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CHAPTER 5.

NEW SETTLERS AND LANDOWNERS (1858 - 1914)

The Cutler Family

The farm to the south of the Atkin property which Thomas Kemp had sold in 1851 to Bishop Selwyn was leased in 1858 to John Cutler. Mr. Cutler who had been born and brought up in Five Ways, Birmingham, had lost his mother when he was a youth of 18. Very soon after her death, his father announced that he was about to re-marry and John, who was both annoyed and distressed, packed a bag and left the family home never to return. He had no idea what to do or where to go until he met a friend who was on his way to enlist in the Army and decided to follow his example. Very soon after his enlistment, he was sent as a convict guard to Australia.

After 18 months in that country and a further 18 months at the penal settlement in Norfolk Island, he came to New Zealand, arriving at Auckland in the British Sovereign in October 1845. Almost immediately after his arrival in the colony, he left Auckland for Kororareka where the first Maori War known as "Heke's War" or the "War of the North" was in progress. After several months' fighting there, his regiment - the 58th - was posted to garrison duty in and around Auckland. It was while he was stationed at Howick that John met his future wife, Marianne Kelly, the daughter of an Irish Fencible. The couple were married at All Saints', Howick, in 1854 and John, having obtained his discharge from the Army, worked at Howick as a labourer until 1858, when he took a lease of the Mission Bay property.

At that time, John and Marianne had two children, a son John who was two years old and an infant daughter, Emily, who was destined to marry James Pilkington, the son of another Tamaki pioneer. The Cutlers' first Mission Bay home was a very crude one, probably the Kemp's old house, but before long was destroyed by fire and the family had to take temporary refuge in a tent until a new cottage was built. Besides cultivating his 37 acre farm, Mr. Cutler, for Bone years, ran an express cart which carried goods and some times passengers to and from Auckland. One of his "special jobs" was to deliver to various Auckland clients contraband Spirits which had been hidden on the beach by smugglers. These goods were dumped in the sand and the incoming tide completed the task of hiding them. Only those in the know knew where to look for them. On one occasion, young John caught his father carrying some sample rum in a bucket and, on asking what it was, was told that it was "black cow's milk."

Though the settlers of Mission Bay were seldom threatened by natives, Mrs. Cutler on one occasion had a very unpleasant

experience. While working in her kitchen, she turned round to find a "friendly" Maori standing behind her in a threatening attitude, with a tomahawk in his hand. He demanded tobacco which she consented to give him, but when she put on a brave "face" and said she would ask her husband for some, who, she said, was talking to some other men behind a shed nearby, the native fled without more ado. Actually Mr. Cutler was away from home!

The Cutlers remained at Mission Bay for 14 years during which time their family increased to eight. Their six Tamaki born children were all baptised in the St. John's College Chapel. (The family ultimately numbered 11.)

Their next and final home was on the shores of the Orakei Basin. Upland Road, which was originally called "Cutler's Road", was later constructed through their property. From there Mr. Cutler ran a pony express which in 1874 developed into a line of horse buses from Remuera to Auckland. While at Remuera, the family still retained their interest in Mission Bay and visited it frequently, generally on their horses*.

Mr. Cutler died in 1908 at the age of 85 and his wife, who was 14 years his junior, in 1924.

Mr. Charles Cutler, the ninth child of John and Marianne, has an excellent memory and can tell many incidents of both Mission Bay and of the Orakei natives, with whom his family were on friendly terms. Even to this day the Cutlers choose Mission Bay as the site of their family reunions, the last of which was the Golden Wedding of Mr. H.J. Cutler, the nurseryman of New Lynn, who is a grandson of the Mission Bay pioneer.**

The Palmers.

When the Cutlers left Mission Bay their former home and property were leased by another Irish ex-soldier, James Palmer. He and his wife Christina had farmed at Howick for many years but immediately prior to their coming to Mission Bay had lived at the Whau, now known as Avondale, In 1872 when they took over the lease from the Cutlers, they were a middle-aged couple of 66 and 48 respectively and were the parents of 13 children, 6 sons and 7 daughters, whose ages ranged from 19 down to one year. Mrs. Palmer was a great asset to the whole of Tamaki West where she seems to have been the one and only trained midwife. The family attended St. John's College Chapel where, during the next nine years, several of the daughters were married. Mr. Palmer died in 1880 at the age of 75 but just how long his wife and family remained at Mission Bay is uncertain as the records of these early leases are not available for perusal. Mrs. Palmer

*As mentioned in Section 2 on "Orakei" it was the Cutler boys who began the hack races at Okahu Bay on Christmas Day.

** This chapter was written during the 1950s. Mr. Charles Cutler who gave information to the author died some time ago and Mr. H.J. Cutler no longer runs a nursery.

died in 1901 at the home of a married daughter in Ponsonby and was buried beside her husband in the St. John's College Cemetery.

The Lankhams

The first lessee of the main Mission block, allotments 32 and 40A, was William Atkin who appears to have sub-leased part of it to George Lankham, a native of Belfast, who had come to the colony in 1860. The exact dates of the tenure are not known but baptismal records of the St. John's College Chapel indicate that he was a farmer of Mission Bay in 1867 and 1870 in which years his fourth daughter and a son were born and baptised. It is probable that they lived in the two storied cottage beside the Mission school. In about 1871 the family settled in Devonport where Mr. Lankham died in 1908.

The Newcombs

In 1872 a newly married couple settled in Mission Bay Richard Blatchford Newcomb and his bride Annie - a couple whose family were to become some of the best known settlers of the district, They took a lease of the greater part of allotments 32 and 40A, all except the flat land in the vicinity of the lagoon.

They built their home half way up the winding lane which led from the beach to the Orakei Road (now called Kepa Road). This was the lane along which grew the hawthorn and sweet briar described by Lady Martin. To the east of their house which stood just above the present Codrington Crescent, the Newcombs planted a large orchard which extended into a gully through which a stream flowed down to the lagoon. (The allotment now numbered 52 Patteson Avenue is part of the old orchard.)

By 1882 the couple had three sons and two daughters, all of whom became well known residents of the district. Albert, the eldest, was for many years employed as ranger by the Tamaki West Road Board. Willie worked for Captain James Biddick whose daughter Bertha he married. Annie married a hale and hearty man named Johnson who worked on the Biddick scows; this couple during the 1950s were living in Holgate Road, Kohimarama and volunteered a great deal of information about early settlers and events in the Mission Bay region. Jim, a stock drover, worked mostly for the Biddicks but was at one time caretaker for Thomas Coates of Orakei. And Lizzie, the youngest, married the son of an early Point England settler named Willian Ireland.

Richard Newcomb died in 1906 and his wife in 1913 but the old house remained in use by some members of the family until it had to be demolished in 1925 when the Mission estate was subdivided. (As stated elsewhere it was bought by Captain Jim Biddick who used the wood in the construction of three new houses he was building in Hapimana Street, Bastion Bay. See photo on page 74.)

The Biddick Family

While the Newcomb family leased the upper part of Mission Bay the Biddicks leased sometimes all and sometimes part of the flat land near the sea and, whenever possible, rented either the house of the "Southern Cross" captains or the two storied cottage which had been built for the Rev. Dudley in 1863 near the stone Mission buildings. As the activities of this family were associated more with Orakei than with Mission Bay, their family history and detailed accounts of their scows and their cattle and sheep carrying business have been given in Section 2 ("Orakei"). Therefore no further mention will be made of them here.

The Eaddy Family

Mr. P.A. Eaddy, the author of "Neath Swaying Spars", an account of the trading scows of New Zealand, spent part of his childhood at Mission Bay where his family, from 1890 to 1893, rented the former home of the "Southern Cross" captains. After vacating this house the family took up their residence at St. Heliers Bay in the former home of Major Walmsley, the man who suggested the name "St. Helier's Bay" to the subdividers of that district in about 1881. His home which the Eaddys now occupied was just below the high drop from Polygon Road East. Mr. Eaddy senior, like the Biddicks, owned scows, the "Dominion" at one time being his. Both P.A. Eaddy and his brother made many voyages in scows - both in Biddicks' and their father's and in schooners trading with the Islands. They also took part in the annual regattas. P.A. Eaddy died at Birkenhead in 1956.

John Abbott

It has already been mentioned in the story of the Atkin family that in 1882 William Atkin sold most of his land to a syndicate of two. These buyers were Donald Hugh McKenzie, a ship chandler of Auckland, and John Abbott, a business, mining and financial agent who became well known in later years as the founder and promoter of the Jubilee Institute for the Blind for which he, personally, collected funds. It is said that he used to drive about in one of the smartest turn-outs imaginable, behind a beautiful little chestnut pony with a lovely flowing mane. In 1883 Abbott acquired McKenzie's interest in the syndicate and leased the land to graziers - Oswald White, J.J. Craig and others - until his death in 1901. In 1906 John Abbott's widow and sons sold the estate to J.J. Craig.

J.J. Craig

J.J. Craig was an Auckland merchant and contractor who, apart from owning a huge carrying business with some hundreds of horses and carts, had interests in coal mining, bricks, seed growing, timber and other building materials and shipping. His own ships, the "Jessie Craig", the "Ailsa Craig", the "Joseph Craig", the "James Craig" and the "Royal Tar" which

was wrecked off Tiri Island, carried coal and timber between Auckland and Australia. He was a hard working man who paid meticulous care to detail but one who, no matter how busy he was, could always find time to discuss topics of the day. said to have been the first man at his city stables in Beach Road each morning - his hours 6 am until midnight! He is described as a big man with a long black beard. From 1883 until 1906 he used his leased Mission Bay land as a seed farm and for grazing purposes only but after his purchase of it in 1906 built himself a large house in a commanding position. Mr. Craig sold this property in 1909.

Edward Dudley Murray was the buyer. He was a prominent Waikato farmer who owned a large estate near Matamata. Incidentally Mr. Murray's wife was a daughter of one of Tamaki's earliest settlers, Thomas Cawkwell, and had been born and brought up on her father's farm near the Tamaki River. Murray lived on the estate for two years during which time he had it surveyed for subdivision and let a contract for the construction of the first Mission Bay road; Selwyn Road it was called was dedicated on the 27th of July 1911. The 58 acre estate was cut into 30 allotments which varied in area from $\frac{3}{4}$ to 6 acres.

The first buyer was a surgeon, Dr. A.H. Porter, who on July 29th 1911 acquired number 1 of the subdivision, the extreme north west corner of the estate which had frontages to sea beach and road, and contained a little over 1 acres. At the second sale on the 11th of August, Mary Atkin bought number 10, another 11 acre section which she intended as a site for a church. On the 6th of the following month the residue of the estate was sold to a syndicate of five, R.H. Paterson, the headmaster of the Mt. Roskill School and James Buchanan MacFarlane, an Auckland merchant, being the signatories to the transfer.

The syndicate's first sale was to William John Boylan who, on September 20th, bought Mr. Murray's former home and the 6 acre allotment (number 2) on which it stood, together with an adjoining allotment of 1 acre (number 3). Here Mr. Boylan and his family lived until 1927 when he re-subdivided his property and sold his home to Mr. Claude Moses. The only other sale in 1911 was to Frederick Trice who bought allotment 30 of about it acres, opposite Dr. Porter's.

Buyers of 1912 were: G.S. Bridgewood, lot 28; John Frankham, lot 18; H.L. and H.G. Logie, part of 29: Kate and Robert H. Paterson, part of 29; William B. Leyland, lot 13: and Albert H. Porter, lot 28.

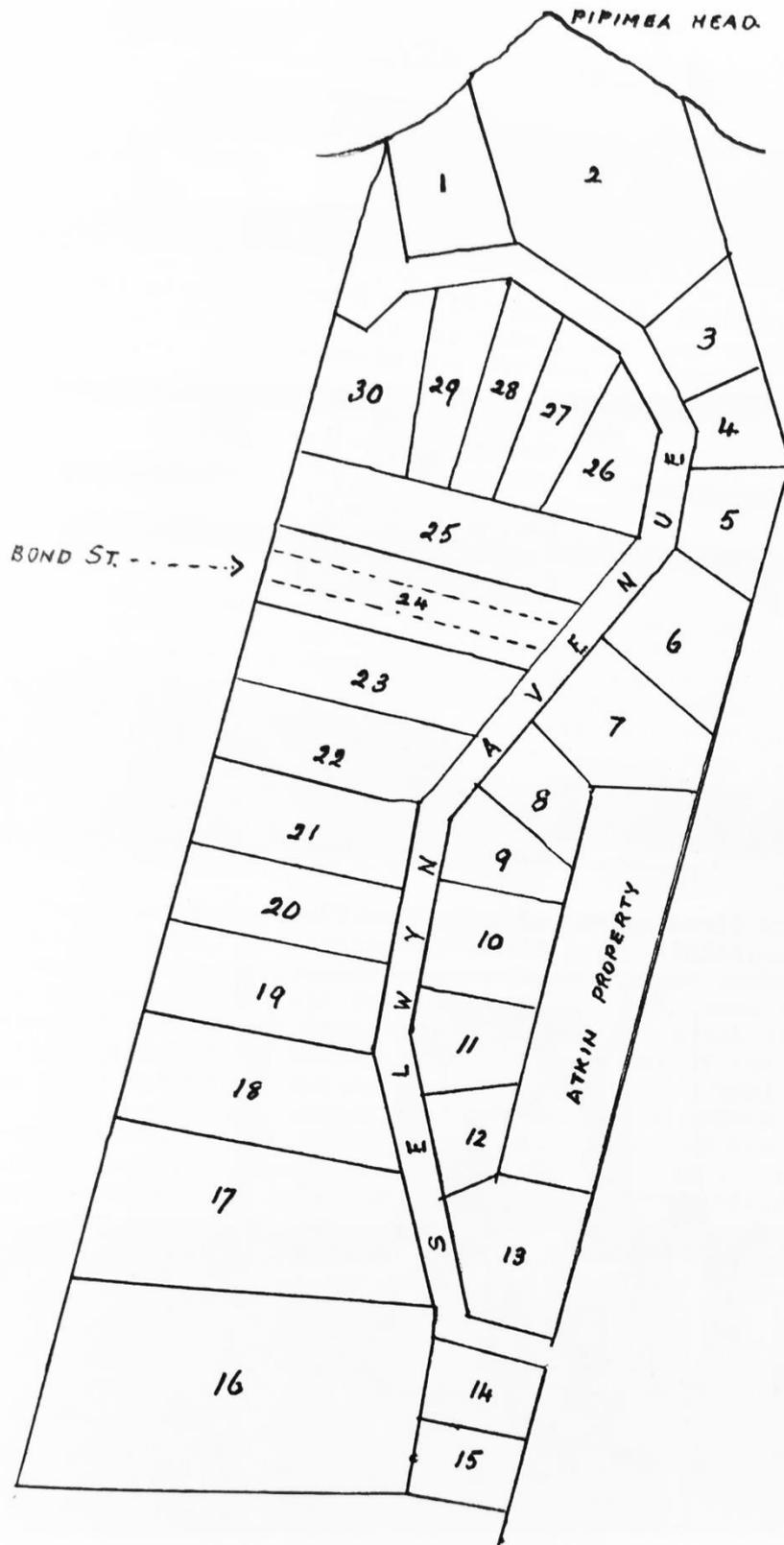
In 1912 the syndicate undertook the further subdivision of allotments 23, 24 and 25, constructing a road down the centre of 24 almost at right angles to Selwyn Road and dividing the land on either side into small sections. The road, "Bond St." was dedicated on the 19th February 1913. Some twelve years later when the Mission estate was subdivided, this road was continued down to Patteson Avenue and its name was changed

first to Raumati and then to Ronaki Road. Buyers of 1913 were George Chandler, Elizabeth McLean, Ada Neill, Henry S. Morran and Arthur Brown; of 1914, Josephine Rongo, Alice Jonas, Emily Nathan, Messrs. H.O. Wiles, Wm. Gee and B.J. Hamlin; and of 1915, Elizabeth Carter, Elizabeth McLean, Mary Jones, and Messrs. Shaw, A.H.W. Burgess, A.O. Horspool, G.S.B. Eversieigh, B.C. Stewart, T.P. Warren, H.S. Pillar and E. Wilson. By the end of 1915 four fifths of the estate was disposed of in spite of the fact that the vendors were facing competition from many of their clients who were dividing their allotments into quarter and half acre sections.

By this time Mission Bay, which was still called "Kohimarama", had become quite popular as a picnic and camping resort. For several years the Melanesian Mission Trust Board had been leasing camping sites to private individuals and to associations such as the Y.M.C.A. Moreover, picnickers had been availing themselves, first of a steam launch service which ran on holidays and weekends during the summer months of 1910 and 1911, and then of the ferries which since December 1912 had been calling with excursionists at the new Kohimarama Wharf. This wharf was built out from the point between Mission Bay and the next bay now called Kohimarama. Thus it served both bays.*

By 1912 the stone mission buildings were in a very dilapidated condition. This was due not only to their age - they were only 53 years old but also to the destructive actions of campers who, probably unknown to the Melanesian Trust Board, had used the refectory very roughly as a community hall for dancing and other social gatherings. about 1912 the Rev. W.H. Wilson, then Vicar of Tamaki West, suggested using it for church services as many of the Anglicans of the district found it difficult to travel the long distance to St. Philips at St. Heliers Bay. According to Miss Mary Atkin new windows were put in, the old decayed porch was replaced by a new one and "all was painted over for the sake of cleanliness". Then, on Sunday afternoons, services were held in the bay for the first time since the departure of the mission in 1867.

*The total cost of the wharf was £2750, £1500 was contributed towards this amount by property owners of both Mission Bay and Kohimarama.



The First Mission Bay Subdivision (1911).
 This was at the eastern end of the bay.