

The Oaks Historical Society Inc

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Wollondilly Heritage Centre & Museum

Newsletter

February 2022

DOCTOR LLOYD DAVENPORT PARRY

1847-1919

BY ELIZABETH VILLY

Doctor Parry arrived in Picton in 1902 to a town that questioned the need for another doctor. Dr Read had recently taken over the practice of Dr Ekin and was appointed the Government Medical Officer, Picton Health Officer and official vaccinator of smallpox. "There is hardly room in a small town like Picton for two medical officer's, it will surely be a question of survival of the fittest."¹

The new doctor was a widower with two teenage children and a small son from his earlier marriages. He was in his mid-fifties and had begun medicine in a world that saw momentous changes. There was, in 1902, an awareness of personal cleanliness and public authorities took responsibility for sanitary and water utilities. Patients undergoing operations had the benefit of undergoing anaesthetic. Despite infrequent epidemics of smallpox in the late 19th century, vaccination and isolation of patients had minimised the threat of this dreaded disease. There were the beginnings of psychiatric research leading to better understanding of mental illness. However infectious diseases such as diphtheria, whooping cough, tuberculosis, scarlet fever as well as the dangers of childbirth still took their toll. In 1902, Sydney was in the grip of a bubonic plague epidemic with a fearful populace. Dr Parry's own death took place when the world was in the throes of the Spanish Influenza epidemic.

It is unknown when Dr Parry arrived in Australia but it appears that he worked in the Hill End district in 1886 when he registered his daughter's birth at that place. Prior to coming to Picton he had spent some five years in the Murrumburrah/Harden district where he had been an alderman and at one time, the Mayor. He was widely travelled, having worked as a young man in Zululand and Ashant, possibly as an army doctor. He had also lived for a number of years in New Zealand.

In 1899, at Murrumburrah he had married Dora (Theodora) Antill, who died two years later leaving her husband to rear their small son Claude. Dora was his third wife. His first marriage was in the Orkney Isles in far North Scotland. After his wife's death he took himself to the other end of the world, to Invercargill, the most southern town in New Zealand. There he married 20 year old Annie McCormack, who gave birth to four children, two of whom died at birth. Edward Lloyd was born in 1882 and his sister Annie Bertha in 1886.

Annie died in 1897.³ After Dora's death it is probable that he was encouraged to come to Picton where her family could help care for his small son. His two older children were in Sydney – his son at Sydney University and his daughter at boarding school. It is unlikely that the Antills, the leading family in the district, anticipated that the new widower would marry within a year. The new bride was



Dora's sister Alice Eliza Antill.

This fourth marriage took place quietly at Marrickville unlike other Antill marriages which were celebrated with a fanfare of publicity. It was not accepted kindly and caused much scandal as there was a biblical injunction against such a marriage. It did not however, affect the doctor's social standing for as a member of the Antill family he was among the elite in the small provincial town. Both his Antill wives' were the daughters of James Alexander Antill and Susannah Wild, who was also of a pioneering family. Dora and Alice were thus the granddaughters of Major Henry Antill who had received grants of 3000 acres in 1822 and later founded the town of Picton. Dr Parry had two more children with Alice. Campbell Antill Parry was born in 1905 but died in 1907. Jessica Campbell Davenport Parry was born in 1909 and lived for 94 years. (Pictured –the Parry residence in Argyle Street Picton) *Continued page 4...*



President's Report

Trish Hill

Welcome to 2022, I hope you all enjoyed the holiday/New Year period and managed to stay safe from Covid impacts. Our current opening/operating times are from 10-3pm and we have a printed copy of our Covid Plan on the front counter which recommends the wearing of masks inside our buildings. There has been a slow trickle of visitors through the museum, noticeably some younger people and some of them local. Great to see they are interested in the local area and the rich history we have to share. Now only if we can encourage a few to volunteer

Late last year it looked like we may have been able to resume general meetings again at this time but with the prevalence of Covid still rife we shall hold off and remain with our monthly business meetings.

We had our first working bee for 2022 last Saturday, thanks everyone who worked hard throughout the day and made a real difference. Working bees are scheduled for the last Saturday of each month in case anyone needs a reminder and our volunteer roster details are once again

included on the back page where it will be noted also. David Campbell, you have brightened the new exhibition space with a Burragorang scene artwork and we appreciate always what you do for us, thank you so very much. Our CHART (Cultural Heritage & Arts Regional Tourism) funding application for electrical upgrade and outdoor heaters was successful (Congrats Debbie!) and installation is scheduled for next week. This upgrade will include the problematic lighting under the verandah so when the schools program resumes Pam Stephenson will have appropriate lighting on those dull days in her activity area.



We have a surplus glass cabinet approximately 1 metre square and is available for rehoming. If you are interested

please give me a call ■



Acquisitions Report

Allen Seymour

It may be early in the year but we've already had quite a few items come in. One of these is a 1971 feasibility study commissioned by Clutha Development and done by Paul Weir Company from Illinois on coal mining in Burragorang. This is about 2 inches thick so I haven't read it but a look at the drawings in the rear revealed that one of the things considered were overland conveyor systems, one from Brimstone to Glenlee, the other from Oakdale to Glenlee. Had this idea been pushed ahead with, things could have gotten very interesting.

From Ross Butler we've received a couple of portable bellows. It appears these may have carried on the coaches so if a problem arose some blacksmithing could be done on the spot. Also from Ross is a model of a bark hut that was made by someone in Burragorang. There are also some posters for Speedwell bicycles, Harley Davidson motorcycles and Powerplus tyre repairs. There is also a photo of a trotter called "The Nut", who was owned by the Publican at the Plough & Harrow and won a 2 mile race at the Camden Show in 1913.

From Trish comes a 1971 copy of the NSW Dept of Health publication "Our Babies" which was standard issue to new mums in the 70's at the Camden Baby



Health Clinic that operated from one of the buildings in the vicinity of Coles carpark. There is also a book "The Making of Mara", presented to Trish at Sunday school in 1963. Thanks to everybody for these.

Over the Christmas period I've been working on the Alp photographic collection. This consists of photos, slides and negatives taken by Wally Alp from Thirlmere during the 1950's and early 60's. There are over 570 photos that have been scanned in, and the details have been put into a spreadsheet. I've also looked at the negatives and listed these as well. There are over 6000 of them, and we will have to try and get a grant to have them scanned, as

there is a lot of very relevant local events in these, such as the Wattle Blossom Festival, Picton Show, numerous Theatre Group events and much more. Among the scanned photos are a lot taken at the Royal Easter Show as they worked on the Southern District Exhibit. There are also many taken around Sydney during the Queen's visit in 1954. These are quite amazing, the entire city really went crazy, and they're worth looking at. The photos and spreadsheet are on the File Management directory under Mosaic Photos/Alp Photos ■



Family History & Local Archive Research Corner

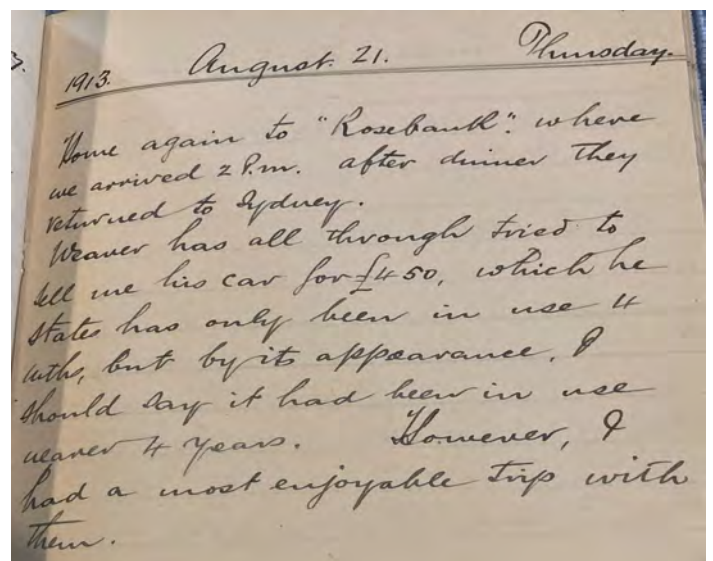
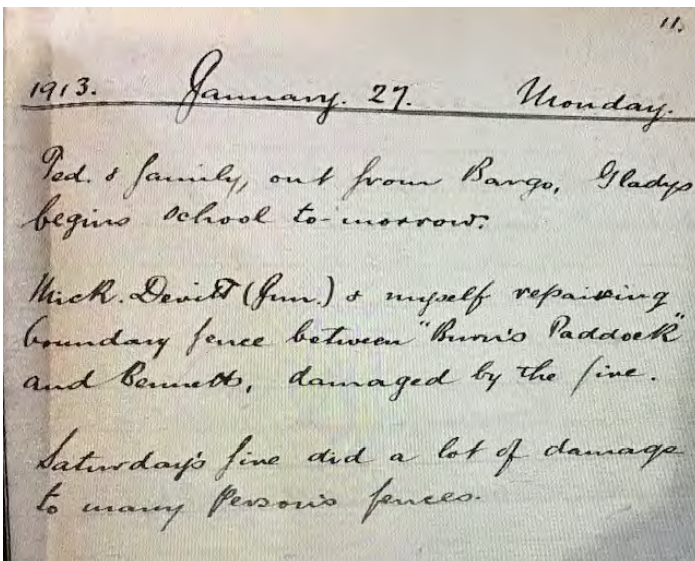
Sue Davis

Diaries or Journals can be immense sources of information. They can help with both family and local history. Personal diaries offer a unique first-hand perspective of significant moments in history in a way that official historical records rarely can. With more than 31 million copies sold in 67 languages, *The Diary of a Young Girl* (best known as *The Diary of Anne Frank*), is often said to be the most widely read book in the world outside of the Bible. The earliest known book resembling a diary is the *Diary of Merer*, an ancient Egyptian logbook whose author described the transportation of limestone from Tura to Giza, likely to clad the outside of the Great Pyramid.

I have several family diaries that I use for Family History research but also for enjoyment to remember the writer. One diary was compiled by my grandmother when she was 81. She was such a busy lady with family, Red Cross, Church, Senior Citizens Club and the RSL. When I read it, I feel a reconnection with her and remember her so well. I have her husband's diary from 1917 when he was serving in the Australian Army in France. He was my grandfather and was said to have had a great sense of humour. Even though recollections of the war are horrible, there are still mo-

ments when his sense of humour is portrayed in his diary. Their son, my father, left the diaries he had written from 1949 to 2011 to me when he passed away. They give us so much information about local and family history and are written in the same style as his everyday speech. You can almost hear him talking when you read his diary. When family members have a special birthday, I photocopy the day of their birth from Dad's diary so that they can see what he was thinking that day! It also gave a great account of the weather because as an orchardist, he was a great watcher of the weather.

Recently at the Wollondilly Heritage Centre we have received some copies of pages of a diary written by James Murray Hewitt of The Oaks in 1913. It gives a great insight into life at The Oaks in 1913 but also of the Hewitt family. James Hewitt lived at "Rosebank", The Oaks. (Does anyone know where that was?) His family came from Bargo and later purchased "Winbourne" at Mulgoa. I hope you enjoy the samples from the diary included with this report. We hope to be able to give more information about the diary as time goes by.



Some Diaries of Famous People you can find online:

Captain James Cook <https://www.captaincooksociety.com/home>

William Cox <https://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/stories/crossing-blue-mountains/journals>

Samuel Pepys <https://www.pepysdiary.com/>

There are so many different types of diaries -War diaries; Holiday diaries; Career related diaries; Special Occasion diaries to name a few. The types and uses of diaries seem endless. Have you ever kept a diary and looked back on what you were thinking when you wrote it?

Doctor Lloyd Davenport Parry *Continued from page 1*

Apart from his personal tragedies, by all accounts it was a pleasurable social life for the new doctor. There was lawn tennis with weekly matches and outings to other towns. Dr Parry was on the committee of the School of Arts, the town's cultural centre with its library and improving lectures often on the

virtues of temperance. He was on the billiard committee. He was a keen rifleman and for years was the captain of the Picton Rifle Club. He was also a foundation member of the new golf club, the game being played by its enthusiasts at Jarvisfield, the Antill family home. →

Life for a country doctor was not all pleasures. In

1904 Dr Parry suffered a nasty accident at the corner of Bridge and Argyle Streets. Dr Read, who lived nearby at Starguard House attended the injuries to his face and bad bruises on his body. His fortunes improved when he won 'the survival of the fittest' race with Dr Read leaving town in 1905. Dr Parry was appointed the Government Medical Officer and official vaccinator. Inoculations were given the first Saturday of each month.

For a number of years he was the only doctor in town and became increasingly busy. He was called to a number of accidents which included attending a woman near Bargo who, while attempting to decapitate a roo, hit her hand and completely severed two fingers. Another bush accident with an axe occurred when a farmer splitting a tree, was struck on the back of the head by a falling limb that rendered him unconscious.⁴

One particular harrowing case was when Dr Parry was called to Maldon one hot November afternoon in 1904. A group of local lads who worked in Sydney took a few days holiday and returned home to Picton. They alighted from the train at Maldon Station and went swimming in the Nepean River at a popular spot called the Pump Holes. The holiday quickly turned to disaster when two cousins, 19 year old Stanley Skellett and 17 year old Barrington Skellett were both drowned. Dr Parry stayed at the river bank while men dredged for the boys but it was not until evening did they recover Stanley's body.⁵ Three days later, his cousin's body was recovered after being wedged in a rock. There were other drowning's, both at this spot and other waterholes and dams in the district.

There was no ambulance service and often Dr Parry took his patients in his own buggy to Matron Sly's private hospital which was next door to his surgery and home in Argyle Street. Seriously ill patients were taken to Camden Cottage Hospital where Picton people raised money for an

endowed bed there.

As the medical officer of the district he became involved in squabbles over the state of drains near St Mark's Church. The doctor was also a secretary of the vestry and his report that the drains emptying into Menangle Street were 'in a

filthy state....stench disgusting.'⁶ His criticisms were not taken kindly by some members of the municipal council, then in its infancy and obviously sensitive to their management of affairs. The correspondence dragged on but eventually some work was done to alleviate the problem. Later the doctor

became an alderman which gave him more clout to influence affairs that involved public health. He also had to report infectious diseases in his district but apart from these duties, the post of Government Medical Officer was not onerous.

Over the years of his time in Picton, Dr Parry proudly made public the successes of his two older children. Son (Edward) Lloyd passed his yearly exams in medicine at Sydney University and in 1914 his wedding, where 300 guests assembled at his brides' home on the Parramatta River, was given a lengthy column in the Picton Post.⁷ His daughter, Nurse Bertha Parry was accepted from a large field of candidates for the position of nurse to the Department of Education.

There was a flurry of activities in May and June 1913 when Dr Parry announced that he was taking his first holiday in 25 years. He was returning to England to his birthplace at Shrewsbury. A number of farewell socials were organised and each had a musical program, a generous supper and fulsome speech making where Dr Parry was praised for his skill, kindness and sympathy. The townsfolk gave a reception at a 'prettily decorated room' in the Superior Picton School with the Mayor, Alderman J.T. Ashcroft, the master of ceremonies.

Dear Sir- We the undersigned, on behalf of the residents of Picton and district, desire on the departure for the old Home Land to mark our appreciation of your valued services as doctor and citizen. In your professional work during the past twelve year, you have by your skilful treatment and unremitting attention, deservedly won the gratitude of your patients and the regard and confidence of all, while as a citizen you have cheerfully devoted much of your valuable time to matters of public interest...

Continued page 5...



Dr Parry said in reply that he found it difficult to express what he felt. After his formal thanks to a large gathering he talked of the advances in medicine from the time he was resident to the late Lord Lister to the present day. He also referred to how long he had been practising and there were few in the state who were carrying on for as long as he had.⁸

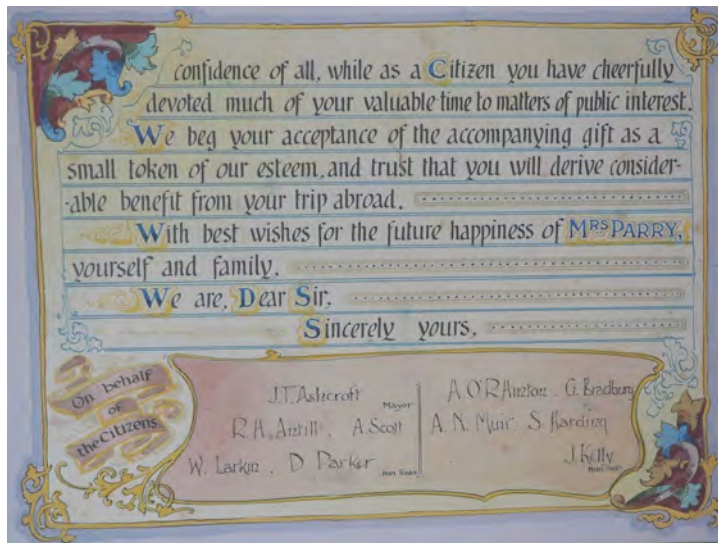
Not to be outdone by this apparently all-male affair, the ladies rallied and gave their own exclusive female farewell at the school. (Dr Parry appeared to be popular with the ladies as soon after his arrival in Picton, some 50 ladies from his former practice at Harden, pooled together and sent him a handsome dressing case)⁹ The congregation of St Marks also gave a rousing social to the doctor. An indication of his financial position may be gleaned from his announcement that he had been appointed surgeon on the *Benalla* on both the forward and return journeys.

More honours were given on his visit to his home-land, a particularly pleasant one was being made a Freeman of the Borough of Shrewsbury. He was following in the footsteps of his father and grandfather.

Dr Parry returned to Picton late in 1913 and settled into his pattern of life as a country doctor. The world changed forever when war declared against Germany and he, like so many in the town joined in patriotic activities. He was particularly active in the Red Cross fund-raising and formed an ambulance class with Dr Maclean. His two eldest children both served as medical personnel in Egypt. Nurse Bertha Parry volunteered in November 1914. She returned home in September 1915 with 700 wounded soldiers from Gallipoli. Lloyd Parry joined the army medical corps as a doctor in 1917. He served not only in Egypt but in Palestine with the Light Horse Ambulance Corps.¹⁰

The war ended with great rejoicing and the return home of Lloyd. But the aftermath of this devastating war saw millions of people worldwide die in the Spanish Influenza epidemic. Picton made preparations to cope. The public school and the railway camp near the tunnel were declared emergency hospitals in the event of the flu reaching the town.

Other measures were restrictions on road and rail travellers and a warning that silk petticoats harboured germs. All social events were cancelled and the schools closed. Dr Parry was on the committee formed to help in the event of the flu breaking out in Picton. He established an inoculation centre and worked with the Red Cross on other measures.¹¹ During the first week of April, 15 cases of Spanish Flu were reported in Picton and at the same time it was announced that Dr Parry was ill. Dr Parry was taken to Randwick Hospital where he died on 25th May 1919 aged 71. He was buried at St Marks with his small son Campbell. His wife Alice was later interred at the same site when she died in 1960 ■



Picton Post & Advocate 2.04.1902

Gail Van Zeist@shepparton.net.au
Ibid.

Picton Post 8.11.1918

Ibid 19.11.1904

Ibid 13.06.1906 & 20.06.1906

Ibid. 17.06.1914

Ibid. 25.06.1913

Ibid. 7.05.1902

Nat Arch of Aust. www.naa.gov.au

Picton Post 5.02.1919, 12.02.1919, 16.04.1919

Editors note: All of the images included in this story are from The Lloyd Davenport Parry album in our collection dated June 1913. There are 22 images featured in the album.

Extract from 'The History of Burraborang Valley from the Records'

By Sonja den Hertog and available in our shop

The history of the Roman Catholic Church in Burraborang Valley is closely associated with the history of settlement in the valley. It is the history created by these mostly Irish families who moved into the area after 1833 at which time Mass was regularly held in the home of Patrick Carlon presumably with Father John J Therry officiating.

By 1839 the Catholic population had grown sufficiently to warrant the construction of a church. The 'Australian Chronicle' of November 15, 1839 described the circumstances that led to the foundation of St Paulinus, Central Burraborang.

"In our retired and most inaccessible valley her voice (the voice of religion) has been heard and with good effect. What we before knew, we then felt that we formed a part of the

great family of Christ, and at an invitation of our chief pastor Archbishop Polding we determined to erect a house for the celebration of the diviner mysteries....

A subscription of nearly £80 had been made, plans drawn and chapel almost 40 foot long

and 20 wide....The site is most beautiful; it is a flat of some 6 acres given by Mr Carolan, bounded by the Wollondilly and stretching from the river up towards the steep mountain range whilst the valley extends on either side...our little church is to be completed before February 1840.

Priests from Campbelltown, Appin and Camden (as from 1860) ministered at St Paulinus until the first parish priest of Burraborang, Father T. Ryan was appointed in 1903. The most remarkable of these priests was Father George Dillon, incumbent at Camden from 1869 to 1881. He concerned himself not only with his pastoral duties but he was also the driving force behind the establishment of several government in the Burraborang. Furthermore he took a tremendous interest in the welfare of the local Aborigines for whom he established the St Joseph's Mission on Pocket Creek (Coxs River).

On completion St Paulinus was dedicated by Archbishop Vaughan to become the largest spiritual and cultural centre in the valley. Together with the Presbytery Church Hall and Cemetery it occupies part of portions 53 and 55 and portion 136 through to 139 Parish of Nattai, the church standing on

Patrick Carlon's original 80 acres grant. In July 1957 the last mass was held and St Paulinus was used for the last time (Images were taken at the last mass). As the waters of the future Lake Burraborang began to rise, the historic church and adjacent buildings were bulldozed down. The stones were used to form the base of the mosaic on the southern approach to Camden just below Camden Hospital on the corner of Menangle Road and the Old Hume Highway. The giant ironbark cross that stood in St Paulinus Cemetery was transferred to the Bushwalkers Chapel at Wooglemai, Sheeys Creek Road Oakdale where it now stands sentinel on the edge of the Valley in a secluded tranquil location of breathtaking beauty. The stained glass windows originally

donated by Valley pioneers eventually went to St Augustine Roman Catholic Church, Myers Flat, parish of Bendigo, Victoria whilst the Bell is now in Wollongong (since donated to our collection) and some pews are in the Roman Catholic Church at Menangle.

Distance and the nearly annual flooding of the Wollondilly River necessitated the establishment of a Roman Catholic Church at Lower

Burraborang and a slab structure named St Joseph's was erected near the Coxs River Bridge in 1884. In 1914 Father Donovan had the old building replaced

with a rendered stone construction and the last Mass was said in June 1955. The Stations of the Cross from this small church were transferred to St Aloysius at The Oaks.

The Cemeteries attached to these two churches contained a large number of graves dating back to 1841 and also contained a number of unmarked graves. In accordance with an Act of Parliament ratified on October 1952, the then Metropolitan Water Sewerage and Drainage Board acquired these cemeteries to have the headstones and recoverable remains transferred to the Roman Catholic Cemeteries at The Oaks and Camden before flooding of the area commenced ■



WEEKEND ROSTER

FEBRUARY

Sue & Helen	Saturday, 5
Bev & David	Sunday, 6
Vivian & Bob	Saturday, 12
Marlane & Kate	Sunday, 13
Debbie & Allen	Saturday, 19
Sue & Paul	Sunday, 20
Working Bee Laurette & Phil	Saturday, 26
Kaye & Jim	Sunday, 27

A newspaper clipping from the 'Macarthur Misleader' from 1985 and about the time the 'new' shops were built in The Oaks (supplied by Vivian Allen)

THE OAKS PLAZA

MAXINE'S —
Ph. 57 1275

THE OAKS CUT PRICE SUPERMARKET —
Ph. 57 1391 — Rodney & Anne Hill

THE OAKS NEWSAGENCY —
Ph. 57 1558 — Angelo

THE OAKS FRUIT SHOP —
Ph. 57 1102 — Maria

LEO'S HOT FOOD BAR —
Ph. 57 1448 Dianne, Gina, Renie

23 — Macarthur Misleader, Friday, December 13, 1985

Some recent photographs of changes to our exhibitions



David Campbell '21

MONTHLY MEETINGS: The Oaks Historical Society Inc. holds its meetings on the first Monday of each month (except January) at the Wollondilly Heritage Centre & Museum, 43 Edward St. The Oaks starting at 7.00pm. Due to Covid restrictions our meetings are currently suspended. Our patron is Judith Hannan. The Oaks Historical Society Inc. takes no responsibility for the accuracy of the articles, papers or reviews that appear in this newsletter. The statements made or opinions expressed are not necessarily those of The Oaks Historical Society Inc. Copies of the minutes are available.

If undelivered, please return to:-
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