

The story of the photographs

My name is Brent Hopkins. The story starts many years ago... I'm not sure how many, it depends on where you perceive the 'start'.

When I was about 15 years old (so that would make it 1984), I was at the rubbish tip with Alf, a friend of our family (another 'Alf' will come up later!).

The North Taieri Landfill (now closed) was located at Milners Road, Mosgiel.

Sometimes, while dumping rubbish, I would have a little curious look around to see what people had thrown away. On this particular day, I saw an old cubic wooden tea-chest, about 70 x 70 x 70 cm. the lid was off it, and there were some things in the bottom of it.

I don't remember specific items, just that the chest was mostly empty, with papers, documents, photographs, and maybe a book or two at the bottom.

I had only been looking for a moment when I saw the 'crusher' coming toward me – a large spiked-wheeled truck used to squash all the refuse.

I quickly reached into the chest and pulled out what I could grab with one hand, and took it home.

I looked through the items. In my haste, I had grabbed a bunch of very old photographs, some of them designed to act as postcards.

At the time, I was a keen stamp collector, so I knew that old postcards might have some monetary value. I took them to Don White, of the Dunedin Stamp Centre. I remember him looking through them, basically rejecting / accepting as he went. He eventually offered me \$15 for some of them – I believe with scenes of Egypt on them, but I can not be sure. I think he took less than half of what I had, I can't really remember

(Do I regret selling them now? Absolutely – I'd gladly pay to get them back. But you have to understand, I was a kid, and \$15 was a great bonus to me for a few old photos that nobody wanted).

Don White asked me if I wanted his 'unwanted' pile back. Strangely, I remember at the time thinking I could take it or leave it – it didn't matter much to me then.

But I took them, and for a long time, they sat in my drawer, alongside my stamp collection.

Time passed, but the photos never got much more than a passing glance from me. This was a time before the internet, when looking things up was time consuming, and may have led to very little success.

However, after selling my stamp collection, I took a look at them again, and in about 2012 decided to try to find something out about them.

The photos I had always been most interested in were the ones of the the desert and surroundings. The Sphinx is unmistakable, and it was clear they were from military service.

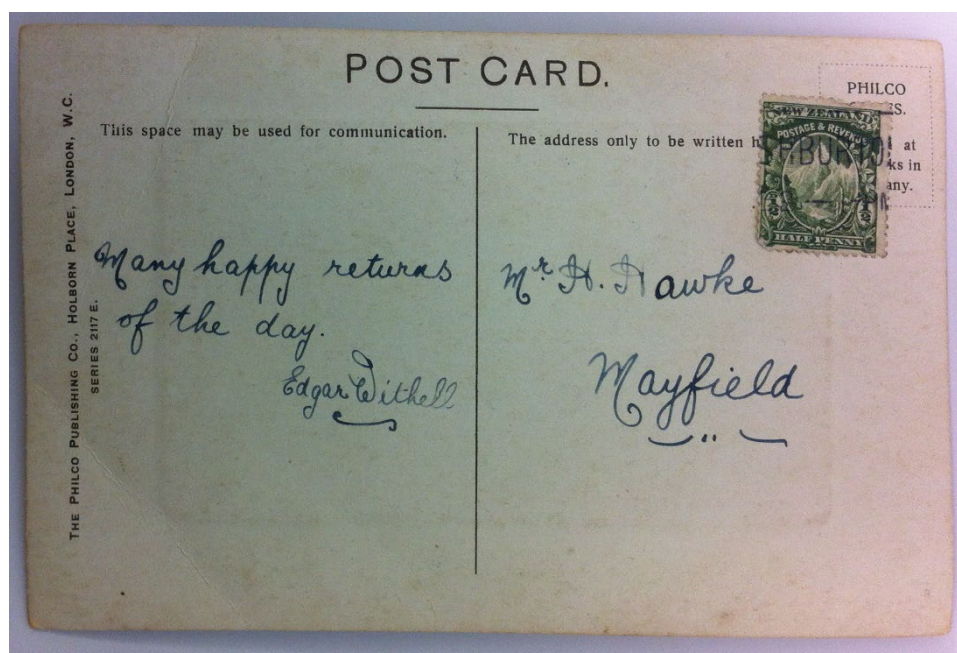
Less clear were the family photos, and even less clear was the single photo of native women from a pacific island.

Of course it wasn't just photos – there was writing on the back that might help me track somebody down. Questions started to arise... Who was it that had owned them? Why did they throw them away? Who were the people in the photos?

I think it's reasonable to ask me 'why did you care?' – my answer to that is that I have always been a 'curious' person, and I had had the photos with no real knowledge about them for some time. It was time to see what I could find.

In describing the photographs, I won't separate my initial brief research in 2012, from that which I did in April 2015. Suffice to say there were only really two times when I had a good look, and 90% of what I have learend has occurred in 2015. Part of the reason for this was the release of WWI military records that coincided with my searching, along with increased publicity around the centenary of the start of the war, and of the Gallipoli landings in 1915.

There is one card I am particularly grateful for. Without it, I may have never had any idea who these people were. It's a simple birthday card...



The main thing to note is the surname of the recipient. It's the only time 'Hawke' is mentioned anywhere, but it's the key to understanding everything. Edgar Withell sent Mr H Hawke a birthday card – to Mayfield in Canterbury. There is no recorded date. The stamp appears to have been re-used – i.e. there is no postmark over the card, just the stamp. (It is a 1900 1/2d Pictorial stamp). Other photos and letters refer to 'Harry'. I have since discovered that 'Harry Hawke' is Henry Woodman Hawke. Edgar Withell appears to have been a friend? There is reference to the Withell name alongside Harry's in the 'Papers

Past' website – mostly the articles refer to bible class meetings, or to debates – but the names shown are Edgar's father or sister.

Edgar saw action in the Egyptian and Western European theatres in the First World War – he died in 1963 aged 68. I can not find a marriage record for him – maybe got married overseas???

(Edgar's granddaughter has left a message for her grandfather on 'Online Cenotaph'. I tried to email her to advise that I had the birthday card, if perhaps it may be of some interest to her, but she did not respond).

Henry Woodman (Harry) Hawke

Henry Woodman Hawke was born on the 1st of December 1885. He was the eldest of six children, to Woodman Hawke (1859-1944) and Elizabeth Ann Hawke (nee Bateman) (1860-1931). Refer to the below table...

Relationship to Harry	Name	DOB	DOD	Age at Death
Grandfather	Henry Hawke	2/4/1820	22/9/1889	69
Father	Woodman Hawke	08/05/1859	1944	85
Mother	Elizabeth Ann Bateman	c.1860	1931	71
	Henry Woodman (Harry) Hawke	1/12/1885	8/03/1919	33
Brother	Alfred James Hawke (called Alf)	7/8/1892	10/05/1960	67
Brother	William Strudwick Hawke	18/05/1896	19/07/1973	77
Sister	Ellen Elizabeth Jane nee Hawke, later married Leonard Cameron McLauchlan (1913)	1887	1941	52
Sister	Christina Annie nee Hawke, later married William Duncan (1911)	1889	1934	45
Brother	(John) George Charles Hawke (John is listed in Coroner report but BDM site shows no John)	1900	12/09/1919	19

Harry's father Woodman was one of 13 children from Roche, Cornwall, England – he was christened in the Wesleyan Methodist church in the Bodmin circuit.

As far as I know, Harry spent his early life in Mayfield, but there seems to be links to Waimate also. I have not really researched the movements of the family as that appears more difficult to source than the other evidence.

So in his youth, Harry attended bible class, and debates prior to the outbreak of the war. His military record also alludes to some time with the Waimate rifles.

Harry (service number 7/1358) in the Canterbury Mounted Rifles –

(Refer also his military record -

http://ndhadeliver.natlib.govt.nz/delivery/DeliveryManagerServlet?dps_pid=IE20691317)

Harry joined up 12 June 1915, as a Saddler in 'G' Company, Canterbury Mounted Rifles.

18/5/15 Medical exam - 29 yrs, 6 months. 5ft 9 in, 11 stone 12 lbs (or 166 pounds (75kg)). Chest 34 ½ inches min, 37 Inches max expansion. Wesleyan Methodist, blue eyes medium complexion, medium brown hair, partially bald. Right eyesight 'satisfactory', left eyesight normal. Hearing and colour vision normal. "This man is in perfect physical health. He is a well-known footballer in his district" "slightly defective eyesight" "fit for active service"

On the 14 August 1915, Harry left along with 2362 other men in the 6th reinforcements aboard HMNZT 28. (His Majesty's New Zealand Transport). This consisted of two ships, the Tofua, and the Willochra. Harry was aboard the Tofua.

I think it's quite incredible that I have found references to Harry in the magazine that was produced by the soldiers on the troopship Tofua - This is available to view on the Auckland Museum site -

http://muse.aucklandmuseum.com/collections/images.aspx?fileName=F%3a%5cSerials_electronic%5cTroopship%5cSurcingle+OCR.pdf&filepathtype=unc&width=500&height=500&cmd=scaledown

...The magazine is called "The Surcingle" ... here's the definition of the word...

*A **surcingle** is a strap made of leather or leather-like synthetic materials such as nylon or neoprene, sometimes with elastic, that fastens around a horse's girth*

Here is a reference to an incident involving Harry...

OVERHEARD ON AFT POOPDECK.

Funny Customer , "Do you think you could cut my hair' without making me look like an idiot?"

Hawke , (like Tonsorial Artist. ex saddler from. Canterbury) " It will be a — hard job, but I will try." (Loud cheers from "G" Squadron.)

(A Tonsorial Artist is effectively a Barber)

Harry also won the Welterweight boxing championship held on board...

BOXING

Heavy.

1st Farrier Corp. Dalton.

2nd Tpr. J J. Lloyd.

Welter.

1st Tpr. H. W. Hawke.

2nd Tpr. A M. Dunning.

... but it was a tight contest...

In the welter weights the final was fought out by two very good evenly matched combatants — Hawke from Canterbury and Dunning of Waikato fame. After a hard and willing contest the former won, on points, by a very narrow margin.

He is also mentioned in a full crew list in 'G' Squadron. Alongside references to Harry personally, there are other more general statements about their mission...

We are fighting a strong courageous enemy and the 6th are about to enter the arena at a time when there is plenty of hard fighting still to do. Altho' we come from a new country we do not come traditionless. Our brothers in the Main body & in the previous re-inforcements have set us a high standard both in Cairo and in Gallipoli. The story of their courage and self sacrifice stirred and thrilled the whole world. The memory of their deeds, time can never efface nor age destroy. But the 6th CAN maintain that high standard — and what is more THEY WILL.

That although Father Neptune did not pay an official visit to "28" when we "felt the bump" on Sept. 8th., yet ample justice was done to the occasion in other ways and there was a splendid opening afterwards for a ship's laundry.



The above is a 'still' from a film on the New Zealand history website. The film shows the actual transport that Harry left on. It is available for viewing at...

<http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/media/video/troops-departing-new-zealand-ww1>

They arrived at Suez on the 19th of September 1915.

The 6th reinforcement's role is described in a blog at ...

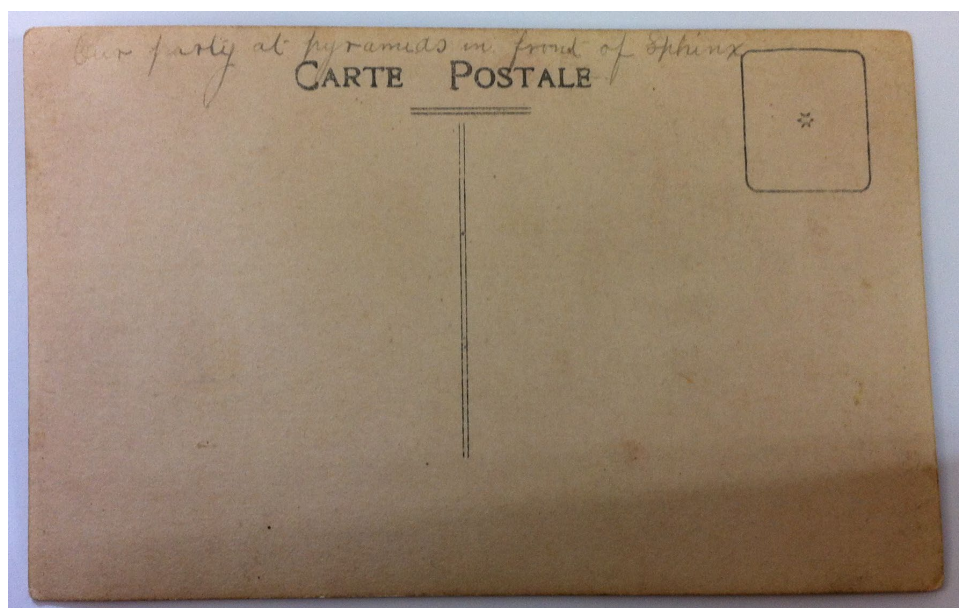
<http://1914-1918.invisionzone.com/forums/index.php?showtopic=64219>

The 6th reinforcements consisted of two (this is the Tofua and the Willochra) ships leaving New Zealand on the 14th of August 1915, they totaled 2363 men. They disembarked at Suez on the 19th of September 1915. They then went on to Mudros Harbour on Lemnos Island, where from the 15th of September the NZ Infantry Brigade was resting after the months at Gallipoli. On the 8th-9th November 1915 the NZ Infantry returned back to Gallipoli from Mudros. This consisted of 2464 men, given that only 900 men were taken off the Peninsula in mid-September, and 2464 were shipped back in early November. It is reasonable to assume that the bulk of those men landed in November were primarily made up of the 6th reinforcements. When checking individual service records it can be a little hazy if a man served at Gallipoli or not, particularly with the latter reinforcements. The 7th reinforcements most definitely did not serve at Gallipoli.

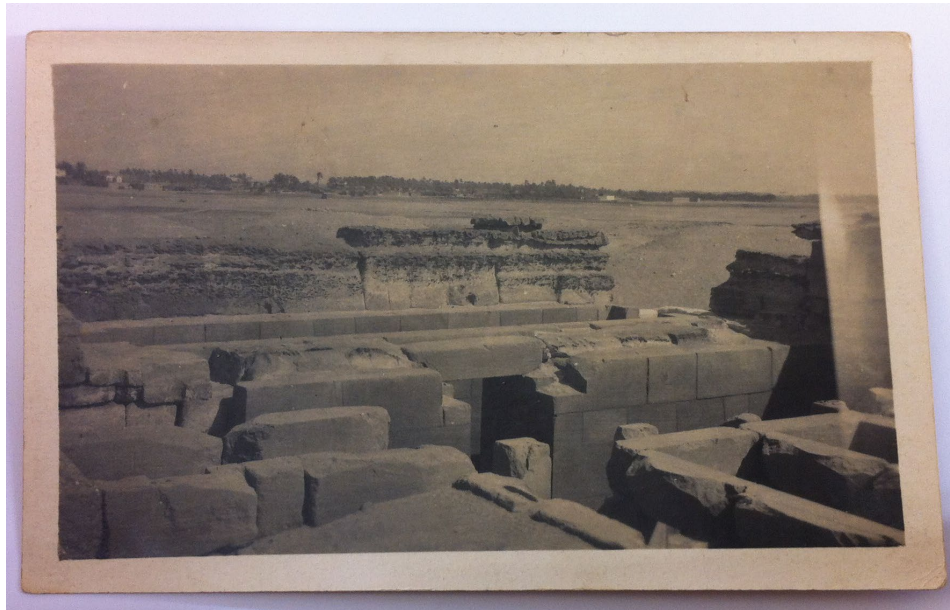
So, did Harry go to Gallipoli?

Well, I can see no reference to it in the military file, and there is an indication (see below) where Harry mentions *others* going to Lemnos in preparation for the firing line, while he is left behind working in the saddler's shop.

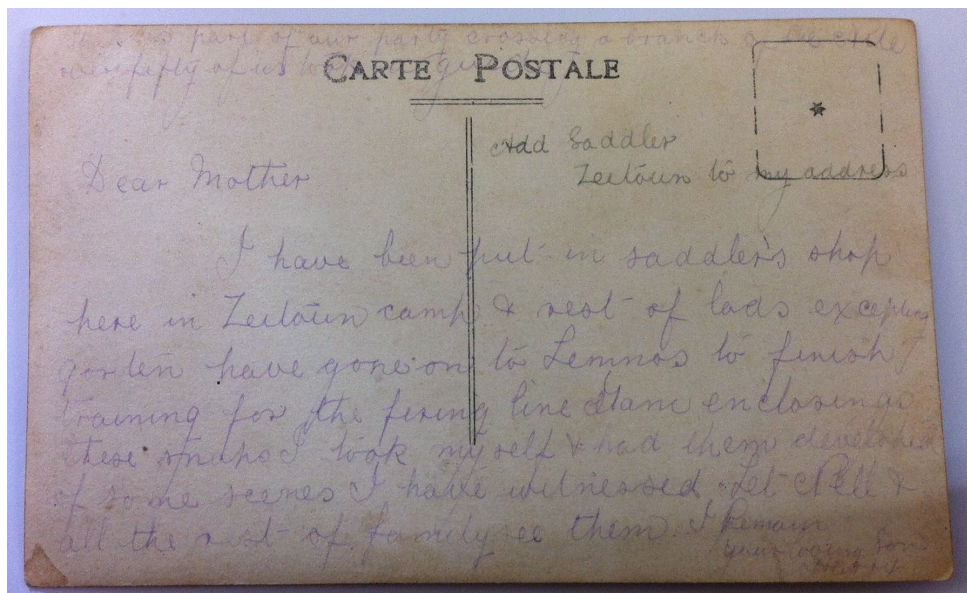
The photos Harry took with his own camera at Zeitoun Camp (Zeitoun was a small village on the outskirts of Cairo)...



Text says – “*Our party at pyramids in front of Sphinx*”



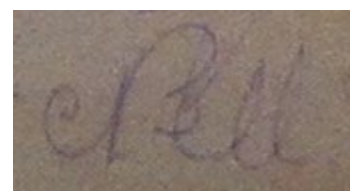
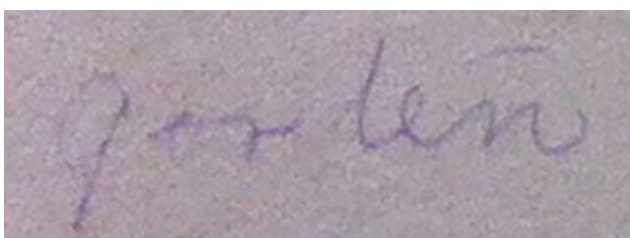
Text says – “Ruins near pyramids looking towards Cairo”



Text says – (At top) “This is part of our party crossing a branch of the Nile over??? fifty of us took guides”

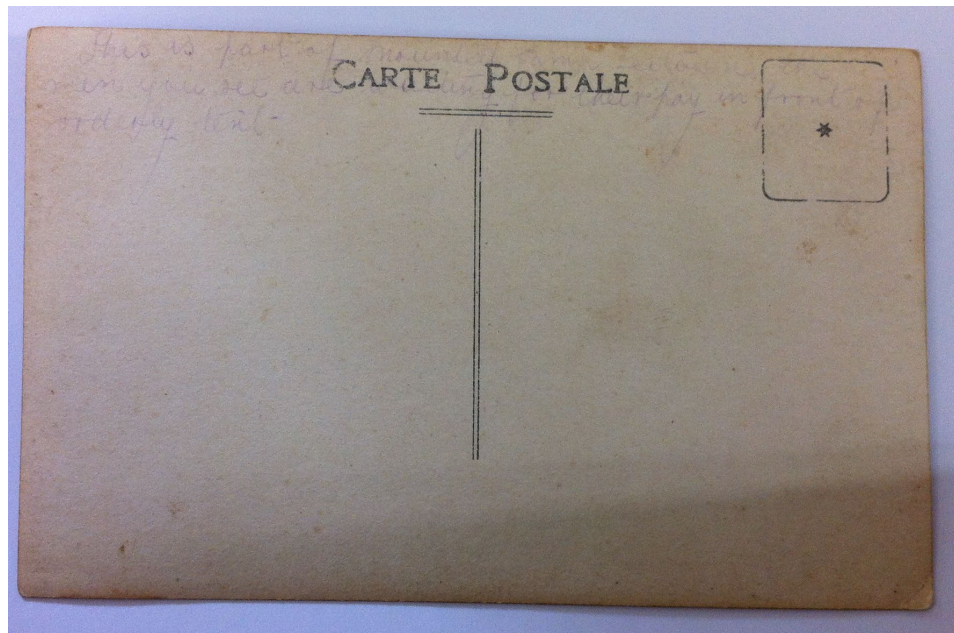
(Toward top right) “Add Saddler Zeitoun to my address”

(main body) “Dear Mother, I have been put in saddlers shop here in Zeitoun camp and rest of lads excepting gorten??? have gone on to Lemnos to finish training for the firing line. I am enclosing these snaps I took myself & had them developed of some scenes I have witnessed. Let Nell??? and all the rest of the family see them. I remain your loving son Harry”

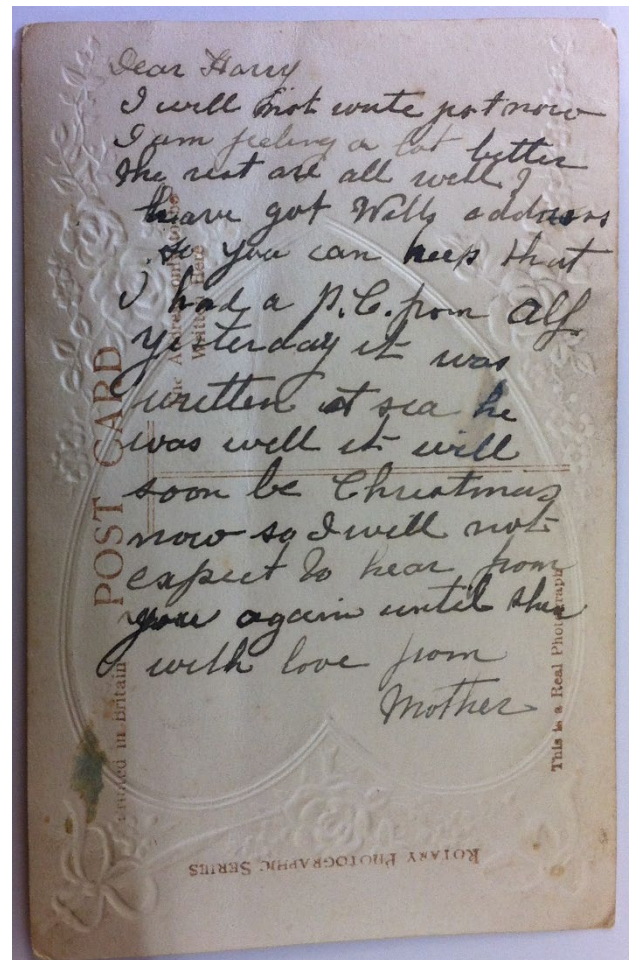
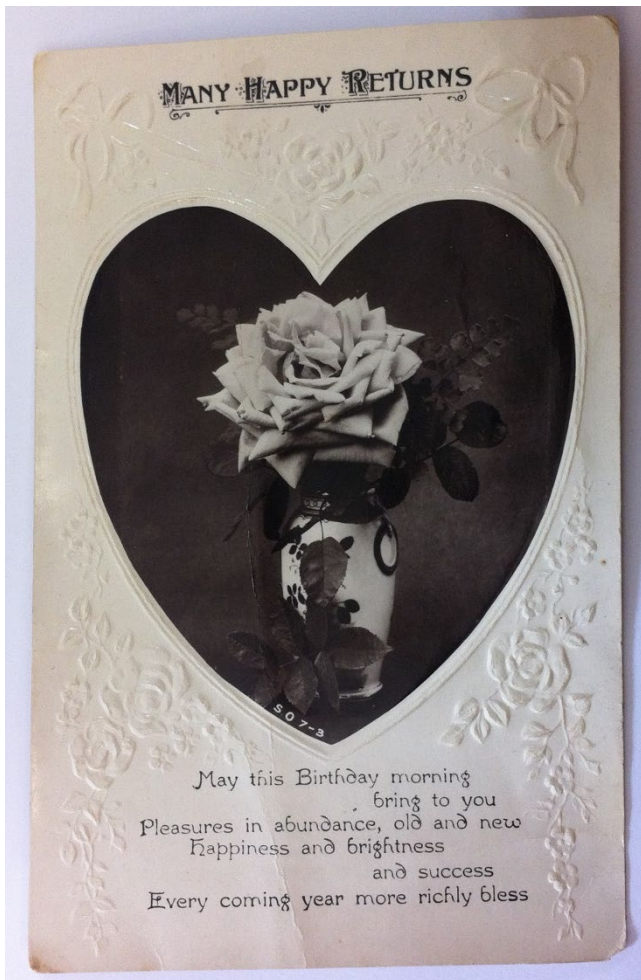




There is no text for the above photo – I believe it demonstrates Harry's enjoyment of rugby, and it highlights that the boys in the camp must have had a few games



Text says – “This is part of mounted camp Zeitoun. The men you can see are waiting for their pay in front of orderly tent”



Harry also got a birthday (1st December) card from his mother – I believe this was for his 30th birthday while on active service in Egypt. Text says – “Dear Harry I will not write just now I am feeling a bit better. The rest are all well. I have got Will’s address so you can keep that. I had a P.C. from Alf yesterday it was written at sea he was well it will soon be Christmas now so I will not expect to hear from you again until then. With love from mother”

Note - a ‘P.C.’ is a postcard. Harry’s brothers William (Will) and Alfred (Alf) were also enlisted.

So, from September 1915, Harry was at Zeitoun...

...But only for three months until on 6 November 1915, he was hospitalised with Paratyphoid. Here's a bit about it...

Symptoms

(Paratyphoid is caused by *Salmonella Paratyphi* A, B and C. Typical symptoms include fever, chills (feeling cold and shivery), stomach pain, headache, feeling unwell, loss of appetite, a dry cough early in the illness, and sometimes a rash of pink spots on the chest and abdomen. Constipation is more common in adults than diarrhoea.

Infection

You can get paratyphoid fever if you eat food and drink that have been handled by a person who is passing the bacteria. Important sources in some countries include water used for drinking and washing food (if it is contaminated with

bacteria from sewage), shellfish (particularly oysters) from sewage contaminated beds, raw fish, raw fruit and raw vegetables, contaminated milk/milk products (usually through the hands of carriers of the disease).

10/12/15 - (*from Harry's Military file*) Medical case sheet written up at NZ General Hospital Cairo. Admitted Nov 6 from 'Zeitoun' (*hard to read*) Camp. Had been ill 3 weeks with severe backache, felt feverish, had diarrhoea. On admission I think it says he had a temp of 104 degrees, no diarrhoea, had backache. Present State "Feels weak but is improving, has constipation"

Harry may well have had quite a bad case – enough to mean he was shipped back home. On Boxing Day 1915, Harry boarded the Willochra (the same ship that had been the sister ship to the Tofua on his way to Egypt), and he returned, along with 195 other wounded or sick soldiers, to Port Chalmers on the 29th January 1916.



This rather faint photo of Harry's shows a nurse with some soldiers. In the upper left, the life buoy shows "Willochra" "Adelaide"



Detail of Harry's photo on board the Willochra

Harry underwent a provisional medical board on board the troopship Willochra at Port Chalmers - where he was invalided to Waimate hospital.

He attended Drill Hall, Timaru on 24 May 1916 to undergo a Medical Board examination. It was noted that the Paratyphoid was contracted 'under circumstances over which he had no control', and that he was suited for a pension, and his general ability to earn a livelihood was lessened by a quarter over the coming three months.

Harry was discharged "Medically Unfit" on the 11 June 1916.

It is at this point that details of Harry's life become more difficult to obtain.

I know that he went to the Waigani Planation on Samarai Island in British New Guinea, in 1917. I don't know exactly why he took up the position or how it got offered to him???

By pure chance, I also have found on the internet (in a stamp dealer's auction details) a photo of Harry captioned "Harry Hawke and Staff at Waigani Plantation"



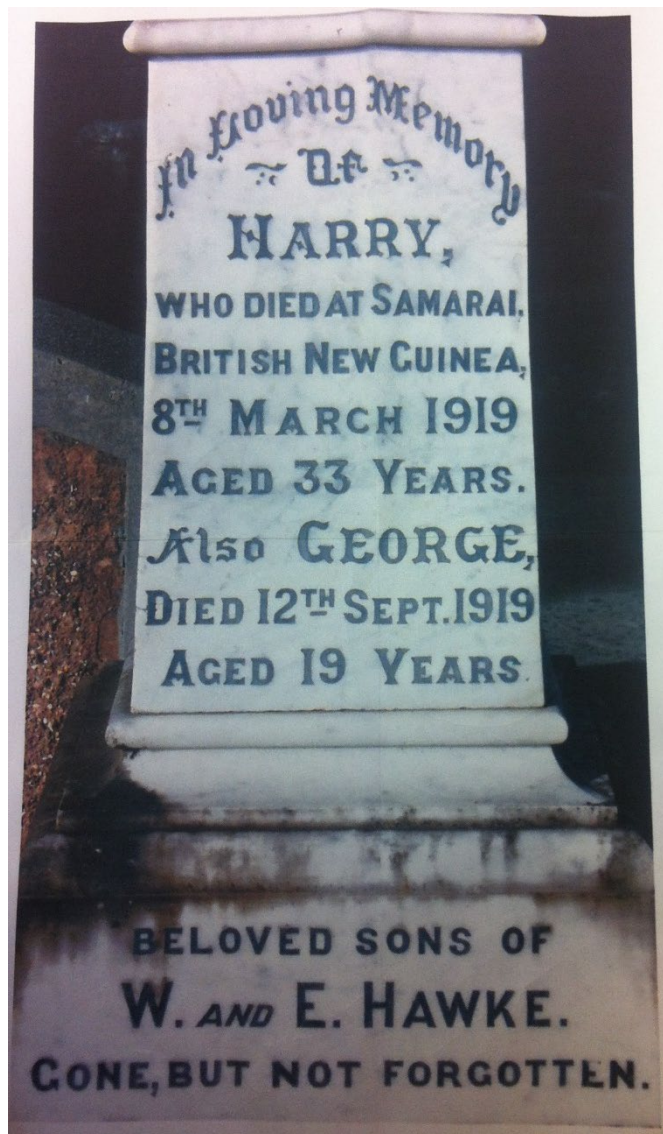
NB – this is not one of Harry's photos, but is the only photo I can find which is actually of him. I'd guess he's the person at the right?

Of course, his work there now explains why the below photo was also amongst the photos I found...



And then, tragedy....

At just 33 years of age, Harry dies at Samarai on the 8th of March 1919.
There are still two big mysteries in my research, one I will mention later.
But this one vexes me... How did Harry die???



Of course, I may never know. Was his immune system weak because of that Paratyphoid? Did he have an accident? The island of Samarai used to have a mosquito problem – did he get Malaria? Or was it something else entirely?

(I got the gravestone photo a while ago from the Waimate Cemetery site. Since then they have changed the structure of the site and I can no longer generate an electronic copy so this is a copy of a printed picture I had. One day I plan to visit the site myself, in the 'old' Waimate cemetery, towards the back, on the left if looking from the road).

News has been received of the death at Samarai Island, British New Guinea, on March 8, of Mr. Harry W. Hawke, son of Mr. and Mrs. Woodman Hawke, Waimate. Mr. Harry Hawke went to the front early in the war. He served in Egypt, and was sent back home an invalid. Two years ago, as a returned soldier, he accepted a position on a plantation in New Guinea.

Papers Past website PERSONAL ITEMS
Dominion, Volume 12, Issue 153, 24 March 1919, Page 4

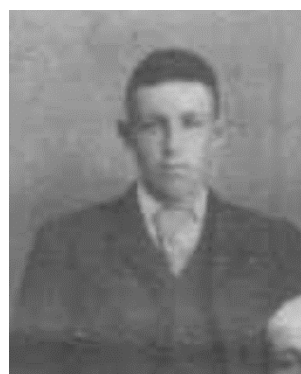
In Harry's military file there is a note saying

"File 8/5/20 Died at British New Guinea 8/3/19"

And so there ends my knowledge of Harry

Rest in Peace, Harry Hawke

Footnote – the pay-for-access website Ancestry.com appears to feature Harry's will, a photo of him (pre-war I believe) and an article about his family called "The Hawke Story". Fairly 'fuzzy' preview shots are available...



Does that end our story?

You know, I once thought that it pretty much did end our story, that the other photos were incidental. I thought I'd have little chance of identifying the people in the photos, so I never focussed on them.

Probably the big breakthrough came when I was looking into Harry's family, to see if I could learn more about Harry himself somehow.

Before I move on I'll mention someone where there is no direct photo linkage – Harry's youngest brother George.

Fifteen minutes into a game of rugby between Waimate and North Otago, on Thursday the 11th of September 1919, George Hawke was terribly injured and paralysed in a tragic rugby accident....

FOOTBALL ACCIDENT TERMIN- ATES FATALLY.

INQUEST HELD YESTERDAY.

John George Charles Hawke, the Waimate player who was injured in the match between Waimate and North Otago at King George's Park on September 4, died in the hospital on Friday night. An inquest was held yesterday in the Courthouse by Mr J. M. Forrester, J.P. (acting Coroner), and a jury of six, consisting of Messrs N. M. Hood (foreman), A. J. McKenzie, R. L. Scott, J. Gibson, N. B. Douglas, and S. Lee.

The referee at the match, Vivian Everett Doran, stated that he had had experience as a referee for eight years. The accident took place from a throw in. The deceased, who was five yards out, caught the ball, and putting his head down, made for the North Otago goal line. He appeared to fall on his knees, being held by an opponent from behind. His own team packing behind him to help form a scrum, pushed him forward on to his knees and his face fell forward on to his chest, his head under him. Witness immediately stopped the game. There was no infringement of the rules. Witness asked deceased if he was hurt and he said that his neck was broken. To witness' mind the match was carried on in the most friendly spirit. What occurred appeared to be an accident. The only fault witness had to find was that the game was too friendly.

Dr. Hargreaves who attended the deceased in the hospital, said that he was paralysed in the lower three-quarters of the body, evidently due to an injury to the upper part of the spine. There was no improvement and the deceased died on Friday night. A fall such as that described by the previous witness would result in such injuries. The case was hopeless from the beginning.

John James Heily, of Waimate, a line umpire at the match, stated he was standing close by at the time of the accident. The position of the play at the time was a line out. Deceased standing on the five yards limit, received the ball and in doing so he moved towards the opponents' goal line. Deceased was tackled by an opposing player. He then dropped the ball to play it with his foot and in doing so he stumbled forward. The next witness saw, deceased tumbled forward, with his head doubled under his chest. The player who had held deceased from behind fell with him and on top of deceased. The referee stopped the game. Deceased did not move and when assisted by others he said his neck was broken. Play was not rough and in fact it was too friendly. The player who tackled deceased did not tackle him roughly. It was purely and simply an accident.

Constable Sampson, who was a spectator at the match, said that he saw the accident from the opposite side of the field from where it happened and he could corroborate the evidence of the line-umpire and referee. Witness was an ambulance worker and he went across to give assistance. Deceased complained that he had broken his collar-bone. When witness tried to get deceased upon his feet it was found that he had lost the use of his legs, being paralysed. Deceased was taken to the hospital. Witness added that he had had considerable experience of football and he had never seen a game played in a more friendly spirit. It opened up very quietly and seemed more of a pleasure match.

Woodman Hawke, farmer at Waimate said that the deceased was his son. He was 19 years of age and a farmer by occupation. Deceased was in good health when he left home.

A verdict was returned that deceased met with an accident while playing football at Oamaru on September 4, resulting in his death, no blame being attachable to anyone.

... and so for the second time in just a few months, the Hawke's had to cope with a death in the family.

In fact, by the time Woodman Hawke died, he had witnessed the death of his wife, and four of his six children.

Ellen and Christina Hawke both died relatively young, Ellen at 52, and Christina at 45.

Only Alfred and William were left by 1944.

William Strudwick Hawke (listed erroneously as 'Sturdwick' in some parts of the births, deaths and marriages website, served his country in both World wars, with his service in WWII being limited to home service.

In WWI he served as a Specialist Machine Gunner – he left NZ on HMNZT 66. In 1917 he got trench foot, and in 1918 he had a gun shot wound to his hip (4/10/18, A month before hostilities ended!). William also served in WWII - at 45 years old, he was in the home services. Onegreatfamily website shows three children - Doris, Bernice, Raymond Henry George.

You'll notice I haven't spent much time looking into the lives of Ellen, Christina or William, or even Harry's parents. Part of the reason is related to my efforts to *primarily* stick with writing what I know about the photos. Another reason is that it seems that it will be very much more difficult to obtain information – particularly about Harry's sisters. The *main* reason is simply time though – perhaps sometime I'll look more into the others... tracing family history leads down all kinds of paths!

So what about Alfred (Alf), and why is he different?

Well, the photos that I found appear to be in three broad categories –

- 1) Harry's wartime and subsequent photos
- 2) Photos which have text on the back of them linking them to someone
- 3) Photos which have either got no information, or very little information in order to identify people.

You'll recall that I found these photos at the North Taieri tip – I had always wondered how they got there – especially given that my knowledge of Harry's family centred around mid-Canterbury.

So I started on a path to find if any of Harry's family had been in or around Dunedin...

Alfred James Hawke was the 4th child of Woodman and Elizabeth. He was born on 7th August 1892.

There seems to be less information about him on the internet – His World War I record is about all I can find other than some Births, Deaths and Marriages info.

The war record shows his civilian occupation to be a 'Teamster' – in that context I believe the word relates to him leading a team of horses.

He left as a rifleman aboard HMNZT 62 aboard the 'Mokoia' on the 21 October 1916, at 24 years of age. Service number 21831. Was placed in the NZ Cycle Corps.

(There was a troopship magazine called the "Koaukoau" which I may look into one day).

His ship arrived at Plymouth, Devon, via a stop in South Africa.

He was posted to Etaples in the Pas De Calais, France, Then Abeele in West Flanders, Belgium. He also spent time back toward the coast late in the war at Boulogne. There seem to have been no injuries, but some illness (scabies, late 1917).

There is a photo, which I had always thought might have been of Harry. However, I had later found out that the (fortunately dated) photo was taken after Harry's death. It has inscribed on the front 'Bodmin – June 16th 1919'.



I now believe this is a photo of either Alf taken by William, or perhaps the other way around.

I do not know who the female companions are, but they may be companions for the day, or more likely to my mind ... they are perhaps relatives.

When I was explaining details of Harry's father, I mentioned he was christened in the Bodmin circuit.

Of course, we have no way of telling, but it seems extraordinarily coincidental that this photo and Harry's ancestors centre on Bodmin, Cornwall.

One final note about this photo – if it is of Alf or William, they were AWOL at the time. The military records of both men show that 4 days' pay was docked for being Absent Without Leave from 23:30 on the night of 13th June 1919, through to 21:00 on the 17th June 1919. This was shortly after a period granted for leave without pay.

Did the boys go off to see relatives (who perhaps may have been nearby their posting, well after the war was over) without permission? I guess we'll never know.

Alf embarked for New Zealand aboard the 'Hororata' on the 28th of July 1919. I guess he may have known about the loss of Harry, and sadly it was only a short time before he was to face the loss of the youngest brother George as described above.

In what must have been an extraordinarily sad year for the family brighter times came. On the 10th of December that year, he married Alice Maud Gray. This is recorded in the Lower Waitaki Parish Marriages (archives, Presbyterian.org.nz)

So what of these other photographs? And do any of them link in?

Well, the first thing I should say is that much of my research is based on 'high likelihood' rather than 'pure fact'.

But I was looking for some names that are listed on the back of some of the photographs, and I found a strong match in Alice Maud (nee Gray) Hawke's family.

Alice was the 13th out of 16 children born to Frances and David Gray. (yes, between 19 and 45, Frances had 16 children, she died in 1944 aged 87)

The table below shows the family...

Children of Frances Elizabeth and David GRAY					
Birth Order	Birth Year	First name	Middle Name	Waitaki Parish Marriage?	Mentioned in Photos?
1	1876	John	Lindsay	Y	N
2	1878	William	Lockhart	Y	N
3	1879	Margaret	Brownlie	N	N
4	1882	Robert	Robertson	Y	N
5	1884	Elizabeth	Cossar	Y	N
6	1886	Mary	Kedzlie	N	N
7	1887	Fanny	Colquhoun	Y	N
8	1888	Gertrude	Ellen	Y	Y
9	1889	George	Cowie	N	N
10	1891	Mabel	Louisa	Y	Y
11	1892	Jessie	Palmer	Y	Y
12	1893	Alexander	James	N	N
13	1895	Alice	Maud	Y	Y
14	1896	Isabella	Pringle	Y	Y
15	1897	Archibald	-	N	N
16	1902	Douglas	Percival	N	N

Obviously I won't go into detail about each member of the family, but I will mention one of Alice's brothers...

If you are interested, you should look at the liberation of the French town called Le Quesnoy by New Zealand soldiers in the final weeks of World War One. It is a famous victory for our military, and one appreciated to this day by the residents of Le Quesnoy.

But the liberation came at a price – George Cowie Gray was killed in action during the battle, aged 29.

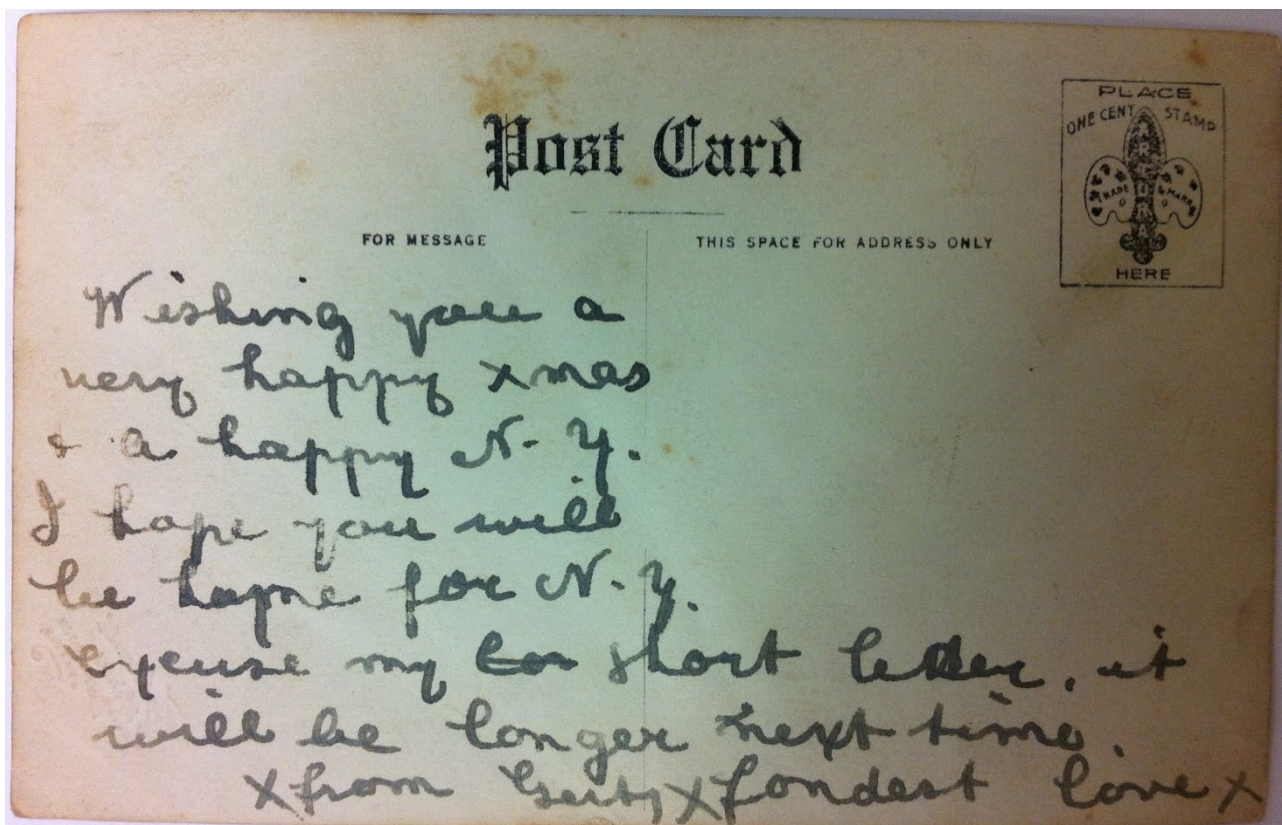
In the above table, you can see that many members of the family were married in the Waitaki district (By the way, Margaret died a spinster and George perished fairly young as mentioned)

If my reckoning is right, the younger girls in the family are the ones who communicated via the photo/postcards that I have.

I believe the whole lot were held by Alf and Alice Hawke for some time.

Let's look at the photos...

First, the photos with (hopefully) clear linkage to Alice...



Text says – “Wishing you a very happy xmas & a happy N.Y. I hope you will be home for N.Y. Excuse my short letter, it will be longer next time. X from Gerty X fondest love X”

(I am not sure which one is Gertrude (Alice’s sister), perhaps the photo also shows another sister?)



POST CARD

CARTE POSTALE

Communication—Correspondance

Address—Adresse



To Alice
From Izzy & Vera
Wishing you a very
Happy
New Year

The Dainty Studio, Oamaru, N.Z.

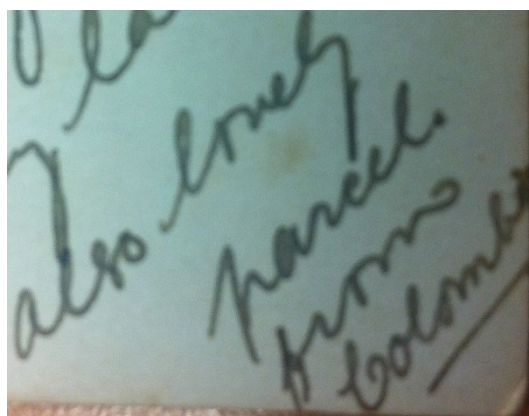
Dec. 1916.
Maudie Lader

Had big mail from
Sandy last night
also love
from
Colman

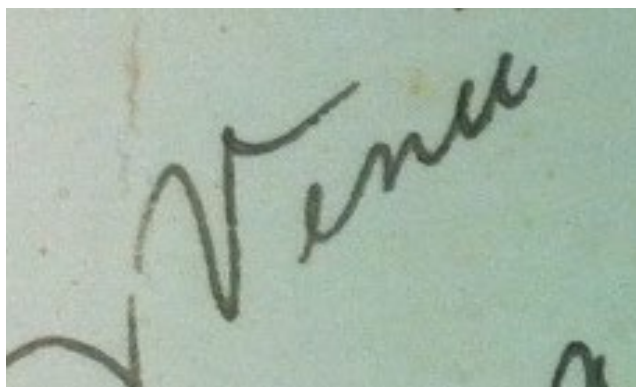
Text says – “To Alice from Isa & ???? Wishing you a Merry Xmas & Happy New Year Dec 1916 Writing later Had a big mail from Sandy last night also lovely parcel from Colombo???”

This photo is intriguing.

I have not found any reference anywhere to Colombo (i.e. I thought Sri Lanka) – that’s if it says Colombo! It could say ‘Colombs’ (Colomb is a surname)



Then there is the name beside Isa...



Does it say ‘Venie’? This has been a mystery for a long time. Some say it is not a ‘V’ but an ‘N’. I believe the text before it is Isa’s ampersand though – it can also be seen between ‘Xmas’ and ‘Happy’.

So what do we know? Well 'Isa' I believe is Isabel(la) Gray, Alice's sister.

If it is, it was taken when she was 20 years old. She knew Alexander Monteith at the time (Alexander's war record shows his next of kin in Scotland, but a local contact as his 'friend' – Miss Gray).

I believe the 'Sandy' she refers to is her boyfriend, but I am also aware she had a brother called Alexander, and it could even be someone else entirely.

Isa married Sandy on the 16th of December 1919, shortly after his discharge from the military (9/9/19).

So I got to thinking... who is the little girl with her? Well, it's a bit of a stretch, but there is a slim chance I might have found out.

Who would Isa take with her to town, all dressed up, to get a photo taken?

If it was a friend's child, I guess we'll never have any chance of knowing.

What if it was a niece?

But to find that, I'd have to look through the marriage, and subsequent birth records of almost all 16 children in the Gray family.

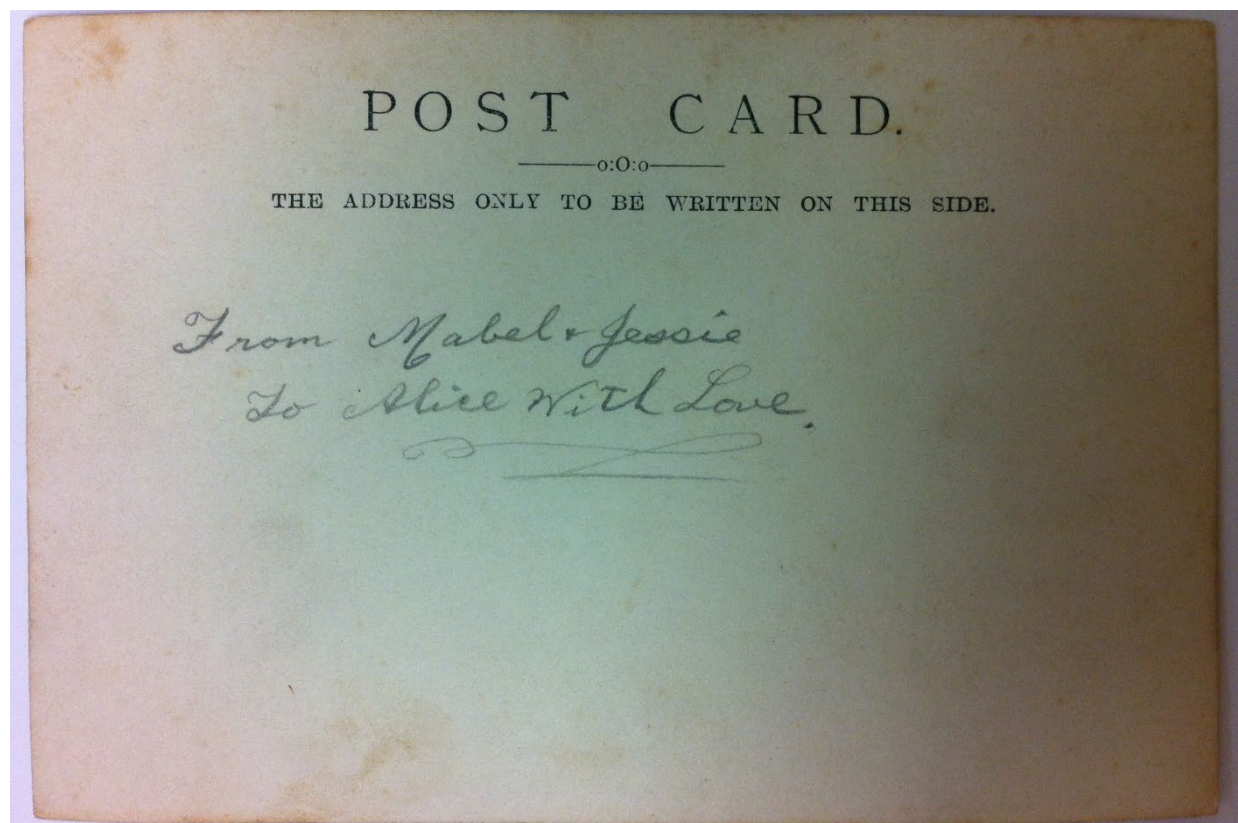
So I did.

The only one where I could see any chance of a match was the child of Isa's eldest brother John. She was called Catherine Frances Davina Gray.

Did they call her Venie or similar?

I know, I've been doing this too long. It is a rather large stretch. But she would have been 9 year old in 1916 when the photo was taken – in my view, there is a chance that it is her.

She died in 1982, aged 74, having married Frank Gregory Elliot in 1928.



Text says – “*From Mabel and Jessie To Alice With Love*”

Mabel and Jessie were two of Alice’s sisters born just a year apart. Identifying which one is which in this photo is probably impossible!

I’m a bit confused by it – is it actually a wedding photo?

So ultimately I can’t tell much.

I believe it's possible (yes, another slim possibility) that this shows the wedding? of Mabel Louisa Gray (leftmost) to John Alexander Johnston (next to her) on the 27th of November, 1912.

That could mean that Jessie is next from left, with *possibly* David (in Births deaths marriages sometimes erroneously referred to as Daniel) Harold Bird being the other person (Jessie married David on 25 June 1913).

Alice, the recipient, would have been 17 at the time.

As we can't see wedding rings (most left hands obscured) it could also be the other way around. Of course, while the photo does show Mabel and Jessie (whichever way around they are), it may not show John and David at all.

Sometimes research can take you down the wrong path and this happened with me – 'Online Cenotaph records the sad tale of one 'John Alexander Johnston' who was severely wounded at Messines. I only realised after a while that this was not the same person as Mabel's husband. In fact there have been many with his exact name born in the latter part of the 19th century.

I believe Mabel's husband was probably the one born in 1886, and possibly died in 1949 aged 63. Hard to tell. I can see no military history.

As for David (Daniel), it is possible he was called up for reserve in 1918 ('Papers Past' item) but again, I am not sure if it's the same chap.

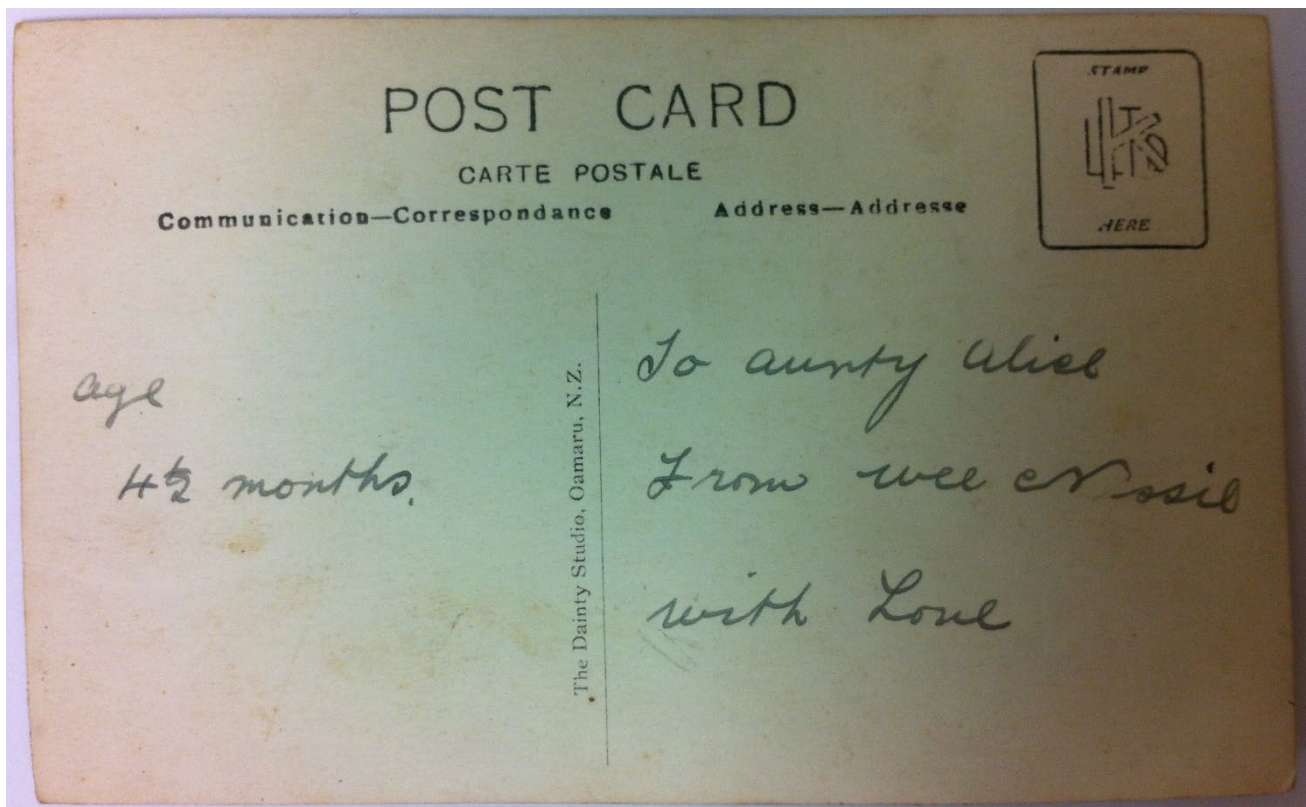
From this point on, the trail gets a lot colder.

This is partly due to the fact I can only search Births Deaths and Marriages for...

- Births at least 100 years ago (i.e. 1915 or earlier)
- Marriages at least 80 years ago (i.e. 1935 or earlier)
- Deaths that occurred at least 50 years ago (1965) or the deceased's date of birth was more than 80 years ago (1935)

... so there may be some photos, particularly of children, where they will not appear on the BDM website.

Perhaps these are two examples...

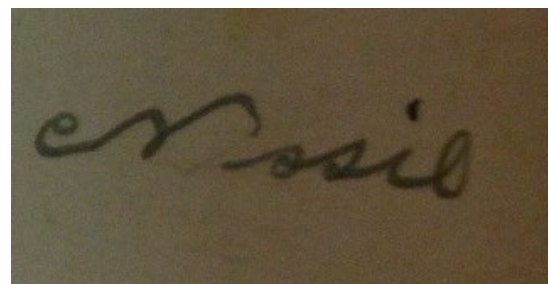


Text says – “Age 4 ½ Months To Aunty Alice from wee Nosie??? with Love ”

Well, does it say ‘Nosie’ or something else?

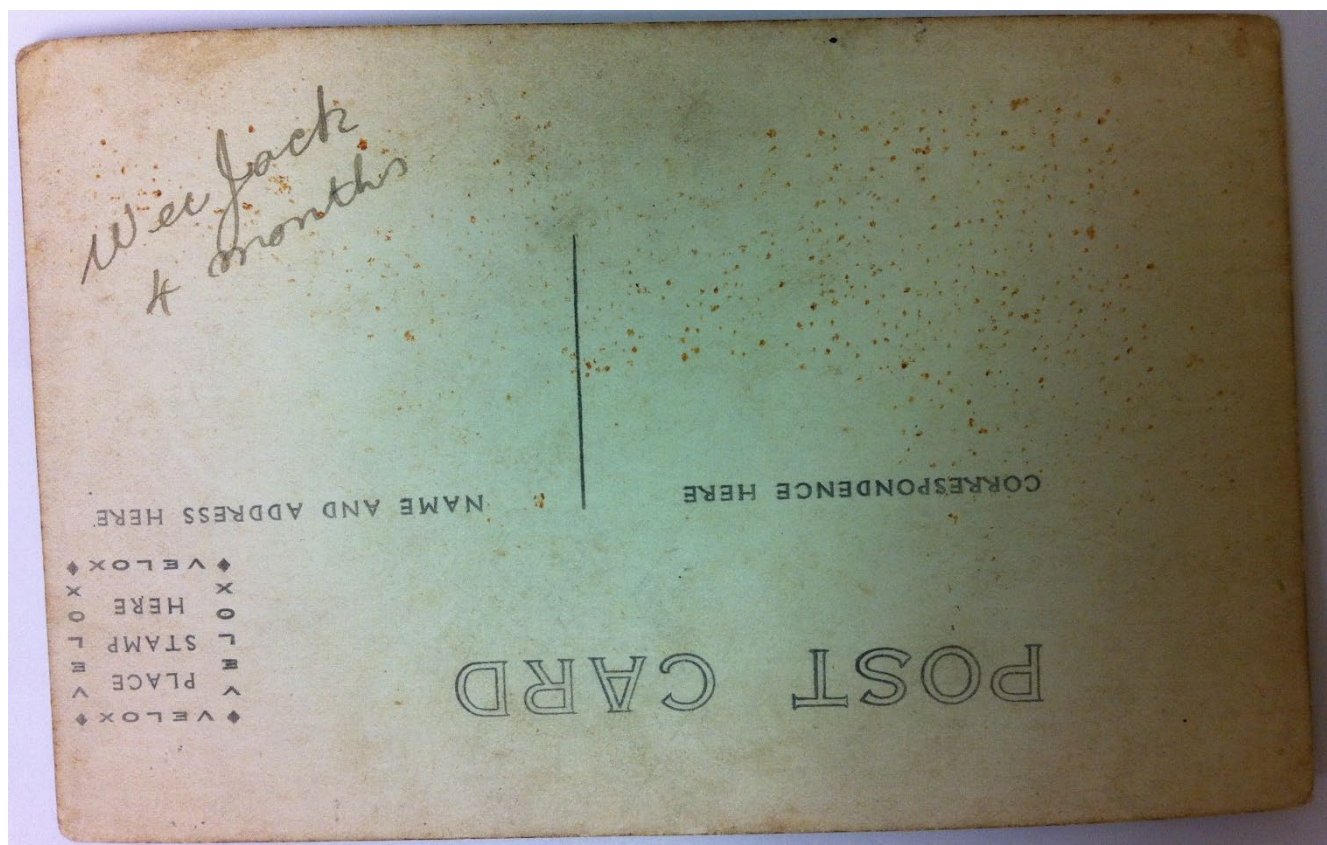
Hard to tell. Of course Alice is mentioned

Again, but this could be the child of anyone



In her extended family, including on the Hawke side I guess. Personally I think it is more likely to be one of her sisters but we will probably never know.

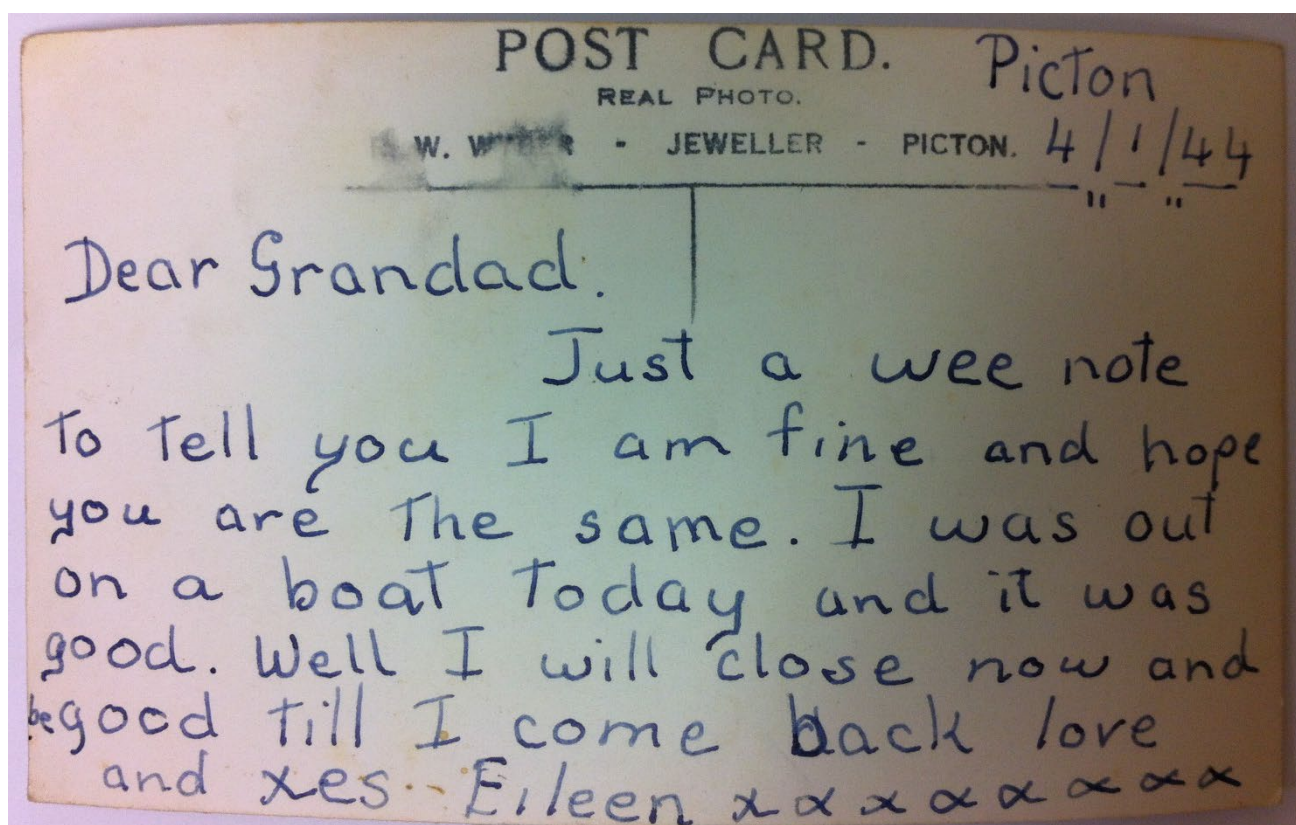
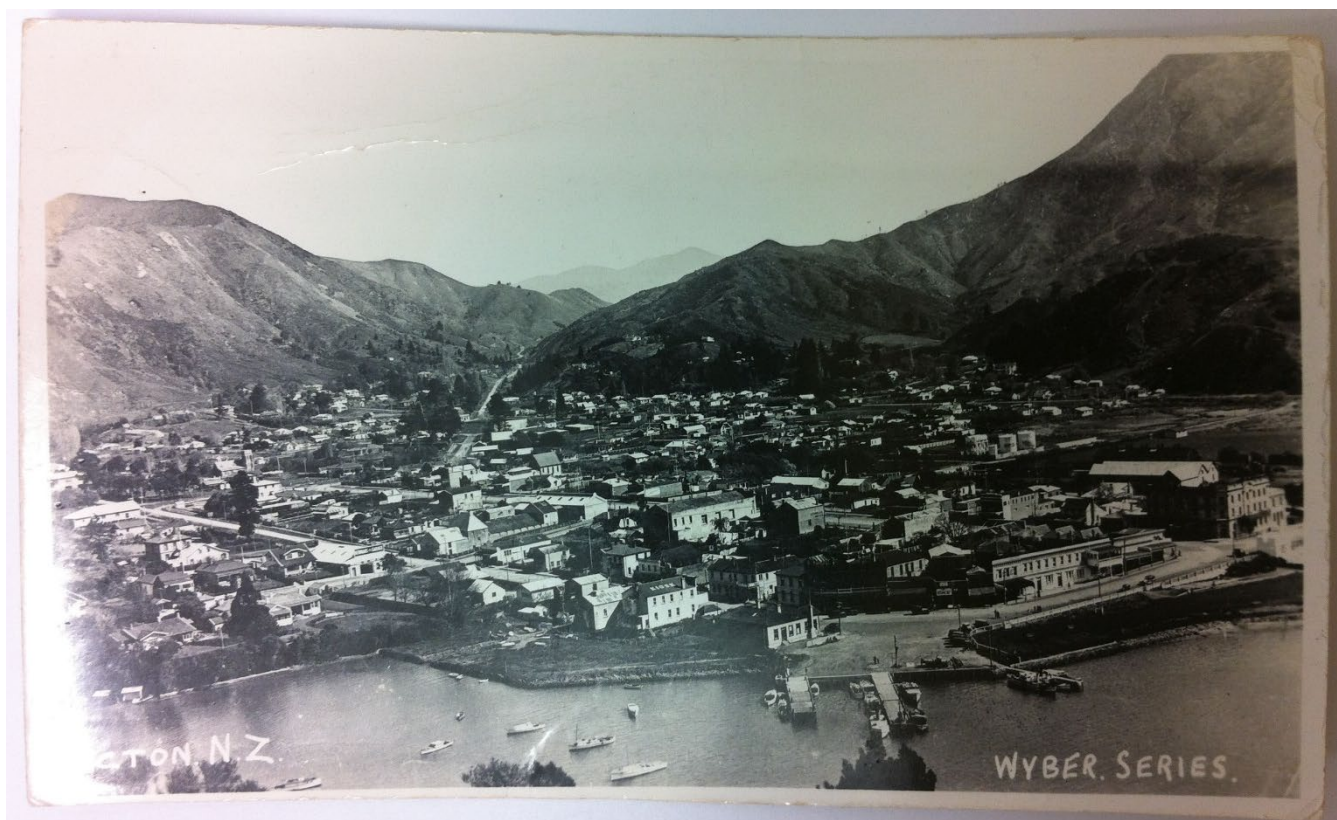
Then there's this one...



Text says – "Wee Jack 4 months"

I have not found a 'Jack' in all records I have searched, so I'm not sure who this wee chap is.

Then there is one photo which is unique – it's the only one that is an actual commercial postcard rather than a family photo...



I won't re-write the text – it's pretty legible...

... so who is Grandad?

Well, I'm thinking it's Alf. He must have been a pretty good Grandad worthy of eight kisses at the end.

If it is Alf, he would have been 52 at the time. Of course, I would really like to see who the children of Alf and Alice were, and whether they had a granddaughter called Eileen. Sadly, but understandably, the privacy rule on Births, Deaths and Marriages does not allow me to know.

There is an exception to their rules for some births - and sadly for Alf and Alice it occurred with them – they had a stillborn child in 1922.

Still, it is possible the 'grandad' might not be Alf –

We know he got married in 1919. If he had a child in 1920, and that child had a child at age 18, the Eileen writing here would have been barely six. Basically, it seems the timeframes may be too tight?

So a little postcard during World War Two ends our story of the photographs... almost.

There are seven other photographs (one is particularly over exposed or something) which I will show in an appendix at the end of this document for which I have no information at all, and there is not text on the reverse side.

Who are the people, the dogs, and the teddy bear? We will probably never know.

Overall, it is my belief that these photos were in the possession of Alice and Alf Hawke. There are many links to them through clues to family connections within the photos/text, and it helps to explain to some degree why I found them where I did so many years ago.

Alf and Alice are buried at East Taieri cemetery, near Mosgiel.



This year, 2015, marks the 100th anniversary of the Gallipoli landings that were supported by saddlers like Harry Hawke in Cairo.

So on April 25th, I went to Alf and Alice's grave, and placed a poppy there to remember all of those in the Hawke family who served our country. My own grandfather was called up for service late in the war, and served at home.

I placed a poppy on his grave too, you see, he is buried just a few metres away from Alf and Alice.

So, there is one more mystery, in closing...

If Alice was the latter of the two to pass away in 1971, where have the photos been between 1971 and approx. 1984 when I found them?

Why were they discarded?

I guess I can't know... for now.

Appendix – other photos with no text attached...





Deep Creek (No. 3)



The Allan Studios,
Waimate & Timaru

Season's Greetings
1916-17





