The Bach
The Cultural History of a Local Typology

Peter Wood

The Meaning of Words

Most countries would like to claim an architecture that physically substantiates their cultural uniqueness. Current discourse can often polarise this desire by separating indigenous architecture on the one hand, and national institutional buildings on the other, as the best examples of an architecture able to express such values. Yet between these extremes one might also expect to find less authoritative if more interesting versions of this problem. It is proposed that the New Zealand Bach offers one such example where the architectural value is not simply the product of physical architectural expression, but rather acts as a cultural repository to house nationalistic values, which in turn construct its architectural significance.

The New Zealand Bach can be generically described as a home-built weekend seaside cottage.[1] It could be generously described as rustic, but traditionally it is more often than not poorly built of second-hand materials on undesirable sites. It is often observed that the uncivilised character of these structures is one of the only common architectural factors within the diversity of examples.[2] Furthermore such asperity is attributed to the exclusive masculine origins attributed to this architecture. Paul Thompson gives the etymology of 'bach' as originating in 'bachelor':

> The unmarried man who lived by himself in simple surroundings was said to be baching or keeping bachelor's hall. Men who were without the assumedly civilising influence of a wife were taken to be undomesticated and lacking in the necessary housekeeping and culinary skills required to live in a 'proper' manner, so 'to bach' or 'baching' referred to a basic level of living.[3]

Thus the bach seems to refer to a condition of living that is remarkable for its rejection of traditional home values. The bach is for the unmarried, it is uncomplicated, uncivilised, undomesticated, it is the place of the improper house. Thompson describes baches variously as being assemblages, primitive, rugged, graceless, and, in one case, an "idiosyncratic paradise."[4] This would suggest that the bach refuses any attempt at architectural classification according to typology. Indeed the bach seems to actively resist this. In New Zealand the word 'bach' would appear to contain an architectural value that is not explicit in its physical manifestation as a unique indigenous type of built form. Instead the naming itself transcends typical comparative description and evokes a form whose structure is based upon the expression of domestic organisation - the exercise of domestication. And herein lies the typological and historiographic problems of the Bach. As mentioned, popular opinion in New Zealand holds that the origin of the term 'bach' is a derivation of the word bachelor. Only recently has the etymology of 'bach' been formally codified with the publication of the Oxford English Dictionary of New Zealand.[5] Editor Harry Orsman concurs with the probable derivation of 'bach' from 'bachelor' but suggests that it arises through the transitive verb 'bachelorize.' This difference points to a usage distinction of the word 'bach' that exists between being a noun (bachelor) and verb (bachelorize). This shift is pedantic, but it is also critically important in understanding the cultural frame of reference in which the word 'bach' becomes associated with an object of the built environment. As a verb the usage of 'bach' is traceable to the nineteenth century, and refers to a kind of domestic living arrangement typified by being temporary, uncivilised, communal, and, without paradox, independent. But the utilisation of 'bach' to describe an architectural type (The Bach) is identified by Orsman no earlier than 1911, and even here there exists some uncertainty to its syntactic application.[6] The New Zealand edition of the *Oxford Dictionary* gives 1929 as the most accurate origin of current typological usage. This should not be unsurprising as the interval 1920-1930 represents the first of two periods of intense bach building (the second period occurring between 1945-1955) but this does not in itself account for the wide spread adoption of the word 'bach' to describe this architectural form in all its expressions.

A Useful Mistake

At this point it is useful to examine one of the better-known bach communities which developed during the same period as the usage of the word 'bach.' Taylors Mistake[7] is a small seaside community between Sumner Beach and Lyttleton Harbour on the east coast New Zealand's South Island, not very far from the city of Christchurch, which provides it with a transient holiday population. It is considered to be one of New Zealand's earliest bach communities.[8] The *Lyttleton Times*, documenting the opening of the surf-life saving clubrooms in 1917, described it as "a little village of seashore huts tucked cosily away in a bend of the coastline".[9] To call these structures 'huts' does not properly recognise their unique architectural nature. More precisely they were referred to as cave-houses due to the habit of constructing a cottage-like facade onto the entrance of a naturally occurring beach cave, but they are more often than not now referred to as 'baches.'[10] The first Taylors Mistake bach is considered to be the cave-house of Alfred Patterson Osborn, which he built for himself in 1880.[11] Osborn became known as *The Pilgrim* for his role in establishing the bach community there, and consequently his cave-house was named *Pilgrims Rest*. But to label this a 'bach' in the contemporary sense is difficult. Cairns and Turpin call it "a superbly-equipped cave mansion."[12] But one part of this story is worth considering. Osborn was married with one child, but his family almost never accompanied him to Taylors Mistake. He would leave them in Christchurch and return when required for work. Jo-Anne Smith has noted that he did not forget about his family at these times as he planted an oak tree above the cave to commemorate

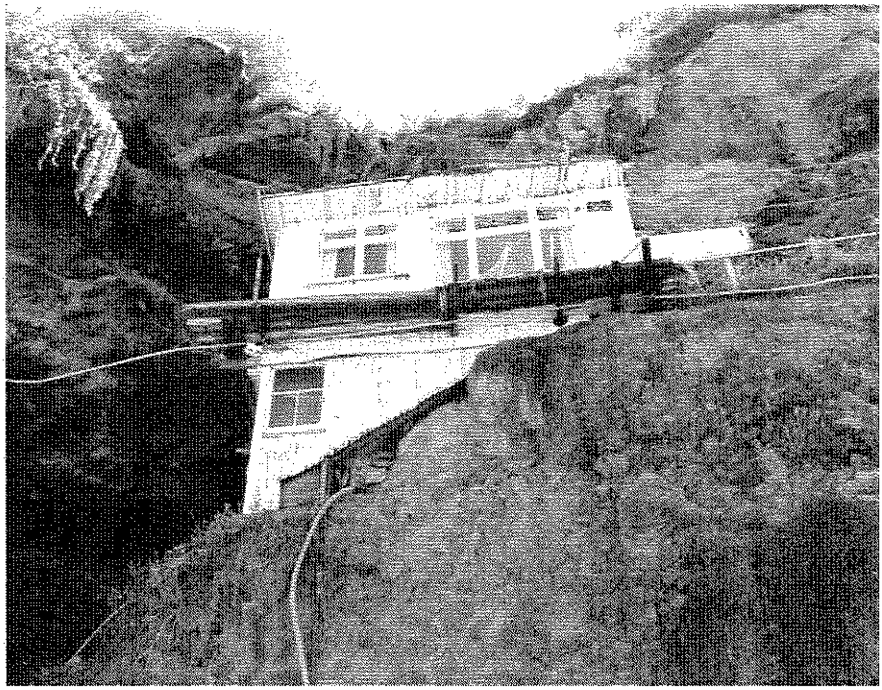

Figure 1: Bach, Taylors Mistake
Photograph: courtesy Paul Thompson and National Library of New Zealand

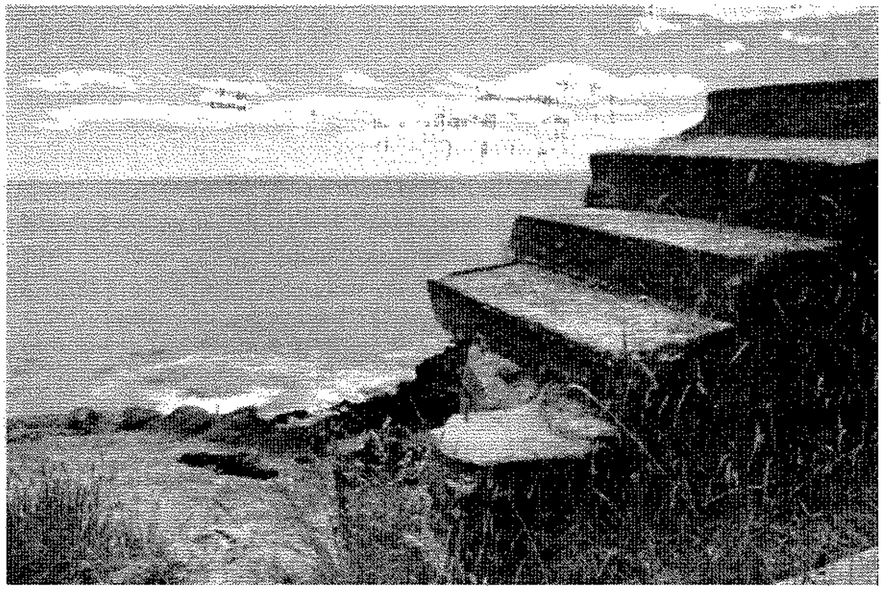

Figure 2: Stair, Taylors' Mistake
Photograph: courtesy Paul Thompson and National Library of New Zealand

his thirty-sixth wedding anniversary, and often flew a flag made by his daughter.[13] Undoubtedly this story contributes to the 'bachelor' mythology of the bach, but it also modifies it. Osborn's 'bachelor pad' is a conditional space of singleness. His voluntary separation from his family is a self-imposed exile that displaces conventional domesticity with a rough version without refinement but which none-the-less is still about the home.[14] It is a return to the cave origins of domestic architecture and is therefore both domestic and anti-domestic. It is effectively between the two in a space that might be called 'grotesque'.

Ugly Houses

Sarah Treadwell has described the verandah ('porch') as a point of the domestic that transgresses the conditioned interiority and exteriority of the house. It is never clear whether it is a partial room or an attempt to domesticate nature, neither inside nor outside it still cannot be said to be exclusive of either. It is the freakish interval in the built fabric that is the particular site of the domestic grotesque, a convolution of border that Treadwell defines as characteristic of the grotesque.[15] Similarly the bach is caught in these convolutions where the blurring of binary distinctions evokes circumstances of the grotesque. As in Treadwell's example, the bach is well known for maximising the porch to obfuscate relationships of interior and exterior, but moreover the informality of the domestic interior against often-untamed (undomesticated) landscapes actively reshapes spatial allocations of interiority and exteriority. The bach is an artefact inside the landscape, but outside conventional culture. The paradox mentioned earlier of the bach representing independence but occurring in communities is another example of the transgressions that it prompts. And yet domesticity, one part of the transgressive play, is not just a passive casualty but another factor in the violations. If the bach is a grotesque then its acceptance within architectural discourse represents another form of domestication. Observes Geoffrey Harpham:

> Domesticating our grotesqueries, we pay, applaud, or admire them, and finally pay them the ultimate tribute of ignoring their deformity.[16]

Such deformity is exactly the frame of reference used by David Mitchell to account for alterations to a suburban 'bach' by Mike Austin where he calls it the 'ugliest house in the bay'.[17] Mention is made of the unfinished and un-seamless, the places between the wall and the floor. The windows are identified as 'skew-whiff', the fibrolite walls are nailed 'hit and miss', and there is for Mitchell an air of attack, of aesthetic distress. The telling affirmation of the bach, he states, is the way in which it is persistently substandard.

> You bang your head on the roof, you fall off the balcony, you dive off the stair into the kitchen sink.[18]

In respouse, Austin notes that the bach may in part be the result of the struggle between people and houses where "typically a bach lacks those items that make a house a home."[19] The bach, in this instance, is the degenerate version of the more sanitised domestic and urban house, and in this way the bach precisely inscribes and defines the qualities of normalised building that one recognises as the home. There is a certain violence here that Mark Wigley has recognised, one firmly a part of the urban.

> The house is not simply the site of a particular subordination, a particular kind of violence. It is the very principle of violence. To dominate is always to house, to place in the domus. Domination is domestication.[20]

Thus, the bach does not represent a violent transgression of domestic condition, it is precisely the opposite; it is that the bach threatens to reveal the suppressed violence of everyday domesticity that makes it so subversive, it is a type of bastion against violence.[21] Into this the Austin bach is made ugly by the way its 'sub-standard' construction realises the constructed sub-standardness of domesticity in a suburb that has otherwise successfully maintained its sanitary mask. Suburban domesticity is constructed on the principle of suppression where deviancy and deficiency are actively fought. Against this model the bach is foreign. In the case of Austin's suburban bach it is easily identified as grotesque and ugly. Placed against a barbarous 'nature' the bach is empowered with the responsibility of domestic culture to claim back some part of being civilised precisely though its grotesqueness. Or as Beatriz Colomina has put it:

> The traditional domestic ideal of 'peace and quiet' can only be produced by engaging the house in combat, as a weapon: counterdomesticity.[22]

In this way the peaceful domestic is actually a suppression of the violence of domestication such that the stability of the domestic is principled on the grotesque ambivalence between nature and culture; interiority and exteriority; purity and impurity; in effect, war and peace.

Antipodean Innovations

This paper began with reference to the formation of the Taylors Mistake Surf Life Saving Club in 1916. The timing of this event is not without a bitter irony. At the time of the first casualty of the sea was pulled out and resuscitated at Taylors Mistake, thousands of New Zealand and Australian soldiers had just struggled from a similar surf onto a beach on the coast of Turkey with quite different consequences.

By the time of the landing at Gallipoli, on 25 April 1915, forty thousand Turkish soldiers manned dug-in fortifications on the Gallipoli Heights. When the Allied troops withdrew some eight months later they had suffered half a million casualties, including 140 thousand dead. Yet this military disaster is also the single event to which New Zealand has identified its coming of age as a nation.[23] The Allied troops never gained any more Turkish territory than they did on the first day of fighting and the conflict degenerated into the horror of a sustained trench war. But, as Maurice Shadbolt has observed, soldiers who had sailed off to war as citizens of the Empire returned home unmistakably New Zealanders.[24] The experience of Gallipoli severed, at least partially,[25] the umbilical cord that tied New Zealand to the Motherland of Britain, but at a terrible cost. Not only was New Zealand unprepared for the extent of the war, but it was ignorant of the scene of this conflict. It soon became apparent that the warring on the Gallipoli peninsula was to be fought not only in trenches, but trenches only metres apart. For a country expecting to go to battle on horseback this presented a crisis not only of men and tactics, but also materials and resources. They were not equipped to fight a trench war but they were quick to improvise for one. The New Zealander, along with the Australian soldier, became known for an antipodean ingenuity that could convert the domestic everyday into tools of war; jam tins and wire into bombs, shaving mirrors and ammunition boxes into periscopes so that rifles were able to be fired accurately without recklessly revealing one's head.[26] The New Zealanders at Gallipoli rapidly gained a reputation for being able to convert and invent devices necessary for the art war with their 'bush tinkering'. That this should be the case should come as no surprise as New Zealand, like Australia, was essentially a new country whose recent history was one of colonial conflict, where land and peoples were aggressively subordinated under an Imperial imperative, and where inventiveness and improvisation were simple necessities in a country whose growth outstripped its resources. The implication of transgressive inventiveness pervades the Gallipoli campaign. Another device improvised and adopted at Gallipoli was the trench periscope. Constructed from shaving mirrors and old ammunition boxes, they provided a safe and practical way to view the enemy positions over the top of the trenches. But more significantly they also signalled a fundamental shift in the way war was perceived. Here for the first time the battlefield was understood as a picture viewed through an optical device. War had become both physically intimate and conceptually remote. Filtered through the reflection of a shaving mirror, no-mans-land is removed from the realities of the personal and is displaced into the immaterial world of the aperture. One of the horrors of Gallipoli is the polarisation between these uncanny extremes; on the one hand tangible experiences of an exterior space, and on the other these abstracted visions of an interior space.[27] To say that this experience was grotesque is far too flippant an understatement, but the true consequence of this moment must be understood as part of a larger ideology that privileges the visual.

> The invisibility of the enemy, and the retirement of troops underground, destroyed any notion that war was a spectacle of contending humanity. ... The invisibility of the enemy put a premium upon auditory signals and seemed to make the experience peculiarly subjective and intangible.[28]

The shift from visual to auditory signals and telegraph and wireless communications became more important, reinforcing the shift from visual to aural forms of communications between sectors.[29]

> the deterioration of the visual field experienced by many in trench warfare removed those visual markers that allow an observer to direct his attention to what comes first and what later. ... The constriction of vision eliminated most of these signs that allow individuals to collectively order their experience in terms of problems to be solved in some kind of rational sequence. ...the individual's own perspective, a perspective that mobilized deeply layered anxieties, animistic images, and surprising unbidden associations.[30]

Critical to the development of this anti-visual ideology was the digging of trenches into the earth that typified battle in the World War I. It has been noted that the term ANZAC was coined by publicists to account for both Australian and New Zealand troops.[31] The mythology of the ANZAC began even before the first landings on the Gallipoli Peninsula. Alistair Thompson has noted how the cultural identity of the Australian 'digger' involved official legend as well as popnlar opinion. For Australians, the most influential of these authorised commentators was Charles Bean whose period writings from Gallipoli were fundamental in constructing the legend of the Australian soldier for those 'back home'.[32] Bean's description of the 'digger' as colonial hero was often at odds with the behaviour of the ANZAC soldier, who was well known for his larrikinism.[33] By comparison New Zealand lacks such comprehensive literary representation and can be said, to some extent, to have been caught up in Charles Bean's version of the ANZAC mythologising. This is apparent in Bean's *The ANZAC Book* where he describes an image of the quintessential digger:

> a tough man who shrugs off discomfort or pain with ironic grumbles and grins; a reluctant soldier but casual under fire and scornful of its consequences, fun-loving and cheeky, a man who distains military swagger.[34]

Domestic Virtues

Despite the persistence of the ANZAC moniker, the term 'digger' was preferred by the soldiers themselves.[35] While 'digger' is universally applied to the Australian soldier there is reason to believe that as a concept 'digging' is more a part of the New Zealand experience than the Australian one. John Dickson has observed that for New Zealanders, digging is a natural part of their psychological make-up.[36] The tradition to which Dickson alludes is that one forged on the back of aggressive colonization where digging, along with cutting and burning, stands as a basic action of imperial domestication. But the first wave of British colonization in New Zealand, unlike Australia, was accompanied by war between the English military and the Maori. This domestic military tradition brings with it a precedent for the 'digging in' at Gallipoli with a distinctly New Zealand precedent.[37] The digging of trenches at Gallipoli demonstrated, in monstrous circumstances, the primitive act of digging shelter in the form of the cave.[38] But despite the 'savage' and 'barbarous' origins of these fortifications they were none-the-less treated with the sanctity of ritual ascribed to the home. They were literally cave-houses, a primal home that has yet to master the cultured behaviour of suppression, where domestic rituals remain both uncanny and grotesque.

> The evening cuppa, sharing a parcel from home, improving dugouts, picking lice out of clothing and talking of what one would do when it was over, assumed almost mystical importance.[39]

Alan Moorehead, writing with romantic guile, describes trench conditions as displaying a state of heightened living where "Life in the suburbs of postwar New Zealand [or] Australia ... never reached this curious sense of living to the fullest."[40]

> The rabbit warren of trenches and dugouts at ANZAC became more familiar to them than their own villages and homes. By night 10,000 shaded fires were lit in niches in the cliffs, 10,000 crude meals were cooked; they slept, they waited for precious mail, their one reminder of the lost sane world, they put the individual extra touch to their dugouts - another shelf in the rock, a blanket across the opening, a biscuit tin to hold a tattered book.[41]

Moorehead calls the ANZAC trenches "grotesque and dangerous hutches. ... reduced to such a calm and almost matter-of-fact routine."[42]

Like the verandah, the trench is a transitory condition where spatial allocations are disturbed. To be in the trench is to be both outside and inside in a new state of spatial hybridity which not only challenges traditional 'home' parameters of interiority and exteriority, but also the domestic functions that are attached to these configurations such as domestic chores. The descriptions of Gallipoli trench-life made by Pederson and Moorehead give an acute edge to the insouciant comment made by Adolf Loos that domestic cleanliness was also efficient soldiering.[43] Life in the trenches subjected soldiers to a horror so absolute that any it denies any conventional domestic description yet it also provided a domestic paradox where corruption and defilement take on qualities of the mystical and sacrosanct. Indeed, William George Malone, Lieutenant Colonel commanding the Wellington Rifles, would state: "The art of warfare is the cultivation of domestic virtues."[44]

The horror of the trench as a home space is not one of the absence of domesticity but precisely the opposite. Here, domestic rituals become grotesquely exaggerated. On opening a tin of jam, J Murray laments:

> the flies are so thick that they are squashed in the process. One never sees the jam; one can only see a blue-black mixture of sticky, sickly flies. They drink the sweat on our bodies and our lips and eyes are always covered with them. As we wipe them away we squash them, thereby making more moisture for the others that take their place. There is no escape from them. The hundreds we eat do not seem to lessen the swarm. They are forever present, night and day.[45]

Yet within this vivid imagery lies a parody of New Zealand, the problem of insects that have infiltrated the house, or holidays at the beach where the flies are less numerous but equally insistent. For example, compare this to Nicholas Boyack's description of Gallipoli trench life.

> A man's immediate environment might include a few metres of earth, a periscope, some sandbags, a rotting human carcass and, if he was lucky, a view of the sea.[46]

The presence of a sea view is evoked against the monstrosity of the immediate, 'non-visual' environment of the trench so that the view attempts to transcend the horror contained within the cave-house. In an environment that challenges the traditional notion of 'seeing', insistent references to the view become an important insight into relationships of immediacy (the intimacy of death) and distance (the sea view) where the space of viewing is a repository for time, and therefore also nostalgia. This corresponds to that 'space' which Susan Stewart has attributed to the location of desire:

> a deferment of experience in the direction of origin and thus eschaton, the point where narrative begins/ends, both engendering and transcending the relation between materiality and meaning.[47]

The trench is literally the hybrid space between life and death, and consequently it evokes grotesque comparison. One Australian private called Gallipoli, "this newly discovered seaside resort".[48] And Lieutenant-Colonel Sutton of the AIF would comment, "No more charming spot in the world could be chosen for a holiday and now it is a veritable hell."[49] Compton McKenzie would go further:

> The comparison to a seaside resort on a fine bank holiday arrived so inevitably as really to seem rather trite. Yet all the time the comparison was justifying itself. Even the aeroplanes on the top of the low cliff eastward had the look of an 'amusement' to provide a sixpenny or threepenny thrill; the tents might so easily conceal phrenologists or fortune tellers; the signal station might well be a camera obscura; the very carts of Indian Transport, seen through the driven sand, had an air or waiting goat-carriages.[50]

A more obvious reason for these comparisons is the topographical similarity between Turkey and parts of Australia and New Zealand, but these comments need to be understood as embedded in nostalgia, and the recognition by a nation of its uniqueness. In this sense, the sea view from Gallipoli is a scene of looking back, evoking the physical distancing while finding a cultural familiarity in a foreign place.

> [Gallipoli] is very like Paekakariki. We are near the top of the hill . . . Below us is a beautiful bay [which] the Turks are constantly shelling and from our position above we can watch the men bathing and the shells bursting within 50 yards of them . . . Below us the bay, with a lovely calm sunlit sea, beyond two large islands, one very much like Kapiti.[51]

Home-Land

Observations such as these offer complex paradoxes. The references to landscapes from home points to both the familiarity of the environment of which the Australians and New Zealanders were now a part (physically and culturally), but simultaneously identifies this land as different and foreign by expressing a desire for the 'original'. Such comparison between features draws a direct parallel between lands and their peoples so that Paekakariki, and its seaside community, begin to embody the Gallipoli experience. It is able to do this by providing a geographic model for the battlefields of Gallipoli that is devoid of the violence. This evocation is an example of what George Mosse has called "the myth of the war experience".[52] According to Mosse, this myth-making is an attempt to transform an unpalatable event into an acceptable past, an action that involves the domestication of war and the brutalization of life. To evoke New Zealand seaside communities, or activities associated with these places, should be seen as an understandable, but violent, action of domesticating war in a attempt to find meaning in the trenches of Gallipoli. The consequence of such comparison is to present to those who did not experience the horror, a sanitised version of events, in this case the factors of commonality based within a collective spirit, and the architectural expression associated with it: holiday resorts, beach communities, and the action of 'baching'. Mosse notes:

> These levels of experience were closely related through the manner in which men and women confronted the war by building it into their lives - domesticating the war experience, as it were, making it an integral part of their environment, their cultural aspirations and political dreams.[53]

One version of this 'building in' of an unfathomable and incomprehensible event is the construction of mythologies to account for its failure or losses – of which the ANZAC myth is one. The literalness of these constructions should also be noted, one physical version being the war memorial, but other architectural expressions might be found if they were thought to exist. However, despite the relationship implied throughout this paper, the drawing of a direct parallel between the trenches of Gallipoli and the bach communities at places such as Taylors Mistake has been resisted. This is not the place to make a study of the psychological damage caused by war experiences such as Gallipoli but it does serve some use in indicating the way in which returning servicemen confronted peacetime domesticity. According to Thomson, there existed a staggering incideut of mental disorders amongst returned solders. In particular he cites the difficulties of soldiers who had enlisted as boys and returned home men but without the experience family routines and relationships, with the itinerant lifestyle of the army making the transition to domestic stability difficult. Families found it difficult to cope with men who were used to years living rough, and they also found it difficult to understand how they had changed.[54] At the risk of misrepresenting the diversity of psychological damage the war caused, it could be said that the expatriated soldiers were returned to Australian and New Zealand as particularly experienced bachelors, but moreover these were bachelors tempered by psychological and physical damage.[55] In Australia this new 'brotherhood' found various outlets including Returned Sailors' and Soldiers' Imperial League of Australia (RSSILA), and the trade unions where fraternity and violence were often not far from each other.[56] In New Zealand these organizations, while existing, do not appear to have expressed the same degree of collective responsibility to expressing the damage to social fabric.

Resistance

This paper seeks to draw parallels between the architectural culture of New Zealands bach communities, and the culture of nationalism influenced by a country's experiences of war. It could be used to account for the shift at Taylors Mistake from 'cave-mansions' to the more rudimentary accommodations for which it is known. Taylors Mistake might be said to exhibit a version of domestic living that mimics the digging, cave dwelling, and improvisation of living explicit at Gallipoli. This in part might account for the widespread adoption of the term 'bach' to describe an architectural typology only after the First World War, and explain why the two great periods of bach building in New Zealand coincide with the return of veterans. The bach shares a grotesque character with the trench based on their shared spatial hybridity of interiority/exteriority, or domestic destabilisation. And the view from the bach remains concerned with a nostalgic looking back.[57] The bach in these examples would be the embodiment of the war brought back and sanitised, then shared with families as a collective experience of peace rather than war, and which could act as a social mediator to allow some unspoken transfer between parties to address damage, the 'building' of a national identity.

However it is not the intention to define a point of origin (an architectural etymology) for the bach. My concern regarding contemporary discussions on the architecture of the New Zealand bach is that they exclude versions of history that cannot be accounted for by notions of typology, style, or chronological development. Such interpretations risk forgetting that architecture, and its resonances (meaning), are as much the product of complex social and cultural arrangements as they are comparative formal descriptions. To account for the bach through a meta-narrative like the Gallipoli experience may be no better, but one anecdotal account of Taylors Mistake is worth telling. While I was presenting an early version of this material in New Plymouth[58] local architect Paul Goldsmith[59] approached me about having spent much of his youth at Taylors Mistake after the Second World War where he recalled the large number of returned servicemen there. Despite having baches these men would dig large pits in the beach and build a fire in the middle of it. These pits were referred to as 'dugouts' and the old soldiers would spend the night there, drinking and talking.[60] During these times it was understood that these men were not to be approached, they were bachelors to be left alone.

Notes

[1] Although there is no fixed definition of a bach, historically it can be said to be a very small house, built by the occupants (often from reclaimed materials), and sited along a sea frontage. For most New Zealanders, the word 'bach' nostalgically evokes those cottages built between 1945-1955, many of which strongly express qualities of the rustic or colloquial. However enough baches exist in the form of converted trams, railway coaches, built-in caravans, or old army huts, that a conclusive architectural description is impossible. Consequently the bach is often referred to as a type of living, rather than a type of building, a paradox this paper discusses.

[2] Paul Thompson, *The Bach*, Wellington: V.R. Government Printer, 1985, p 10.

[3] Thompson, *The Bach*, p 7.

[4] Thompson, *The Bach*, p 11.

[5] Harold Orsman (ed), *The Dictionary of New Zealand English: A Dictionary of New Zealandisms on Historical Principles*, Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1997.

[6] Orsman cites: "Henry ...was made acting secretary to the Brigade, and was given the key of a room in the 'batch' formally occupied by Munn." *Truth*, 28 January 1911, p 6; "The 'bach' said the doctor was absolutely unfit for human inhabitation." *Truth*, 24 February 1912, p 6; and "Some suburban bloods lately gave a more or less 'fancy dress' ball at a 'bach', where six young men and a housekeeper managed to keep the wolf from the door." *NZ Observer*, 5 April 1913, p 16. Each of these examples should be considered an important precursor to the widespread adoption of the word to refer to a particular architectural type. But the use of quotation marks points to the provisional nature of its authority at these times, and alludes to a slippage in use between verb and noun. This shift is illustrated in Orsman's example for the formally similar 'crib': "When the mater returned to Dunedin after her holidays ... I determined to try 'baching', and after having been six months in my crib at the top of the hill, I am more than ever resolved not to descend again into town level ... My 'bach' is perched ...about 7000ft above sea-level." *Otago Witness* (Dunedin), 9 October 1912, p 79. See Orsman, entry on 'Bach', *The Dictionary of New Zealand English.*

[7] I am indebted to Ray Cairns and Barry Turpin, upon whose history of the Taylors Mistake surf life saving club I have relied. It may come as a surprise to them that so much of their material was directly architectural, as well as meticulously researched. See Ray Cairns & Barry Turpin, *Guardians of the Mistake: The History of the Taylor's Mistake Surf Lifesaving Club, 1916-1991*, Christchurch: Raven Press, 1991. The title of this book utilises an apostrophe in reference to the original naming (See also 'Where did that

Name Come From?', *New Zealand Memories*, 3, 15: 53). Throughout this essay I will omit the apostrophe for consistency, as is the custom today.

[8] Thompson, *The Bach*, p 66.

[9] Quoted in Cairns & Tnrpin, *Guardians of the Mistake*, p 23. The surf-life saving club had been created twelve months earlier when a near drowning had made apparent the dangerous nature of an un-supervised beach.

[10] Cairns & Turpin, *Guardians of the Mistake*, p 13. The first of these baches is attributed to Tom Archbold who built a dwelling in one of the coast caves in 1879. Its site was well south of Taylors Mistake. Cairns and Turpin describe this cave-house as having bunks, a fireplace with chimney, and a rain tank water supply. Archbold is also recorded as having used natural stones to build an outside 'bath' at the water edge. It is probable that the inhabitation of these caves began with eighteenth century fishermen who required overnight accommodation and slowly brought in material to make the caves more comfortable for inhabitation.

[11] Smith suggests that Osborn may have been visiting Taylors Mistake for ten years before building his house. Jo-Anne Smith, 'The Pilgrim's Rest at Taylors Mistake', *The Press* [Christchurch], 18 January 1996, p 16.

[12] Cairns & Turpin, *Guardians of the Mistake*, p 13. Osborn would go on to be the first president of the Taylors Mistake Surf Life Saving Club and later patron. He was also responsible for the erection of a memorial sundial next to the surf club to commemorate those killed in World War I.

The most famous of the recorded cave houses was The Hermitage, belonging to Jack and Jesse Worgan and constructed from materials salvaged from the 1906 Exhibition and Fuller's Old Theatre in Christchurch. The main room of the 'cave' measured 12 metres deep by 6 metres wide, and fittings included bunks, a sofa bed, duchess and drawers, large sideboard complete with dinner set, dining table and chairs, kerosene heaters, an Edison phonograph and an upright piano. Notes the son of one of the original owners: "Although the ceiling and part of the walls of the cave dwelling were formed by the natural rock (white washed) the exterior wall were well designed and constructed. In the main these were comprised of a 3ft base wall of rock and concrete surmounted by timber and stucco. These varied in height where they met the rock ceiling. The walls included two sets of double glazed doors with adjoining windows which opened onto a large tar-sealed terrace. A smaller space to the right of the main room was partitioned off and was known as the 'ladies room.'" J H B Worgan, 'Taylors Mistake', *New Zealand Memories*, 2, 14: 841 & 855-857.

[13] Smith, 'The Pilgrim's Rest at Taylors Mistake', p 16.

[14] D'Arcy Cresswell, writing during his visit to New Zealand in 1933 stated: "I am writing snugly in bed in my new apartment, what they call a bach in this barbarous land, though it's simply a self-contained room like many I've had in London ..." D'Arcy Cresswell, as quoted in H Orsman & J Moore (eds), *The Heinemann Dictionary of New Zealand Quotations*, Auckland: Heinemann, 1988, p 199. From this statement it can be suggested that the

difference between an apartment and a bach is its location. Contextualized within a 'barbarous land' the apartment becomes the bach, providing domestication in the face of a savage environment.

[15] Sarah Treadwell, 'Bordering the Grotesque', unpublished paper, courtesy Sarah Treadwell.

[16] Geoffrey Harpham, "The Grotesque: First Principles." *Journal of Aesthetic and Art Criticism*, 34: 197.

[17] David Mitchell, "The Ugliest House in the Bay", *Architecture New Zealand*, (May/June 1992): 28-33.

[18] Mitchell, "The Ugliest House in the Bay", p 32.

[19] Mike Austin, 'Architect's Statement', *Architecture New Zealand*, (May/June 1992): 33

[20] Mark Wigley, *The Architecture of Deconstruction: Derrida's Haunt*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1992, p 137.

[21] As one French general of the seventeenth century observed: "suburbs are fatal to fortresses." Quoted by Horst de la Croix, "Military Architecture and the Radial City Plan in Sixteenth Century Italy," *Art Bulletin*, 42, 4 (December 1960): 273-274.

[22] Beatriz Colomina, 'Domesticity at War', *Assemblage*, 16: 20.

[23] It has been observed that New Zealand is quite unusual in identifying its nationalism with a martial disaster, most countries preferring to celebrate victories.

[24] Maurice Shadbolt, *Voices of Gallipoli*. Auckland: Hodder and Stoughton, 1988, pp 7-8.

[25] Bruce Jesson has documented the development of the New Zealand economy and points out that the legacy of British colonial development is still active today. However Gallipoli is generally recognised as the most important cultural event in the development of an independent nationalism in New Zealand. Bruce Jesson, *Behind the mirror glass : the growth of wealth and power in New Zealand in the eighties*. Auckland: Penguin, 1987.

[26] Alan Moorehead names Lance Corporal W C Beech of the 2nd Battalion, Australian Imperial Force, as the inventor of the periscope rifle. Its design is said to have been a trench adaptation of periscopes used by British soldiers. Alan Moorehead, *Gallipoli*, London: Hamish Hamilton, 1956, p 147.

[27] Martin Jay has noted that to generalize on the effects on visual experience and the discursive nature of that experience stimulated by World War I is hazardous. But he points to several recent commentators who have made suggestive starts. Trench Warfare, they argue, created a bewildering landscape of indistinguishable, shadowy shapes, illuminated by lighting flashes of blinding intensity, and then obscured by phantasmagoric haze. The outcome of which was more visually disorienting than any other effect of the modern condition. The trench soldier's view of the world was limited to the sky above, and the mud underneath. The development of camouflage and the increasing similarity of uniforms, whether between officers and men or one side and another, or indeed between men and the earth, further blurred visual

distinctions between reality and illusion. Martin Jay, *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought.* Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1993, p 213.

[28] Eric J Leed, as quoted by Jay, *Downcast Eyes,* p 213.

[29] The only Victoria Cross awarded to a New Zealand soldier at Gallipoli was conferred to Cyril Bassett of the NZE Divisional Signal Company for his work in maintaining the telephone line communications. Of the award Bassett would later state that the only crosses his mates got were wooden.

[30] Leed, as quoted by Jay, *Downcast Eyes,* p 215. One backlash to the debasement of vision happening in the trenches poses a particular irony to architecture. Jay states that the willed return to visual lucidity and clarity in opposition to what had become known as 'the Cubist war' saw the development of a new nationalistic-inflected classicism in the arts that would eventually culminate in the uncompromising Purism of Amédée Ozenfant and Charles Édouard Jeanneret by 1920.

[31] According to Moorehead, the name ANZAC was forged by accident. Two Australian Army sergeants at the Australian Army and New Zealand Corps headquarters at Shepheard's Hotel in Cairo cut a rubber stamp with the initials 'A & N Z A C' for registering papers. When a code name was needed for the Corps, a British officer suggested 'ANZAC'. Moorehead notes the irony of the unfortunate resemblauce to the Turkish *ansac* which means 'almost'. Moorehead, *Gallipoli,* p 92.

[32] Bean was born in Australia in 1879 to British parents who return to England when Bean was twelve. He would not return to his birth land until 1905 and consequently his formal education and family life were well versed in the British public school model of serve, honour, patriotism and valour. This preparation would express itself during the war when he was a vocal advocate promoting Australian soldiers to vote for conscription. As Australia's official war correspondent based with the Australian Imperial Force, he was responsible for a prodigious output including national press reports and AIF newspapers. He also edited a series of ANZAC annuals and published his own 1916 press reports in *Letters from France.* See Alistair Thomson, *Anzac memories: living with the legend,* Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1994, pp 46-72.

[33] This reputation founded by the behaviour of soldiers in the streets of Cairo. 'Larrikin' is considered by the OED as being a distinctly Australian word, the equivalent of 'Hoodlum' or 'Hooligan.' Robin Skinner has observed the significance use of this term to describe a small group of New Zealand architects who presented their work overseas. Robin Skinner, 'Larrikins Abroad: International Account of New Zealand Architects in the 1970s and 1980s', Papers from the Sixteenth Annual Conference, Society of Architectural Historians, Australia and New Zealand, Launceston: SAHANZ, 1999, pp 301-306. For an account of Charles Bean's selective representation of the ANZAC soldier, see David Kent, 'The ANZAC Book and the ANZAC

Legend: C E W Bean as Editor and Image Maker', *Historical Studies*, 21, 84 (April 1985): 376-90.

[34] Thomson, *Anzac memories*, p 66.

[35] The origin of this term is thought to have been taken from a directive from General Ian Hamilton. In response to Australian and New Zealand claims that the beachhead at Gallipoli was an untenable position, Hamilton wrote: "Your news is indeed serious. But there is nothing for it but to dig yourselves right in and stick it out. ... You have got through the difficult business, now you have only to dig, dig, dig, until you are safe." Moorehead, *Gallipoli*, p 201.

[36] "In New Zealand, thanks to a literary tradition ... we are tuned to 3-D 'hack' and 'dig' cues in both literature and architecture. Thus, for us, the digging of a basement, something we haven't bothered with much, takes precedence over its imaginative aspect." John Dickson, 'The History of Entrapment: A Reading of Architecture's 2-D Accessory', *Interstices*, 4 (1995): npn. "Life, real life, was physical. To live was to dig, hack, hit, shove, sail, swim, kick." K Sinclair, "Life in the Provinces: The European Settlement", *Distance Looks our Way: The Effects of Remoteness on New Zealand*, Auckland: University of Auckland, 1961, p 179. Compare this to the front line observation of William Malone: "We go on digging under shell fire and rifle fire night and day, but thanks to our excellent digging our casualties get less." As quoted by Christopher Pugsley, *Gallipoli: The New Zealand Story*, Auckland: Hodder and Stoughton, 1984, p 171.

[37] Although it is a contentious point, New Zealand military historian James Belich has argued that the modern military trench has its inception with the New Zealand land wars of the 19th century. See James Belich, *The New Zealand Wars and the Victorian Interpretation of Racial Conflict*, Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1986.

[38] Dickson, 'The History of Entrapment', notes Vitruvius who mentions "others dug caves on mountain sides" and goes on to describe the trenches dug by Phrygians who lived in open country. *Vitruvius, The Ten Books on Architecture*, (translation by M H Morgan), New York: Dover, 1960, pp 39-40. Ironically, the excavation of antiquities at Gallipoli became something of a sport amongst French soldiers stationed at Cape Helles where Turkish artillery unearthed relics. Similarly French soldiers digging trenches at Hissarlik exposed stone sarcophagi which disclosed vases, lamps, statues, and bones. Moorehead, *Gallipoli*, pp 196-197.

[39] P A Pederson, *Images of Gallipoli: Photographs from the Collection of Ross J. Bastiaan*. Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1988, p 17.

[40] Moorehead, *Gallipoli*, pp 160-161

[41] Moorehead, *Gallipoli*, p 161.

[42] Moorehead, *Gallipoli*, p 160

[43] "Today we pay more attention to cleanliness. Even in the trenches the American soldiers built bathrooms. And what happens then? People said: 'And you call them soldiers?' Why? Because, for us Europeans, the image of a good soldier is bound indissolubly with that of a dirty soldier." Adolf Loos,

"Regarding Economy", in Max Risselada (ed), *Raumplan verses Plan Libre: Adolf Loos and Le Corbusier, 1919-1930*, New York: Rizzoli, 1989, p 139.

[44] Pugsley, *Gallipoli: The New Zealand Story*, p 171.

[45] J Murray, *Gallipoli, 1915*, London, 1977, p 60, as quoted by Pederson, *Images of Gallipoli*, p 17.

[46] Nicholas Boyack, *Behind the Lines: The Lives of New Zealand Soldiers in the First World War*, Wellington: Allen & Unwin/Port Nicholson Press, 1989, p 47.

[47] Susan Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection*, Durham & London: Duke University Press, 1986, p x.

[48] Private Finch, as quoted by John Robertson, *Anzac and Empire: the tragedy & glory of Gallipoli*, Richmond: Hamlyn, 1990, p 82.

[49] As quoted by Robertson, *Anzac and Empire*, p 82.

[50] Compton Mackenzie quoted in Moorehead, *Gallipoli*, p 188

[51] Paekakarike is a small coastal town very close to Wellington on the Kapiti Coast, so called after the island of the same name. Captain Harry Palmer, as quoted by Pugsley, *Gallipoli: The New Zealand Story*, p 213.

[52] George Mosse, 'Two World Wars and the Myth of the War Experience.' *Journal of Contemporary History*, 21 (1986): 491-513. The most central myth of the war experience is that of the glory of death. In order for the death of a nation's young men to be an acceptable loss to a culture the myth of war experience cloaks this ruin with a pretext of patriotic sacrifice for the collective good. Death in this model is a joyous self-sacrifice where soldiers do not die but 'live on' as a part of national purification.

[53] Mosse, 'Two World Wars and the Myth of the War Experience', pp 491-492

[54] Thomson, *Anzac memories*, p 111.

[55] Thomson notes that in Australia the national divorce rate doubled between the censuses of 1911 and 1921, and that women brought the majority of petitions for the first time Thomson, *Anzac memories*, p 111. Historian Judith Allen has summarised the impact of the war on Australian women: "The interpersonal brunt of the First World War and of the inadequacies of public provision for this population of disturbed young men fell disproportionably on Australian women. Women's bodies and minds absorbed much of the shock, pain and craziness unleashed by the war experience." Judith Allen, *Sex and Secrets: Crimes involving Australian Women Since 1880*, Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1990, p 131.

[56] Thomson notes the large increase in trade union involvement reflecting the desire of returned servicemen to address the conditions of conditions, pay and industrial power which they lost during the war. As Terry King records, wherever there were returned soldiers there was also "a scent of trouble, a whiff of impending mob violence, a vague sense of things being out of control." As quoted by Thomson, *Anzac memories*, p 115.

[57] Another account of the sea view from the bach is given by Christine McCarthy, 'A Summer Place: Postcolonial Retellings of the New Zealand Bach', *Jouvert: A Journal of Postcolonial Studies*, 2, 2: npn.

[58] New Plymouth is situated on the west coast of the North Island of New Zealand. The coast line in this area contains some of the last bach communities that remain relatively unaltered from the 1950s bach building boom. However in part this may be the greater result of relative isolation and a low socio-economic population. I was accompanied by my colleague Jeremy Treadwell (School of Architecture, UNITEC Institute of Technology) who offered his own, quite different, version of the bach based on his research with the remaining baches on Rangitoto Island in the Hauraki Gulf, Auckland. This material is part of Treadwell's doctoral research.

[59] Goldsmith has the distinction of being conceived at Taylors Mistake. I take this opportunity to apologise to him for my flippancy in asking whether his conception was in fact the 'Mistake', and thank him for his generous recollections.

[60] Today there exists a great deal of uncertainty about the future of the Taylors Mistake baches. In 1976 the Christchurch City Council voiced a concern about the threat to public health posed by the Taylors Mistake baches. It proposed the removal of all seventy baches but then agreed to a ten year stay of execution if electric toilets were fitted. By 1986 only thirty-eight baches remained at Taylors Mistake when the Council proposed a permanent stay in response to the response from bach-holders. This was overturned by the town planning commissioners on the grounds that zoning this area 'residential holiday' intruded on the integrity of the area as a natural reserve. An independent working party formed in 1991 recommended a compromise arrangement where those baches not deemed to interfere with public access or enjoyment may stay, while the others will be either destroyed or removed to another site set aside away from the beach. These are only recommendations and it remains to be seen what will finally happen to one of New Zealand's most important architectural communities, but it seems unlikely that the Taylors Mistake baches will survive as a 'living' architectural record. See David Close, 'The City Council's Efforts to Fix the Taylors Mistake Row', *The Press* [Christchurch], 8 July 1993, p 12. David Round, 'The city council's failure in the Taylors Mistake row', *The Press* [Christchurch], 29 July 1993, p 12.