most important thing in life? It's the people. That poem means a lot to me, and I wanted to let everybody there know what was important to me.

A lot of fence mending was happening that day – the history between Nga Puhi and Ngati Porou at Te Kaha is quite ferocious. Way back, Nga Puhi went down there and basically slaughtered their way to East Cape, because they had muskets, then went back home again. It wasn't until later, when they got muskets of their own, that the tribe retaliated. Last time Nga Puhi travelled down was for war, but now they came for peace.

This was the first time that those two tribes had stood on one marae in about 100 years. And when they referred to the history on that day, they did it in a jovial way. There was nothing vindictive about it. So I guess it's good that what happened to me has had such a positive effect.

At Te Kaha, Nga Puhi kaumatua (elder) and 28 (Maori) Battalion member Tamati Paraone asked Te Whanau-a-Apanui to bring Willie home to the north. He died before it happened, but his wish would be carried out.

Anyone who spends any for all he is a man of action. He processes things with his heart. He is a speaker, but when he expresses himself, he is called the pukehina. His could be called the pukehina. He is in the bush on your own. He does not make any noise, you think about your thoughts. The homecoming connection with his Maori.

When his grandfather Pukehina, a thin strip of land, as his coffin was being lowered, everyone's surprise, they saw the old warrior. Two but one look at Willie, you see this was not the

Neighbours were surprised. Pukehina was a quiet man, but by an eerie stillness, he ended. Only then was it known.

As with his own, he had known it was

It's pretty intense. I know so much about it. It will be in some way. I'm only a bit at school. I'm not a real warrior. Maori have our own