



Ella Webb (left) and Georgia Kuijpers (right) with Ella's time capsule which she has donated to the Museum as a record of students' reactions to the pandemic.

A warm welcome to 2022



Tēnā koe and welcome to our first newsletter of 2022. As the Omicron variant of Covid-19 takes a firm grip within our community, there is a wide range of feelings about the outbreak. Some feel calm, some are highly anxious. Acknowledging each other's responses will go a long way to supporting one another.

As a museum, we have a responsibility to record and preserve these experiences. The addition of Eric Hill's *Cambridge in Lockdown*¹ to our archive has been a good start and in December last year, we were delighted to receive a Covid-19 time capsule created by Ella Webb, a Year 9 student at Cambridge High School.

The time capsule includes personal protective equipment (PPE), a polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test, timelines and graphs about the outbreak in 2021, memes and also stories from early polio and smallpox pandemics in New Zealand. When the 14-year-old was interviewed by the *Cambridge News*, she said that Covid had made everything different for her but she was surprised to see what previous generations had to put up with. "The similarities are remarkable, but it was a more difficult time for them," she said. "The authorities (here) are doing the best they can. They listened to the facts and the science."

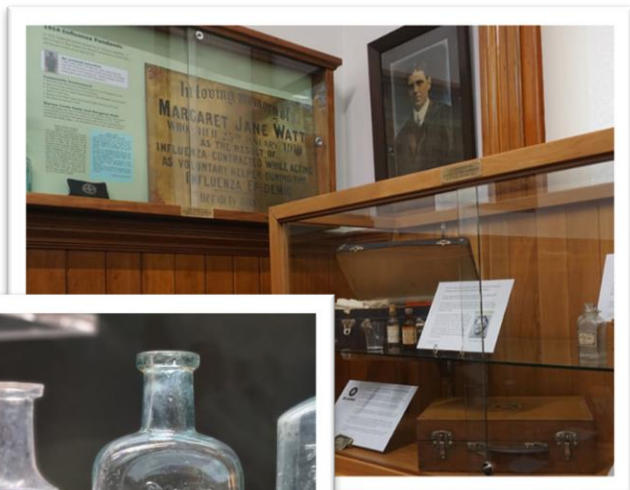
In this edition of the newsletter, Karen has chosen a piece written by Ruth Wilkinson about Dr Walter Stapley who worked tirelessly in Cambridge during two pandemics. If you are interested in learning more about these times, please drop in to the Museum and see our latest exhibition *How are you? Kei te pēhea koe?* a look at changing attitudes to medical care and wellbeing in the community including artefacts, photographs and stories from chemists, maternity hospitals, whare marama, Te Waikato sanatorium and St John First Aiders.

Also in this edition, Neville Souter's Early Motoring History in Cambridge shows that the sale of the former Bunning's building to Ingham is another step in our town's fascination with technology and transport.

To all of you supporters of Cambridge history and heritage, thank you for being on this journey with us. Please stay in touch by email and social media.

Elizabeth Harvey
Acting Museum Manager

¹*Cambridge in Lockdown* documents Eric's four-month photographic tour through the Covid-19 lockdown in Cambridge in 2020. Proceeds from the sale of this book will go to the Resthaven Foundation which is a 'not for profit' life care facility centred in Cambridge. More details and option to buy here <https://bit.ly/3tm3Elp>.



How are you?
Kei to pēhea koe?
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The First Cars of Cambridge

The following is an abridged transcript of a talk given to the Cambridge Historical Society by Neville Souter, aged 70, in September 1969. His grandfather, Captain William Burns Souter founded the firm of W Souter & Co in the early 1860s passing the business on to his sons Edwin (Neville's father) and Joseph in 1888.



Neville Souter (pictured in 1908, ref 2958/24) attended the Cambridge District High School and took over the business shortly after his father's death in 1924. Already the firm had transferred from seed, grain, farm implements and real estate to the motor business. Mr Souter died in 1976 aged 77.

"I have been born just at the right time as I have been able to keep in step with motoring developments since the time of Cambridge's first car.

The first car was a White Steam car owned by one James Sinclair, proprietor of the Masonic Hotel. Steam was generated by a kerosene lamp, an operation taking over an hour before there was enough steam pressure to move off. It had the conventional tiller steering of the day, a body something akin to a double buggy and wheels not much heavier than a bicycle's. It was quiet and serviceable and, of course, a crowd collected round it whenever it appeared. I often used to stand in the hotel yard watching it get up steam – for a respectable distance I might add as there were dire predictions that one day it would blow up. This was the year 1906.

This car was followed by a Vauxhall and a French Vinot owned respectively by Hugh Ferguson and Frederick Bunyard. These two cars were small two seaters of 5 hp (horsepower), two speeds forward but no reverse, tiller steering and chain drive. It was in the Vauxhall that I received my initiation into motoring and I could not get to school fast enough to tell my mates that I had had a ride in a motor car. Since that time my interest in motor cars has never waned and I am just as keen today as ever I was.

In the same year my father, in partnership with Arnold Wilkinson, imported a 5 hp Starling. This was very up-to-date in that it had wheel steering, three speeds and reverse. It was a smart looking little car but beauty was only skin deep as it had a cone clutch of the grabbing

variety and this, coupled with the poor quality of the early century steel which the gears were made of, caused many replacements due to gear stripping.

The car was passed on to someone at Waihi and replaced with a 10 hp Cadillac. This was a real car. It had a single cylinder engine under the seat at the rear, and an iron step which was a legacy from the horse and buggy days. Under favourable circumstances, such as having the wind behind it, it could do 30 mph. The rear tyres were solid rubber which were not exactly conducive to easy riding. I had several trips to Auckland in this car, the usual time taken being 8 to 10 hours. It was a four seater and the three passengers had to walk up the Razorback hills. With a good many rest periods, the Cadillac could then just manage the climb under its own power. The Cadillac was eventually sold to Frank Buckland, Mayor of Cambridge.

The next car to arrive was a 12 hp 4 cylinder Darracq which was acquired by Mr H Jeffries, the local Postmaster. Among other things it had a steering column gear change, a feature that was shortly afterwards discontinued and did not make its re-appearance until Chevrolet set the pattern in 1939 when it was hailed as a wonderful improvement. This became a universal fitting but its popularity was relatively short-lived and by now most manufacturers have reverted to the floor change. Incidentally all early cars had the gear lever and hand brake on the right hand side as there was no such thing as left hand steering. The gear shift was subsequently moved to the central position on the floor where it could serve either right or left hand steering.



1908 (L-R) Bunyard's Humber, Greenslade's Cadillac and Ferguson's Vauxhall. Ref 1564

A number of Cadillacs were bought and sold by W Souter & Co, some of the purchasers being Archdeacon Willis, Dr Edmonds, Dr Roberts and Mr Wallace. The Cadillac was so successful that I remember my father saying that he never wanted anything better but my uncle and partner in the firm saw one of the first Ford advertisements and

wanted to try one. The order was finally placed through our agents in New York and in 1908 the car arrived. It was painted a vivid red, had two seats in front and one behind. The engine was 4 cylinder and 15 hp – had the flywheel up behind the radiator where it acted as a fan. There was a Schebler carburettor and Bosch low tension magneto and a water pump. These specifications made it quite different from the Model T which was to follow. A new feature was a detachable cylinder head. The task of removing carbon and grinding valves on other makes was a major job but on



the Ford it was a simple operation. Today, of course, all cars have the detachable head.

In the early days of motoring, garages, repair shops or mechanics didn't exist. Most of the early owners had to teach themselves to drive. All repairs were done by enthusiastic amateurs and in this connection Arnold Wilkinson was a natural. Before the arrival of the first car, he had a 1¾ hp Minerva motor bike made in Belgium, so he knew a bit more than other budding mechanics about "what made it go".



Mr Wilkinson (pictured, Ref 2958/8/78) was a plumber by trade but it didn't matter whether it was your bicycle, sewing machine or watch, he could fix it.

When I see the modern electronic testing devices now on the market, I am reminded of his technique. A broken down car would be towed into the yard. Mr

Wilkinson would come bustling out (wherever he went it was always at a jog trot) and after making sure the machine was not out of benzine he would put his hand on the spark plug and instruct someone to "crank her over". The intensity of the spark was usually governed by his vocal reaction and if it was satisfactory he would get to work on the carburettor.

The Ford was a great success and my father's allegiance to the Cadillac was short-lived. By this time my people were well and truly in the motor business and became Ford Agents for the Auckland Province. In due time they opened branches in Hamilton and Auckland and appointed agents, some of whom are still selling Ford Cars to this day. It will be realised that with so few cars in the country, the trading of vehicles had not developed. This omission was soon to be corrected and in due course all manner of horses and horse drawn vehicles representing "trade ins" on the sale of cars were soon to be "garaged" in the paddocks of my present home.

Cars of this era were very plain affairs. There was no hood, screen or instruments of any kind but they all had a throttle and spark lever. The Ford Model T never had an accelerator pedal. If you wanted to check your fuel supply you used a graduated stick to dip the tank. Engines developed very little power and if you wanted a lamp, well, that was an extra.



Outside the Wilkinson garage in Duke Street c.1919-1922, Ref 3741

Benzine was the fuel and it cost about 5/- per case of 8 gallons – somewhere about 7d per gallon, and you could have any brand you liked provided it was Pratt's Red Label. In due time Pratts produced a motor spirit which was known as Pratt's Yellow Label but it didn't take on. Some of the early motorists used naphtha and benzolene but the Red Label was the popular brand. Eventually other brands came on the market. These included Shell, Plume, Kalif, Big Tree, Lion, Gold Crown etc.

The source of electricity for these early cars was provided by accumulators, the popular brand being those made by Peto and Radford and were the forerunners of the present day storage battery. They had to be re-charged at frequent intervals and for this purpose we had a ½ h.p. stationary engine driving a dynamo.

It is now 1909 and by now the motor car had really taken charge. A letter dated 22 September 1908 written to us by the Reliable Dayton Motor Car Co. of Chicago said, "Regarding the future of the motor carriage, some of the shrewdest men of the day assert the car is here to stay". Quite a momentous prediction. Some of the early letters from America were quite amusing. I remember one from the Sun Light Six Motor Co and the final paragraph read as follows. - "We must apologise for having to write to you in

English but are making arrangements whereby in our next letter we will be able to address you in your language". Unfortunately "our next letter" never materialised as, like so many more of the budding American Companies, they went broke.

Car design was now developing by leaps and bounds. Cadillac introduced a four cylinder, one of the first of which was bought by Mr Jack Rowe, proprietor of the Criterion Hotel as the present Central Hotel was known in those days.

The first Model T Ford made its appearance in 1910, this museum piece going to Mr J Allwill of Hautapu. It was a left hand drive model, had neither hood, screen or lamps and cost £375. Successive Model Ts with right hand steering continued almost without mechanical change until 1927, and this policy of letting a design get out of date, eventually almost broke the Ford Company.

Cars continued to arrive in Cambridge in ever increasing makes and numbers and Mr Wilkinson's Plumbers Shop was fighting a losing battle as the proprietor was properly wrapped up in motorcars. This battle was ultimately lost and from it emerged the well known business of Wilkinson & Co Ltd, with Mr Wilkinson remaining a dominant figure in its management until his retirement.



Te Ihingarangi

Part 8 of a history of the Karapiro-Maungatautari area by
Te Kaapo Clark and Lyn Tairi.

1800

KO NGATI RAUKAWA, NGATIKOROKI, NGATI WAIRERE, NGATI HAUA

In 1846 a flour mill was built and in 1852 another was built because Ngāti Koroki "had extended their growing to such a scale that their mill could no longer cope with the harvest and in consequence they planned a further one, as well as a brick oven for bread, the whole to cost £350...."

In 1856 Mr and Mrs James Shepherd set up a trading store about half a mile from Whareturere. Mrs Shepherd recorded in her diary, "we sent several tons of bacon and flour to Auckland... All the bacon was cured for us before it was packed in flax kits for the market... Maungatautari was a most prolific place with large plantations of raspberries... and large groves of peach trees."

By 1859 the situation had begun to change. Mrs Shepherd noticed the people were worried about the situation in Taranaki, where a dispute had arisen over land sales. Tension was also increasing in the Waikato as Pakeha wanted more land, and had become uneasy over the establishment the Māori King Movement in 1858.

Hostilities broke out after General Duncan Cameron's troops crossed the Mangatawhiri River (at Meremere) on 12 July 1863. At the Battle of Rangiriri, Tioriori was taken prisoner. He was interned on board the hulk 'Marion', along with other prisoners taken at Rangiriri. Tioriori had been injured saving the life of a British soldier by moving him from open ground into a hollow.

Tioriori later recounted the incident: "During the attack upon Rangiriri I saw a wounded soldier; he had ribbons upon each side of his coat; he was lying in a position where he was liable to be struck by the bullets of both his friends and foes. I went to save him, so that I might say 'he is a man whose life I saved'. I assisted him to rise and with my arms extended, supported him towards a hollow, where he would not be exposed to the fire of either party. Whilst I was in the act of assisting him I was struck by two balls, one immediately after the other, one in the heel, the other in the calf of the leg. I then left him and returned to the pa..."

This action, and the fact that Tioriori had warned and helped Mr Berry and Mr Underwood leave Te Wharangi before the war started, led Governor George Grey to lobby for Tioriori's early release. The Government decided not to release him because "It [was] well known that Tioriori was infirm of purpose, and that in joining in the Rebellion he suffered himself to be over persuaded by his tribe and friends.... Ministers cannot believe that it would be judicious to place him for the present in a position in which he could possibly be again subject to the same influences!" Tioriori was released by September 1864.



Dr Stapley was revered by Cambridge locals. The Arnold family, who owned the property at Te Awa Lifecare from the 1860s to the 1980s, had this photograph framed and displayed in their home.

Dr Walter Stapley

Walter Stapley, MD (USA) practised in Cambridge from 1912 until he died suddenly in 1925 at age 55.

Smallpox started to spread among the Māori population in July 1913 and the Government's Health Department warned that no Māori was to travel on public transport without a certificate. Dr Stapley and Health Inspector Bennett tended the sick at Maungatautari pa and there was no spread of smallpox in this area.

Dr Stapley was a tireless and cheering worker during the 1918 pandemic in Cambridge, at a time when the Town Hall had to be converted to a hospital. He is commemorated with a plaque on the benchseat outside the St Andrew's Church on the corner of Hamilton Road and Victoria Street.

"With his old black dog Toby in the front seat of his Model T Ford, Dr Stapley bumped over the country roads from Tauwhare, Matamata, Tirau, Putāruru and Arapuni, as well as attending to his Cambridge patients. In those post World War I days, in spite of doctor shortage, house-calls were made on request. Dr Stapley was too impatient to waste time outside a door whilst someone fumbled with the inside knob, but would stride straight in, calling as he sought the sickroom where, many people declared, his very presence healed their sorrows and soothed their pains." Ruth Wilkinson

