

What Time the Bugle Blew

From M. Nalder, *Battle-smoke Ballads, or, Poems of the Transvaal War* (1899)

From kauri-clad Wairoa
Rich in her tropic charms, -
Otago's rugged stations, -
And Canterbury's farms;
From where the West Coast miners
Toil for the coal and gold -
From boiling Rotorua -
From Southern Ranges cold -
From hill and bay and headland,
In all the country through -
They rallied to the Red Cross
What time the bugle blew.

Yes! 'Twas the bugle blew!
The Empire's summons flew;
The Long White Cloud re-echoed loud,
What time the bugle blew!

On Afric's rock-strewn sand-wastes -
On kopje, spruit and veldt,
The burning day, the chilling night,
Hunger and thirst they felt.
The hard and constant duty -
The skirmish or attack -
The hillside bare, the scanty fare -
The lonely bivouac;
Ten months of stern warfare,
Nor rest, nor pause, they knew -
But they were there when wanted
What time the bugle blew.

Yes - when the bugle blew
Weary and worn and few,
They did what they were asked to do
Whene'er the bugle blew

They fought `neath famous leaders,
Alongside comrades bold,
Whose names ring out like clarions
Where'er war's tale is told.
Their foe was brave and stubborn,
Who mostly smote unseen -

Fever and ball drank up their blood,
Their baptism was keen.
Did they disgrace the Southern Stars
That gave the Field of Blue?
Go, ask the men who watched them,/What time the bugle blew!
No! When the bugle blew
They did what they could do;
Zealandia's sons were 'mid the guns
What time the bugle blew.

Now many are returning,
Shattered in health and frame;
And many sleep beneath the sand
For Queen and Empire's fame.
But Anglo-Saxon deeds and blood
Aye grapple friendship fast,
And like the glowing Future
To the mighty storied Past.
Now when their homeward tramp resounds
Where fern and rata grow,
The heart and hand of Maoriland
Bids Honour's bugle blow.

That heart - that hand - are due
To those whose laurels grew
Twined round the Southern Standard
What time the bugle blew.