

**BILLENS Archibald (Archie)**

Born: 17 Jun 1885 Akaroa, NZ  
 Died: 5 Sep 1962 (77) Levin, NZ  
 Buried: Tiro Tiro Rd cemetery, Levin, NZ

Father: Henry 1846 – 1936 Kelvin Grove  
 Mother: Elizabeth (Eliza) Hewitt 1852 – 1935 Kelvin Grove

Married: Never

**Children: None**

**Notes:**

He was the 5<sup>th</sup> child of 8 from his father’s 2<sup>nd</sup> marriage. The 1<sup>st</sup> marriage had 5 children

His brother Robert H was a joint owner of the Horowhenua Chronicle

His nephew, Hewitt Elliot Billens (Son of Robert) was KIA in 1944. He was a pilot officer.

He was a photographer in Levin from 1922 – 1954.

He was a stalwart of the Waiophehu Tramping Club

**Property:**

Does not appear on any property lists

**Electoral Rolls:**

	<b>Archibald</b>	
1908	Palmerston Nth	Photographer
1911	Palmerston Nth	Photographer
1914	Palmerston Nth	Photographer
1919	Palmerston Nth	Photographer
1922	Oxford St	Photographer
1925	Oxford St	Photographer
1928	Oxford St	Photographer
1931	Oxford St	Photographer
1935	Oxford St	Photographer
1938	Oxford St	Photographer
1943	Oxford St	Photographer
1946	Oxford St	Photographer
1949	Oxford St	Photographer
1954	Queen St	Photographer
1957	Queen St	Retired
1960	Queen St	Retired

LDC 16 Mar 1920

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Mr Arch Billens, of the Billens Studios, Palmerston North and Eketahuna, has purchased the photographic business carried on by Miss Gardner, in Levin, and will take possession at the beginning of next month.

LDC 30 Mar 1920

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Miss Gardner announces that she has disposed of her photography business to Mr A. Billens, and thanks her clients for their appreciated support.

The ladies of Levin will be greatly

LDC 28 May 1920

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In another column Mr Arch, Billens, of the Billens' Studios, Palmerston North and Eketahuna, draws attention to the fact that he has taken over the photographic business lately carried on in Levin by Miss Gardner. Mr Billens, who has taken up his permanent residence in Levin, will devote the whole of his time to the local busi-

ness. Some important improvements have been made in the lighting arrangements of the studio, and as the new proprietor is a student of the most modern methods of his craft, it is claimed that work of city calibre can now be turned out in Levin. Some fine samples of child and adult portraiture taken during Mr **Billens'** recent stay in Eketahuna, and finished in the Levin studios, are now to be seen in the show cases. A fast lens has been added to the studio equipment for winter work, while another is en route from England. The location of the studio is in Haswell's Buildings, next Miss McKegg's tea rooms.

LDC 17 Apr 1923

Mr A. **Billens** secured some excellent photographs of last week's Gate-opening at Weraroa. Every individual in the big crowd stands out distinctly, while the Prime Minister's all-embracing smile has been caught to perfection.

In order to bring this Levin studio up to date, Mr A. Billens, photographer, has imported from the optical works of Messrs J. H. Dallmeier, Ltd., London, one of their latest types of portrait lenses. The lens, which is of sixteen inches focus, is of very large dimensions, and measures nearly a foot in length, this size being necessary to obtain correct modelling and perspective in large photo studies direct in the camera. It is also equipped with an arrangement for taking soft focus photos, which are now so much in vogue with the leading photographic artists of England and America. A reflex camera of the latest pattern, for the photographing of pedigree stock, has also been added to the studio equipment.

LDC 8 Oct 1928

**PUBLIC NOTICES.  
THANKS.**

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**I**N connection with Saturday's fire we desire to express our sincere thanks to the Fire Brigade for their efforts and to all those who assisted in the removal of goods from the tearooms and studio, and in other ways.

OXFORD TEA ROOMS.  
A. **BILLENS.**

LDC 28 Oct 1931

**OXFORD TEA ROOMS FIRE.  
CHARGE OF ARSON FAILS  
JURY RETURNS VERDICT OF  
"NOT GUILTY."**

The story of the discovery of the fire was told by Archibald Billens, photographer, of Levin, who occupies rooms immediately behind the storeroom where the outbreak occurred. He said he heard someone in there chopping wood during the afternoon. Shortly before 6 p.m. he heard some person enter the storeroom, remain there a short while, go out and slam the door. Then there followed footsteps down the tearoom stairs and the closing of the main door. He heard all this in sequence quite distinctly. A few minutes later he had occasion to go to his dark room and on passing through his studio, found it full of smoke. He immediately notified the fire brigade by telephone and informed Mr Williams, proprietor of the tearooms.

LDC 24 Jun 1931

## **NEW ZEALAND'S PRODUCTS.**

**Levin Is a Good Consumer.**

**A Survey of the Window Display.**

## Arch. Billens.

Some examples of natural colour in photographs are displayed in Mr Billens's show cases. These are his own work and are a beautiful example of what is being done in our own town. Visitors have frequently expressed astonishment that such high-class photography can be produced outside the cities. The result is due to Mr Billens's rare combination of technical skill with the artistic touch.

LDC 13 Apr 1945

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Friends of Mr. A. Billens will regret to learn that he has been indisposed for some time, necessitating his going to Palmerston North for remedial treatment.