

The Papakura Sentinel



Number 59

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Editorial

Here we are, halfway through the year. Things are beginning to settle down and activity in the Museum is up. The Mighty Small Mighty Bright exhibition has brought large numbers of youthful visitors to the Museum, with parents during the holidays, and since then with their teachers and teacher aides. MSMB came from MOTAT and coincided with the International Day of Light on Saturday 14 May, brought to us by Andy Wang of Dodd-Walls Institute. That day saw a constant stream of young families with a lot of Wow!, as people of all ages generated electricity, played with a gyroscope and saw a different world of luminescence, ultraviolet, lasers and multifaceted lenses. Another youngster who appeared briefly was lone’s wee boy William with his mother and a train of admirers. Museum baby has broken the ice.

And now we are preparing an exhibition of our own, a team collaboration of Alan, our Curator, with Kara, Wendy, Corallie, Caroline and Rob, called Lens on Papakura and District. It’s about local photographers and photography and is generating quite a bit of interest. Thanks to those who have shared information and materials on local photographers. We are learning more about Howard, Payne and others that people remember. More on page 2.

At a personal level PDHS extends its sympathies to Norma Cooper on the recent death of Bill, members of the Society attending meetings as late as last year. Also to Patricia Neate on the death of her brother.

Meetings continue to be held. In April Wendy gave an interesting talk on the Society’s 60 years—celebration planned to coincide with the Museum’s 50th later in the year. May’s meeting featured Edward Bennett, talking about the Victorian way of death. And we are looking forward to talks by Phil Sai-Louie and Terry Carson in June and July—see page 17.

The Heritage Walk has been accepted by the Auckland Heritage Festival and will be advertised for 1 and 8 October. In the meantime we will provide informal walks. Contact the Museum or email

**PAPAKURA & DISTRICT
 HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

Monthly Luncheon Meetings: 4th Thurs, 1pm – 3pm
 Regular Saturday Bus Trips to places of interest

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pdhs@papakuramuseum.org.nz to express an interest; walks will be arranged.

In this edition, Kirikiri takes a back seat—some readers may be relieved. Edna Carson and Iain Wakefield have been collaborating on the story of Drury's hotels, and the first article is in this issue. Also our resident air buff, Curator Alan Knowles presents his first contribution, writing about a missing plane. And is interviewed for Sentinel. Kirikiri cameos feature a group of second generation gumdiggers and some sad tales.

Enjoy your reading

Rob, Ed

Walk Papakura's past

Lens on Papakura and district

Our next exhibition

We are drawn to photographs and paintings because a picture can paint a whole history, and inspire new research. This has happened in the Papakura district. Thanks to the Museum's collection, to the generosity and interest of locals, and wonderful online tools such as National Library's Digital NZ (bringing together collections from all over the country), Auckland Library's Kura, and staff of Auckland Libraries and the Auckland Museum library, research over recent years has kept revealing photographers such as James Douglas Richardson, Albert Tattersall, Anne Campbell, George Hardy, Douglas Mills and Whites Aviation. Others like Des Howard and R Payne were working within the memory of many people. Others again, Trefor Ward and Sandra Cowley, have been commissioned to record aspects of our more recent past. So there is a story behind the selection of photographers.

Selecting photos has been challenging, because in some cases an abundance has opened up so many stories. The exhibition, which is being finalised, is the work of many people, including our manager Kay, who worries about the financing and is always part of the installation. Alan Knowles has taken on project management with real enthusiasm, and has reached out to other sources. My interest in the photographers, especially the Papakura-based ones, has been fed from the beginning and researched by Kara. Neville Williams, behind the scene, keeps producing amazing photos which he studies in detail. So many that bear the stamp of Alfred Tattersall, Mrs Campbell, George Hardy continue to surface out of Neville's pack. Wendy, with Corallie and Caroline, have enthusiastically explored our collection of cameras and other photographic materials and are planning the plinths. And there continue to be offers, too numerous to mention, usually beginning with: 'Would you like...' or 'I remember...' This will truly be a local exhibition about and by locals.

While acknowledgment is made of nineteenth century photographers, named and unnamed, who began the recording of local scenes and people, the exhibition is in four parts.

Wide lens follows the story of two Wairoa/Clevedon born photographers who became quite prolific—the professional Albert Tattersall recorded all aspects of Samoan life and history between the 1880s and 1940s; and James Douglas Richardson, amateur enthusiast, who deliberately set out to preserve scenes of old Auckland over the early twentieth century, very conscious that he was recording history.

Local focus is the story of three locals, Anne Campbell who recorded local life in the first years of the twentieth century, George Hardy who took over her role in the 1910s and early 20s, and the well-remembered Des Howard.

Bird's eye view owes its inspiration to flight and the pioneer Douglas Mills who flew low above the area before World War 2, and Whites Aviation, particularly Clyde (Snow) Stewart after the war.

Professional lens contains commissioned collections by Trefor Ward now of Hamilton, and Sandra Nicholls/Cowley, which captured carefully selected views of Papakura in recent times.

ON THE ROAD TO THE WAIKATO

DRURY HOTELS FROM 1855 (Part 1)

Edna Carson and Iain Wakefield

The first European settler in the Drury district was Thomas Runciman, who bought land there after crossing Slippery Creek with a dray in about 1850. Runciman and his family had arrived on the *Nimrod* in 1839 at the Bay of Islands from where they went to settle near Whangarei until the war with Hone Heke and his followers in 1845 forced the family to flee south. In 1853, soon after building a two-storey house on his land in Drury, Runciman's eldest daughter Jane married William John Young, son of another pioneering family. Young had earlier spent time in the California Gold Rush and had returned to New Zealand with sufficient funds to buy a nearby property, which he then farmed for a few years. He realised that Drury would soon become a place of importance after the land sales in the 1850s, as it was on the main route to the fertile Waikato region, either overland or by river.

He decided that a hotel could be a profitable venture and built a house which he knew would meet the requirements of the current licensing regulations. He was granted a publican's license in November 1855 and announced to the general public in January 1856 that he had obtained a license for his new house, the Farmers' Hotel, situated at the junction of Waiuku and Great South Roads, and that he had plans for 'the erection of a more extensive and commodious building' in the near future. At the time of this announcement, the property already contained 'a good dairy, well stocked poultry yard, completely fenced paddocks, stockyard and stabling' and he recommended it as an ideal place for travellers to spend time on their journeys to the bush, sampling while they were there his excellent range of wines and spirits.

He set about this project with enthusiasm and by late 1857 had completed the new hotel, now a large two-storey building, had opened a general store on the property and was also providing transport in a van to and from Auckland several times a week. At this time, his hotel was also being used as a venue for meetings of the Opaheke residents, as there was no other building in the district large enough to hold such gatherings. The following year, when the meeting of the Coal and Limestone Exploration Committee was held in his hotel, he took the further initiative of providing transport to convey any interested people to the coalfield itself some distance away. The hotel achieved even more recognition when it became the headquarters for geologist Ferdinand von Hochstetter's 1859 expedition to that part of the country, flying the Austrian flag in honour of this international expedition.

A photograph taken by Bruno Hamel, who was on the expedition and considered the hotel to be 'the last outpost of civilization towards the South', shows the Farmers' Hotel as it was described then: 'the bedrooms are lofty and well ventilated; the public dining-room is spacious and opens on to a wide verandah from whence a fine view of the country between Drury, Papakura, and the Manukau is had'.



Hamel, Bruno. Drury Hotel. Auckland Museum collection PH-ALB-84-p13-1

There was again mention of the stabling and the saddle horses for both men and women, gig and dog cart which were available for hire, while passenger and mail vans were then running daily from his hotel to Auckland and twice a week to Waiuku and Mauku, other early settlements in the Franklin district.

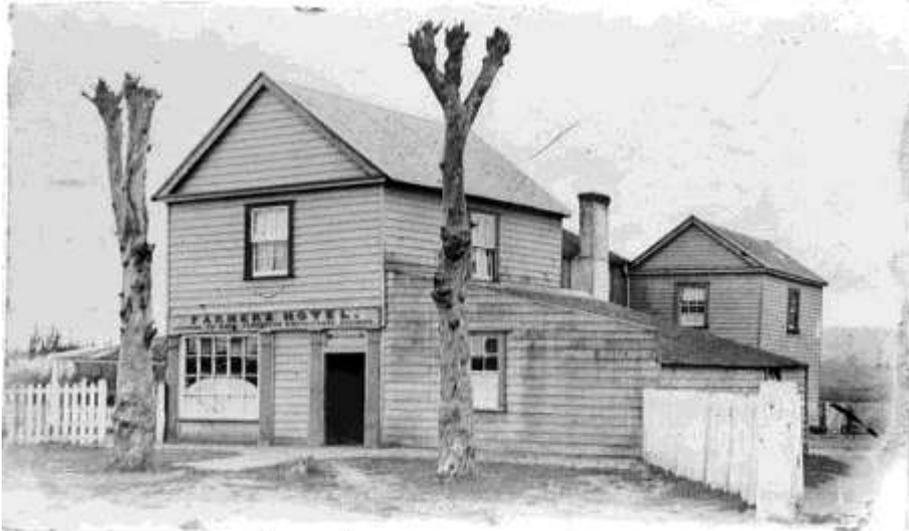
During the next two years, as troops were gradually being moved to Drury in preparation for the invasion of the Waikato region, William Young ensured that the Farmers' Hotel became the social centre of Drury, organising the occasional horse race meeting on part of his property, while the hotel's Assembly Rooms were the venue for a Volunteer Ball. He also hosted Governor Sir George Grey and his party on their trip further south to the Waikato. However, he did suffer a setback when the stables were burnt down in February 1860 and these had to be rebuilt - arson was suspected. At this stage, like so many early entrepreneurs, he decided to pursue other interests, the acquisition of livery and bait stables in Auckland city to assist his transport operation, the purchase of the Grange property in Papatoetoe as a family home, and the establishment of stores and small hotels further south following the movement of troops to the Mangatawhiri and Waikato regions. He was no longer able to supervise all these undertakings himself, so evidently passed over the running of the hotel in May 1862 to William Wallace, who remained in charge until the hotel and 20 acres of land were leased for a year by James Mill for £400 from May 1863.

Mill renamed the hotel as the Farmers' Royal Hotel and managed it throughout the height of the Waikato War. One of the hotel's most notable lodgers for a brief period was Gustavus von Tempsky, who had given up gold mining at Coromandel to become the official war correspondent for the *Daily Southern Cross* based in Drury, where some of the British regiments were already in camp. While staying there he accepted an invitation from Lieutenant William Jackson, founder of the Forest Rangers, to join this group in August 1863 on an initial scouting expedition in the Hunua Ranges. After three days of living on basic rations and clambering through this rugged bush region, the party finally emerged at Drury to partake of a 'very welcome meal at Mill's hotel'. Von Tempsky later achieved fame as the commander of the second group of Forest Rangers. Meanwhile James Mill, as the current hotelkeeper, benefited from the increased patronage of troops stationed at Drury and at the same time, protection from a group of about 50 of these camping nearby.

The presence of so many British regiments and volunteer troops in Drury during this period of unrest, meant that the Farmers' Hotel, after being the only one in Drury for several years, found it had competition from two other licensed hotels. First to open was the Drury Hotel for which William Cronkshaw, a former builder and contractor, obtained a license in 1863. A year later, Charles Raven was granted a license for the Great South Road Hotel, a substantial hotel which he had built in 1864 at a cost of £1,500. For a few months, John Wilson ran a Temperance Hotel, though he failed in his attempt to get a license in 1864, as the Licensing Committee stated that his house was not finished and there were enough licensed premises in the district already. He evidently completed the house but in August 1865, the Temperance Hotel was advertised as a mortgagee sale with a nearly new building on the property.

After Mill's lease for the Farmers' Hotel expired, William Young transferred the license in September 1864 to Robert Dunbar, an experienced hotelkeeper from Sydney, and seven months later Dunbar was in turn replaced by George Godkin, who was to have a long and memorable association with the hotel. The hotel had evidently become dilapidated and badly conducted under Mill's tenure, and Young had to convince the Licensing Committee that these problems would be quickly remedied to bring it up to standard. Godkin's first priority on taking over the lease was to upgrade the hotel by doing extensive repairs and much-needed painting. However, as he too was feeling the effects of the downturn in business after the withdrawal of most of the troops from the district, he tried to attract new custom from people living further afield in both Auckland and Waikato - the Great South Road had now been widened and metalled that far - by advertising the comforts of his first-class hotel with its excellent stables, carriages and other transport for hire and well fenced paddocks for stock being driven to market. He also claimed that it was a 'most suitable retreat and place of recreation for picnics, private

functions and wedding parties’.



Farmers Hotel (prop. George Godkin). Auckland Libraries Heritage Collections 4-9148

In 1866, he and the licensees of the other two hotels had to re-apply for certificates to obtain their publican's licenses, which were issued by the Provincial Treasurer under certificate from the Licensing Magistrates. All were granted at the time, though the Drury Hotel's one had been transferred to Cronkshaw's wife Elizabeth. However, the magistrates had concerns about the license for the Great South Road Hotel, which had been transferred from Charles Raven to William Baker when the hotel was sold to him and John Morrin, an Auckland grocer, because Baker was not living on the premises himself and the public had no guarantee that the hotel would be conducted properly. The hotel happened to be empty at the time of the Licensing Meeting and had in fact been advertised to let by Morrin. It was Benjamin Castledine who then took up the lease and the hotel was reopened in August that year. Subsequently Baker was ordered to transfer the license to Castledine as the proprietor living on the premises, and the application for this transfer was made in April 1867. Castledine managed the hotel for some months and during his time as the licensee, he hosted Bishop Pompallier on his way south. The Great South Road Hotel became the preferred venue for any public meetings in Drury.

The Drury Hotel, soon after Cronkshaw transferred the license to his wife, was advertised for auction in June 1866 as 'a large house of twelve rooms, well built; the allotment on which it stands is 66ft x 276ft, a portion of which is cultivated as a garden. There is a good well, stabling for 14 horses, and every other convenience'. The freehold was also offered for sale later in the year. There were no buyers and the hotel remained unoccupied for some months, while Cronkshaw went to live on his nearby farm.

Early in 1868, not long afterwards and in rather suspicious circumstances, the Drury Hotel and the Great South Road Hotel both burnt down; the Drury Hotel on the 28th January and just over a month later, the Great South Road Hotel on the 29th February. Both hotels were insured and it was thought at the time that the owners or lessees might have had some input into their being destroyed. This was never proved and the verdict in the case of the latter was simply given as 'an act of incendiary by persons unknown'.

Although there was no longer any competition for the Farmers' Hotel, everything was not clear sailing for Godkin as it was a time of great unemployment, and 1868 witnessed the exodus of many men from Drury and the surrounding districts to the Thames goldfields, where they hoped to find work and make their fortunes. He found it difficult to meet the annual cost of £40 to renew his publican's license and was forced in 1870 to apply instead for a bush license, which had the reduced cost of £20.

The Farmers' Hotel then became the venue for all ratepayer and public meetings in the district, whether it

was a matter of organising a monthly cattle market, erecting saleyards, or the formation of a volunteer Cavalry Corps. Visiting dignitaries such as Governor Sir George Bowen and the Catholic Bishop of Auckland, Dr Thomas Croke, lunched or dined there on their journeys south. It was the place where all the army and navy volunteers went to get their pensions, in addition to being used as a court house for inquests and trials, as well as a number of licensing meetings. Entertainments on Boxing Day and New Year's Day often took place within its grounds, and the Drury race meetings became an annual highlight.

However, it was no easy task being the proprietor of a country hotel, as Godkin was often called upon to deal with drunken patrons and he himself was arrested in January 1873 along with two other men for an assault on James Mallay, who was beaten up and later died in Auckland Hospital. After all the evidence had been heard at their trial, Godkin was later exonerated when it had been seen that he was merely trying to defuse the situation and had in fact arranged for Mallay to be transferred to Auckland Hospital at his cost. Nevertheless, this was an indication of situations that could arise when tempers and fists combined with an excess of alcohol got out of hand.

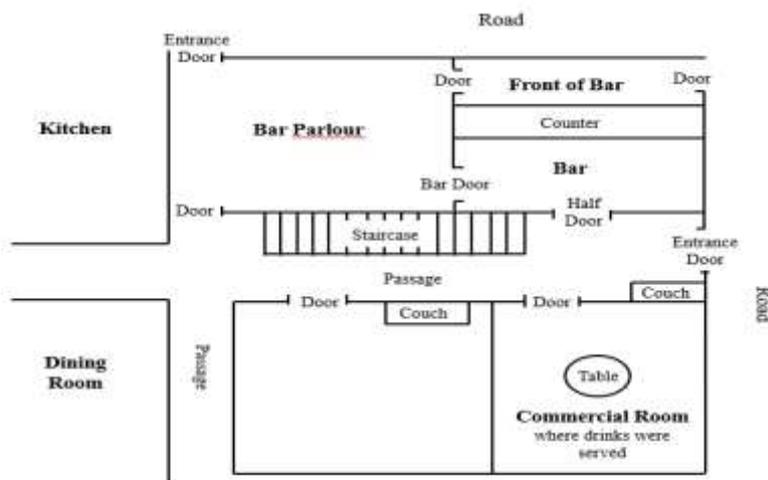
The death of William Young in April 1873 from an accidental shooting at his Grange Farm in Papatoetoe marked the end of an era in the hotel's ownership, though Young himself had not taken an active part in its running for many years. Godkin bought the hotel himself and retained the license for many years. New licensing legislation came into force in 1881 and it became necessary for all publicans to submit public notices for any new applications or transfer of licenses for hotels. Godkin's license was renewed without opposition for the next six years until on the 15th February 1887 the hotel was destroyed by fire. Fortunately the building was insured, as only a small amount of furniture and stock was saved. There had been an earlier scare in December 1884 when fire had been discovered in the downstairs area though there had been no great damage on that occasion.

With the opening of the railway to Drury in 1875, the Farmers' Hotel had seen increased patronage from day trippers, though it was sited some distance from the railway station. When Godkin decided to rebuild his hotel, he chose a site closer to the station (the present day shops at the roundabout). By March 1887 plans and specifications had been prepared by the prominent Auckland architect, Edward Bartley. In May that year the foundation stone for the new hotel was duly laid by Phoebe Godkin, his daughter, in front of a large crowd who had gathered earlier in the day for the monthly cattle sale. It is possible that Godkin himself had not been well enough to attend the function. It was he, however, who had made the application to the Licensing Meeting in June that year for 'the removal of the license to a new house near the entrance to the Drury Railway Station' and suggested its new name, the Railway Hotel.



A description of the new hotel appeared in the *Auckland Star* 7 October 1887:

The building is substantially built of brick, the three fronts being faced with pressed brick. It covers an area 55ft by 60, and contains 20 rooms all of a large size and lofty. A balcony and verandah, 8ft wide, run round the front and two sides. The entrance hall is 8ft wide, containing a bold staircase leading to the first floor. On the ground floor there are three sitting rooms, bar, and a large dining room, also good cellarage and a dairy in the basement. On the first floor there are two sitting rooms and nine bedrooms, besides bathrooms and closets. All the rooms have easy access to the balcony, and on this will be fitted up fire escapes, while all the bedrooms are well ventilated. Messrs Jones and Pollard were the contactors. Mr Mell being the sub-contractor for the brickwork.



Railway Hotel, Drury 1909

Archives NZ, R26104871, box 6, record 131

By 1889, Godkin's health was failing fast and he felt that he was no longer capable of managing the hotel, though he still took an active role in local affairs. He advertised the Railway Hotel as being 'to let' and finally his brother Thomas Godkin, who had been managing a hotel in Thames, moved to Drury to take over the license in June 1889. Thomas ran the hotel until 1894 while trying to resolve some rather messy matrimonial affairs. At the height of these problems, he applied to transfer the license to his nephew George Godkin Jnr but this was not granted as George was under age and unmarried. However, he was successful in transferring the license for a brief period to William Donald at the quarterly Licensing Meeting in December that year, before it was transferred back to him midway through the following year.

While this was happening, George Godkin had died on the 8th November 1891 after spending the last months of his illness at the Royal Mail Hotel in Auckland. When his estate was being wound up, the following notice appeared in a May 1895 issue of the *Auckland Star*:

Important Sale of Freehold Property.

The Railway Hotel together with 42 acres of Land adjoining it, on which are Stables, Store, and other Buildings, situate near the Drury Railway Station. Also a Section of Land containing about 90 acres known as the Drury Racecourse securely fenced, subdivided, and having a running stream of water in all seasons. The above is a Free Hotel.

The hotel itself was eventually bought by Hancock & Co in June 1895 for the sum of £2,950 to add to that company's existing portfolio. However, bidding for the land with the Drury Racecourse did not reach the reserve price of £4 10s an acre and was passed in at the auction to be sold later. During the latter part of the 1890s, the Railway Hotel was a very welcome stopover for rugby teams riding home after their matches in the Franklin Rugby Union, as players came from places as far away as Clevedon, Bombay, Pukekohe and Tuakau.

Thomas Godkin continued as the licensee for another few years until an application was made in May 1899 by

Alfred Caleb Pulleng to take over the license from him. Pulleng's management of the hotel was short lived, as his young wife died tragically early in 1902 and feeling unable to carry on without her help, he in turn transferred the license later that year to Sidney Laycock. From then until 1909 when there was a meeting regarding the reduction of hotel licenses in the Manukau Licensing District, there were several licensees and a number of repairs were undertaken by the owners to improve the unsanitary conditions and meet the requirements of the annual inspection of fire escapes.

At the time of the 1909 Licensing Meeting for the reduction of hotel licenses, the licensee of the Railway Hotel was Harriet Dingle, a widow with a family, and this hotel was one of those under review for closure. She was rather concerned as to the outcome of this hearing. Earlier that year she had been convicted of selling liquor in prohibited hours, namely serving drink to a non-resident visitor on a Sunday, a charge which had been instigated by a farmer from Pahiataua out of spite. An appeal against the charge resulted in it being overturned. Six months later, she 'won £100 from the complainant because he had slandered her by suggesting that she had been unduly intimate with his brother' who had been staying at the hotel. Her concerns proved to be groundless. Whether it was because of the lengthy submission by her counsel, Fred Earl, or the evidence given by local residents as to the hotel being well conducted, and its being a necessity for the travelling public and drovers taking stock to market, the hotel was one of the three in the district to retain its license while the Wairoa Hotel at Clevedon and two others lost theirs.

Harriet Dingle moved from Drury to a hotel in Onehunga in March 1911 and David Joseph Jackman succeeded her as the next licensee. Management of the hotel from then onwards was undertaken by a succession of licensees throughout World War I with its restrictive War Regulation Acts, which confronted immorality as never before, by regulating the sale of intoxicating liquor to women, suppressing prostitution and aiming for the prevention of venereal disease. These regulations, as well as the introduction of six o'clock closing in December 1917, naturally affected those working in hotels to a great extent. This was the situation until 1928 when licensees changed frequently with only William Charles Waugh and Samuel Robertson holding the license for more than three years. From time to time the Franklin Licensing Committee expressed concern that the facilities at the hotel were not up to the standard expected in a hotel of its size, in particular that there was no proper water supply – domestic water came from the roof into tanks and water for general purposes had to be hand pumped from a well on the property – no hot water for washing glasses, no electric light and the bathroom and toilets were unsatisfactory, because there was no drainage system for the disposal of effluent which satisfied both the Franklin County Council and the Health Department. The owners did take steps during these years to rectify the problems and a satisfactory report was given in July 1928 when the license was renewed.

Part 2, by Iain Wakefield, to be continued in the next issue

Sources:

Morris, Nona. Early days in Franklin. Franklin County Council [and others], 1965

Stowers, Richard. Forest Rangers: a history of the Forest Rangers during the New Zealand Wars. The Author, 1996.

National Library of New Zealand. PapersPast articles relating to the Farmers' Hotel and Railway Hotel and other Drury hotels

The disappearance of RNZAF Corsair NZ5544

By Alan Knowles

On the night of Sunday April 15th 1945, No. 22 Squadron of the Royal New Zealand Air Force (RNZAF) lost two Corsair fighter aircraft and their pilots. Whilst undertaking night flying training one of the Corsairs, NZ5353, flown by Flight Sergeant Alan Mortimer radioed to say that he was bailing out of his aircraft. Mortimer's burnt-out aircraft was quickly found, and his body was located the next morning. The other Corsair, NZ5544, flown by Sefton Clyde Joseph Ferrick requested a clearance to join the Whenuapai circuit for landing but failed to arrive at the base. Ferrick disappeared without trace and to this day the aircraft is one of the 16 planes that are classified as missing without trace in New Zealand. Ferrick was 23 years of age when he went missing and by that time had completed two South Pacific tours with the squadron.

No. 22 Squadron was at that time based at Ardmore Airfield with some exercises being conducted at Whenuapai Air Base. Prior to the squadron heading to Whenuapai its commander Squadron Leader James Ralph Court (a veteran of the Pacific war and early member of the Auckland Gliding Club at Drury) obtained a weather report from the Ardmore meteorological station that would cover the night's flying activities, which would run from 6.00 pm to 1.00 am. The report predicted a few scattered showers but improving from 10 pm. S/L Court took off at 6.30 pm and noted that there were a few isolated showers and a clearly visible horizon with conditions improving throughout his flight. Also taking off then was F/S Donald McNab, in NZ5544, the aircraft Ferrick was to use later that evening, who reported that the aircraft performed perfectly in all aspects of the flight. McNab also reported that he was able to call both Ardmore Direction Finding (D/F) and Whenuapai tower during his flight without fault. The aircraft were delayed from taking off after 8.00 pm due to rain but just before 9.00 pm the rain stopped and Ferrick took off in NZ5544 at 9.55 pm and climbed into the night sky.

After he returned, S/L Court went to the control tower to join other personnel located there to oversee as well as supervise the operations. Not long before 10 pm the duty meteorological airman made a report that a cloudbank was forming in the direction of the Waitakere Ranges. He was concerned that if the cloudbank progressed onto the airfield it would impede aircraft landing for at least 30 minutes. With reports of heavy showers nearby and with nearly all of the night flying activities completed Court issued instructions for all aircraft to be called in, with no more take-offs or landings to be undertaken. This instruction was radioed to Ferrick, and acknowledged.

At 10.20 pm Ardmore D/F contacted Whenuapai tower to say that Mortimer, who was flying Corsair NZ5353 had stated that he was bailing out of his aircraft on a bearing of 120 degrees from Ardmore. Court straightaway initiated search proceedings and a short time later a resident living along Mangatangi Road west of Kaiaua contacted Ardmore D/F to report that an aircraft had crashed into a hill located behind his house. Then, at approximately 10.30 pm, Ferrick contacted the Whenuapai tower and requested a clearance to join the airfields circuit and requested the latest weather report. Another of the squadron's pilots F/S Wellington radioed Ferrick to inform him that the cloud base was 1500 feet. Ferrick failed to acknowledge Wellington's report but contacted the tower about another matter, which was the recall of another pilot F/S N.M. Quarrie. Those who were on duty in the tower that night felt that Ferrick was close to the aerodrome when he called due to the strength of the signal. Wellington described weather conditions as being good with only half cloud cover with large patches of stars visible and had no problem orientating himself.

Moments later a Corsair passed over the airfield at approximately 700 feet, and was immediately taken to be Ferrick's. A pilot then requested permission to land, and the controller answered the call with "You are number 1 to land on runway 22". This was acknowledged with "roger out". Quarrie then joined the circuit and was given clearance to land as number 2 behind Ferrick. Wellington, who had landed his aircraft at that moment, picked up this call and realised he had been mistaken for Ferrick. Wellington did not correct this misidentification as he was pre-occupied, and never brought this to the attention of the controllers until questioned later. The controllers assumed therefore the Corsair that had landed before Quarrie's was Ferrick's.



Air to air view of a formation of Corsairs flying from RNZAF Station, Ardmore.

Courtesy of the Air Force Museum of New Zealand.

With attention centred on the loss of NZ5353 the personnel in the tower had failed to notice that Ferrick had not returned. P/O P.S Thompson, who had been sent to investigate the report by a resident of Kaiaua that an aircraft crashed into a hill behind his house, confirmed this was Corsair NZ5353. Court and McDonald visited the location of the crashed Corsair and were still unaware of Ferrick's disappearance.

The first person to realise Ferrick had not returned was a sergeant of the ground crew. He contacted Flight Lieutenant Archibald Watson (the "B" Flight Commander), who was acting as the timekeeper, and it was his job to record the times that each aircraft departed or returned. Watson had heard an aircraft bearing Ferrick's call sign being given landing instructions, as well as post-flight taxiing instructions, and mentally checked off Ferrick as being on the ground. When Wellington walked into the timekeeper's hut, Watson was surprised as he thought he was still in the air. Watson then assumed all aircraft had landed but the ground crew told him otherwise. Watson then contacted the tower to check but was told that, to their knowledge, Ferrick had landed. With two different versions of events, and thinking perhaps that Ferrick had met with a taxiing accident and was stranded, Watson ordered a ground search, but nothing was found. He also made a list of the numbers of all the aircraft that were accounted for and confirmed Ferrick's aircraft was missing.

As soon as it was established for certain that Ferrick was missing, search and rescue procedures were initiated. The RNZAF Control Centre, Auckland, was notified of Ferrick's disappearance at 11.25 pm. A check was made to see whether Ferrick had used the Ardmore D/F. LAC Evan William Stephenson Jones was the D/F operator stationed at Ardmore that night and, although he received calls from other aircraft, he received no calls from Ferrick. Jones called Ferrick every minute until 1.36 am on the 16th of April without any replies being received on either of the two designated channels.

Whilst this was being carried out, Sergeant Denis James Gisby, the Airfield Controller stationed at Ardmore, regularly sent off signal mortars until 2.00 am in the hope that Ferrick might see them and be guided to Ardmore Airfield. At Whenuapai, Takapuna and North Head, searchlights were used for the same purpose. With nothing heard or seen of Ferrick at 2.00 am, by which time he would have run out of fuel, both the

Whenuapai and the Ardmere towers closed for the night.

At 7.00 am on the morning of the 16 April, an aerial search got underway for Ferrick and Mortimer (who still had not been found). The search was essentially in two parts. One section of aircraft was to look for Mortimer who, having stated he was bailing out of his Corsair, would probably be located somewhere downwind of where NZ5353 had been found at Kaiaua. The other section of aircraft was to concentrate their search around an area off Waiheke Island where a questionable radar plot was made. Because of the nature of the plot, no reliance could be placed on it, but as this was the only search clue to go on, this area was thoroughly searched. This plot also tied in with a report from a navy gun position at Camp Emu on Motutapu Island where it was reported that an aircraft flew low over the camp at approximately 11.00 pm.

Four Harvard aircraft concentrated a search in the Kaiaua area and the Firth of Thames while another Harvard searched the area around Waiheke and Motutapu Islands. Poor weather forced the aircraft in the southern area to turn back to base. At 9.45 am four Harvards again went out to search the area around Kaiaua and the Firth of Thames. Mortimer's body was found at approximately 10 am by a ground search party and upon receiving this info, the Harvards returned to Ardmere. This completed the search for Mortimer, but the search for Ferrick and NZ5544 continued.

Four Ventura aircraft of No. 4 squadron operating from Whenuapai searched the firth of Thames area from 6.20 am to 7.40 am, and were forced to return to base due to poor weather. Once the weather had cleared, further searches were carried out between 8.39 am and 1.23 pm without success. Two Harvard aircraft again searched the Waiheke Island area between 10 am to 11.45 am. It was not until 11.23 am on the morning of the 16th of April that the control center was advised that Ferrick had requested permission to enter the Whenuapai traffic pattern. Because of this a search was not carried out in the vicinity of Whenuapai until the afternoon. At 1.50 pm two Harvards searched the local area plus the Waitakeres for 40 minutes before carrying out another search around Waiheke Island and out towards the Coromandel Peninsula. A total of 19 flying hours by the searching aircraft had been made without sighting anything of Ferrick or his aircraft.

Earlier in the day, a radio station began to broadcast a message to the public requesting any info that might assist in locating Ferrick and his aircraft. As a result, a considerable number of reports were received and investigated. Many people reported seeing flashes and explosions during the night, but these were more often than not linked to the crash of NZ5353 or the firing of signal mortars from Ardmere. Several reliable reports were received from people near the Waitakere Ranges. These included a report by two rangers, a Mr. Ash and a Mr. Cummings, who noticed a low-flying aircraft near Mountain Rd at between 11.30 pm and midnight. Land searches were undertaken in the Waitakeres, but these were confined to the high points only as a full search of the area was not practical due to the nature of the terrain.

On 17 April the size of the search area was increased and five Harvard aircraft from Ardmere carried out 13 searches in a total time of 13 hours 17 minutes. In addition to going over areas of Waiheke Island and the Waitakeres again they also searched the west coast from the Kaipara Heads down to Manukau Heads and the Waikato River mouth. Searches were carried out on the Coromandel Peninsula from its northern-most point down to Thames and in areas east of Whenuapai. Three Oxford aircraft from Hobsonville also carried out searches covering the areas from Campbells Bay to the Whangaparaoa Peninsula, Waiwera, Parakakau, Pahitua and Atuatua areas without success.

On Wednesday April 18 the search was scaled down; two Harvards carried out three searches on the Manukau Heads, the Waitakeres and Helensville areas. A Corsair also searched the Hunua Ranges, but nothing was sighted. With no reliable reports being received from anyone who had witnessed a crash or seen any smoke from a fire, searches could only conclude that NZ5544 had either crashed into the sea or in a remote area covered with thick bush. The search was therefore abandoned at 2 pm. In all, 18 aircraft had carried out a total of 46 sorties in a total flying time of 52 hours 13 minutes.



Group. No. 22 Squadron personnel in front of a Corsair, at RNZAF Station, Ardmore. Believed to be before leaving for their third tour of duty. S.C Ferrick is seated at the front left, S/L Court seated front middle and A Mortimer seated 3rd from the right.

Courtesy of the Air Force Museum of New Zealand

So what had happened to Ferrick? He was considered a capable as well as sensible pilot with a cool head, and viewed as one of the better pilots within the squadron. At Ardmore he undertook a link trainer program and used the Ardmore D/F during sorties so would have been familiar with the system and known its limitations. If for instance he was disorientated due to cloud cover Ferrick was more than capable of climbing above the cloud using his instruments and then calling Ardmore D/F for a position fix. Ferrick had flown over five hours on Corsairs at night and 17 hours total night flying on different types of aircraft. The radio calls that were made had been done in a calm assured voice that would indicate that everything was functioning normally and he knew his position. Pilot incapacitation seems unlikely because if Ferrick felt unwell he would have radioed the tower, and even if the radio failed that would not have prevented him from returning to the airfield if knew his position. The fact that he called Whenuapai to request a clearance to join the circuit meant that he must have been close to the airfield and made visual contact of the nearby area. It can be reasonably assumed that the crash must have happened suddenly as no mayday was heard. Few things could have caused such a sudden end; critical structural failure or meeting terrain suddenly are the two most likely options. The later theory has credence because there are many high points and if the aircraft was turning anti-clockwise and northeast of the airfield there are multiple pieces of high terrain that could have been impacted with.

The reported sightings of an aircraft, many of them at 11 pm, were over a wide area. These sightings illustrate that during a search, it is difficult to separate actual sightings from hoaxes or those people who thought they saw or heard an aircraft. The last pair of Corsairs to land at Whenuapai were Wellington's and Quarrie's which were on the ground at 10.50 pm. The Corsair sent out to search that was flown by Thomp-

son landed at 11.20 pm, so the only Corsair that could have been in the air at 11 pm would have been Ferrick's or Thompson's. With Thompson flying directly to Kaiawa and back, any Corsair sighted to the west, north or east of Whenuapai must have been Ferrick's. Some credible sightings are:

10.45 pm, a Mrs Jinks, postmistress of Browns Bay, saw a red flash in the direction of Rangitoto;

11 pm, a Mrs Cerutti of Epsom saw an aircraft pass over going due west ;

11 pm, a Mrs O'Leary heard an aircraft over Titirangi for half an hour before it went in the direction of Onehunga;

11 pm, a Miss Morton heard an aircraft very low in the vicinity of Howick;

11 pm to midnight, a Mrs Allan heard an aircraft fly over Milford. The engine was missing badly, and it spluttered 2 or 3 times before ceasing altogether going in the direction of Tiri;

11 pm, a Riverhead State Forest ranger saw an aircraft low over forest area going in an easterly direction;

11.10 pm, a Mrs Elliot of Waikoukou Valley, Waimauku, heard an aircraft fly so low that she rushed outside. She saw the aircraft flying very low heading into the forest area of Whenuapai;

11.35 pm, Mr J W Wallace and wife saw a bright light in the centre of Waiheke Island.

Given these reported sightings it is clear to see why the search was centred on Motutapu, Waiheke Island and Waitakere Ranges. The court of inquiry which was held on the 19th April 1945 could not find any reason for the aircraft's disappearance. Assuming NZ5544 crashed in some remote area, where would it most likely be found? The likely areas were the Waitakere Ranges, the floor of the Hauraki Gulf, or somewhere in the sea between Muriwai Beach and the Manukau Heads. Contemporary searches have proved fruitless, with many supposed sightings over the years turning out to be trees or other unrelated artefacts. Whatever the aircraft's location, finding it will help solve the mystery of Ferrick's disappearance when he was so close to landing at Whenuapai.

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Interview

Alan Knowles is the Papakura Museum Curator in the absence of Ione, and has thrown himself into his work with enthusiasm and energy. Editor decided to challenge him with three difficult questions. I asked:

What drives you?

Ever since I can remember I have always had a passion for museums and its related fields such as history and archaeology. A museum provided an escape and felt like somewhere that valued life, education, and the preservation of culture. Every time I went on a field trip to a museum or was taken by my family, I would get excited and struggle to sleep in anticipation. In general, my motivation comes from achieving goals, tasks that I set myself, and my constant thirst for knowledge as well as trying to consistently reach higher levels of my personal best. It sounds a bit cliché but the process itself is just as fulfilling as the successful attainment of goals as facing challenges enables to me to grow.

Having the privilege of working within the museum sector enables me to view the present through a different lens, as understanding the past changes our relationship with the present and ultimately will enable us to view the future with quite remarkable accuracy. Caring for museum collections, developing exhibitions and displays, undertaking research and writing are all passions of mine which my role as curator enables me to fully indulge in, lucky me! Working alongside and meeting so many experienced, passionate, and knowledgeable people who know and research Papakura history is fascinating and provides me with plenty of drive!



Describe your ideal museum.

The ideal museum would have amazing artefacts, inspiring displays, interactive exhibits, research facilities, and be a space where all in the community feel welcome. The public are drawn in by fresh and exciting exhibits that are educational and stimulate thought as well as discussion. It is paramount that a museum is clear in its function and purpose. The main mission of any museum is preserving, collecting, interpreting, and displaying artefacts of significance for the study and education of the public. My view is that museums are more relevant today than they ever have been. Museums have the power to shape society as they provide an opportunity to learn from the past, act as a focal point that brings communities together, enable access to all and stand strong in the face of adversity. For a local museum such as Papakura it is important to highlight how history interacts with present day issues. Museums act as the custodians of not only the physical artefacts but also function as vessels through which stories are told. Many museums take the idea of

the community space to the next level and enable dedicated spaces and artefacts that have a connection with a particular group of people, such as local iwi for example, to be cared for and curated by the communities themselves. The museum essentially acts as the storehouse within which artefacts can be connected with communities that reinforce identity as well as meaning. For a regional museum such as Papakura there could ideally be a dedicated space that could be created by the community that could focus on local issues. Enabling the museum to be accessible to all of the community is a fundamentally important concept within an ideal museum. It should act as a focal point where every member of the community can be welcomed and transported to another time or place. Larger museums have attempted to make their collections more accessible to the public through guided behind-the-scenes tours and establishing informal spaces where the public can interact with each other and the museum's professional staff at scheduled face to face opportunities. This enables conversation to flow and provides an insight into the responsibilities as well as challenges of museum staff. As a smaller regional museum, the potential for Papakura is huge, as opportunities for informal interactions and creating a truly community space are abundant. This automatically provides an advantage over the larger institutions which are investing large sums of money and resources in attempting to achieve this.

How did you get to this point?

I have been lucky to pursue my passions and interests through my study and working life. I grew up in Papatoetoe and after travelling around I'm still living there! I went to Papatoetoe High and then I got an apprenticeship in the electrical trade. I always had a hankering for history and I just happened to be at Auckland University one day and found out about the history and archaeological programmes there. I enrolled in a B.A double majoring in Anthropology and Ancient History. I studied archaeology, participated in excavations, read Egyptian as well as Roman history extensively and learnt to read hieroglyphics. I then pursued my MA in Ancient History which enabled me to study Egyptian history in depth and was lucky to be supervised by Anthony Spalinger (one of the world's foremost Egyptologists). I was then looking at PhD study overseas but felt I needed a break before undertaking such a commitment. I took a position as a community worker with the Salvation Army in a newly established outlet in Panmure. Throughout though I had pursued my other passion which is aviation. I studied for my pilot's licence and have held it for a number of years now and have an extensive knowledge of all things aviation both past and present. I then decided to do more study and enrolled in a Postgraduate Diploma in Museum Studies, this time through Massey University. During this time, I was lucky to undertake projects with Auckland Museum and attained an internship with the registry team at MO-

TAT. I also decided to undertake another degree and attained a Bachelor of Aviation Management, also through Massey University. As a result of this I undertook an internship through Air Chathams based at Auckland airport both flying and working within their operations control department. With Covid, the aviation industry has experienced a downturn and the airlines staff were placed on casual contracts and forced to find other avenues of employment. By this point I had been part time at MOTAT for nearly 4 years during which I gained amazing museum experience, and that has led me to my current role as Papakura Museum curator. I feel extremely grateful and privileged to be entrusted with such a role and look forward to the experiences ahead, I love every moment of it!!

Thank you Alan. Interview by Editor.

Kirikiri

Three second generation cameos



The first is a group of gumdiggers, photographed some time after 1899 at Glenora Park, a full 34 years or more after *Viola* and *Resolute* arrived in New Zealand. (Thankfully someone had named all but one of them).

Of the 19 men aged between their teens and early 50s, six had either arrived as teens in 1865 (the two Stewarts—Peter, back 3rd from right and Robert, middle right) or like Norman and Frank McLeod, (either end of back row), Jack Croskery (back 5th from left) and Jack Nealie (front right) were New Zealand-born children of

Kirikiri settlers. Norman and Frank McLeod were sons of Hugh, the retired soldier who had also been a gumdigger, and his wife Elizabeth. William Charles Derbyshire (standing next to Frank McLeod) had married their sister Elizabeth, so was an in-law. The presence of Bill McLeod (front left) poses a question. He is not known to be a child of Hugh and Elizabeth. However there was a William born to John and Catherine McLeod, who had left Kirikiri years before. If he was their son, it might suggest a relationship between the McLeod families. In any case a full third of the 19 had connections to our Kirikiri community.

The photo lends itself to different conclusions. Kirikiri was a significant part of the total Papakura population— in Papakura school, Presbyterian church and sports teams as well as work groups like these gumdiggers and the Coulthard sawmillers. Close family connections formed since first meeting in Glasgow or on board ship in 1864-5 persisted at the core of this group. (Bill Croskery would marry Margaret Stewart in 1911.) And thirdly, since gumdigging provided an opportunity in hard times, these young men were pleased to have work and income.

The second cameo reminds us that Kirikiri settlers were often part of a chain migration.

Andrew McClymont arrived in NZ several years before his parents and youngest brothers landed from the *Resolute*. Mary Veitch arrived two years after her father William, his second wife Sarah and two brothers arrived on the *Viola*. In 1868 the two married at the home of her father. The couple continued to live on Andrew's land near Ardmore school. But in 1882 he placed his two lots on the market.

He got his Master Mariner's ticket, and like a disproportionate number of Scots, invested in ships and began trading round the coast based in Auckland. He began with a 52 ton schooner, *Cutty Sark*. In early 1882 he and a partner acquired the fore and aft schooner *Saxon* of 58 tons. Mrs McClymont was a passenger on one trip to Greymouth. His arm was crushed in a wharf accident in that year, and it was amputated. He may have withdrawn from direct control of ships, but early in the following year he went to Rarotonga as

a passenger on his ship. He resumed his role as captain. In March 1885 he bought for £550 the *City of York* and advertised it for excursions, towing and fishing. One trip went round the islands as far as Waiheke for 2s. But the project may have misfired. He had difficulty paying crew, and became bankrupt with liabilities of £112 9s 7d and assets of £10: the *City of Cork* was seized by mortgagors, to be sold a month later. Once his bankruptcy was closed, in 1889 and 1890 he was skippering the 99 ton schooner *Waireka*, usually between Auckland and Lyttleton. Although these were the main ports, he was familiar with the New Zealand coasts, Russell, Whangaroa, and Hokianga in the North, Thames and Manukau, Napier and Wellington. On one occasion he took *Waireka* to Rockhampton. The last reference to him as a master was when he advertised the cutter *Janet*, 27 tons, for a voyage to Norfolk Is. Meanwhile, in his father-in-law's 1891 probate records he is described as a storekeeper.

By September 1892 he was in ill-health; he clearly became depressed and started drinking. His attempted suicide in 1894 led to a trial, and he died the following year on 9 November 1895 at his residence in Chapel St. He was 54. His widow survived him by fourteen years, dying in 1919. The couple left no children. (Neither did her brothers, so there are no descendants in NZ of the Veitch family.)

The third cameo signals the influence of other people's stories on the lives of our settlers. **Thomas Neillie**, a woodsplitter, married Mary Devin in 1879. Her back story appears to have saddled them both with a series of difficulties. Thomas was the younger son of Thomas and Martha. Unlike his older brother he did not start life in New Zealand with a land grant, and when he bought land it was in Mount Roskill. Thomas and Mary appear to have been plagued by an enemy. In 1882 Superintendent Thomson 'despatched a detective to Papakura to investigate a case of suspected incendiarism... The house of Mr Neillie near Papakura was destroyed by fire on Saturday ... during the absence of the occupants, and as it was uninsured, the loss, expected at £200, will fall on Mr Neillie. There are various circumstances connected with the affair that lead to the conclusion that it was not accidental, and these will be thoroughly investigated by the police officer.' (in light of subsequent events I assume this is Mr Thomas Neillie.)

Problems continued. In 1885 one Alexander McLeod was summoned in a court case for assaulting Mr Thomas Neillie of Mt Roskill Road, throwing him to the ground and pulling out part of his beard (which was presented in evidence.) Apparently the dispute had erupted when McLeod, who owed Neillie £50 told him that he had bought land and paid a deposit on it, and Neillie had argued that he should have paid his debt first. Mrs Neillie ruefully confessed him to be a son-in-law. Following up this relationship turned up a sequence of unfortunate events, uncovered step by step back from the assault.

Mary Ann was a widow when Neillie married her. In 1875 Mary Grace had married Hugh Devin, formerly of Chicago, Illinois, who died of cancer at Tokatea, Coromandel, on 15 February 1876, aged 34 or 37.. Previously she was married to Jeremiah Grace, and the couple had had five children. Her daughter, Mary, would marry the bellicose Alexander McLeod in 1883. It is not clear what happened to Jeremiah Grace. There could have been two men of that name, on Auckland shipping lists in 1856 and 1858. One of them, a blacksmith, was a habitual drunkard who on one occasion threatened his wife and fired blanks in the house with his Enfield rifle, so Mary may have been a deserted wife when she married Devin.

In 1887 a building on Mt Roskill Road, including the shop and house of Mr Reynells, belonging to Mr Neillie of Papakura, caught fire, the fire spreading to neighbouring homes and a shop. The newspaper report ended: 'Mounted Constable Kelly and Constable Dewes were present, and the former made exhaustive enquiries respecting the origin of the fire, though with little success. The cause of the outbreak is shrouded in mystery.' (And no evidence it was resolved.) By this time Thomas was not well. He died a year later, but had spent 23 months in hospital with paraplegia. Unsolved mysteries were buried with him.

NOTICES

MEETINGS:

(held in the Papakura Library meeting room):

June meeting, Thursday 23 June at 1 pm. Phil Sai-Louie, on Great Kiwi brands.

July meeting, Thursday 28 July at 1 pm. Terry Carson, The Medieval Machinegun: a look at the impact of the longbow in British history.

MUSEUM EXHIBITIONS:

Lens on Papakura district—June to August.

50 years of the Papakura Museum—September (coinciding with celebration of 60 years of PDHS)

Meetings are held on the fourth Thursday of each month at the Library Meeting Rooms opposite the Museum, starting with the talk at 1 pm, continuing with business and afternoon tea (for a **\$2 gold coin** minimum). All are welcome. Phil Sai-Louie arranges our interesting speakers.

Events are advertised here, on the screen in the Museum window and on our blog and Facebook pages. Please check for updates and Museum news.

Trips are usually held on the fourth Saturday of each month two days after the meetings. The bus leaves from East Street behind the Access Point building at 10 am, unless otherwise stated. Cost is \$5 more for non-members, but anyone is welcome on a first come first aboard basis. Please register early and advise if unable to attend as numbers are limited.

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