

# Barquilla de la Santa Maria

BULLETIN of the Catholic Record Society -  
Diocese of Columbus

Vol. XXIV, No. 6

June 13: St. Anthony of Padua

June, A.D. 1999

## The Church in Hardin County to 1883

by Rev. Anthony S. Siebenfoercher<sup>1</sup>

*This sketch appeared on pages 498-502 and 728-729 of the 1883 History of Hardin County, Ohio, by Warner, Beers & Co. Since we have never published any story on the Church in Hardin County, this ought to be of interest to our readers. The notes have been appended by your editor.*

### Kenton

The earliest Catholic settlers of Hardin County were Peter Woods, Henry Norback, John McCormick and John Garrett<sup>2</sup>, who lived in Goshen Township twelve years before the Wyandot Indians gave up hunting in its forests and moved on toward the setting sun. Edward McGuigin<sup>3</sup>, Michael Toner<sup>4</sup> and Bernard Matthews<sup>5</sup>, arrived in 1834. The former two settled likewise in Goshen Township, while Mr. Matthews at first entered forty acres of land in Pleasant Township, which he soon sold, and bought land in Cessna Township, where he still owns a farm of 280 acres. Of these first Catholic pioneers, Mr. Matthews, now in his eighty-second year, alone survives.<sup>6</sup>

The first priest known to visit this county was Father Emanuel Thienpont<sup>7</sup>, one of the earliest missionaries of Ohio, who came to Hardin County as early as 1836. Afterward, Fathers McNamee, Sheehan, Meagher, Howard and Crogan<sup>8</sup> occasionally attended to the spiritual wants of the Catholics in this vicinity, until about

the year 1862, when the Superior of the Society of the Most Precious Blood at Minster, Auglaize Co., Ohio, undertook to send priests at regular intervals to Kenton. Thus came in turn Fathers Patrick Henneberry, known as a zealous missionary as far as California and Oregon, at present giving missions in South Africa, an eloquent preacher in both English and German; Mathias Kreuch<sup>9</sup>, a very saintly man, now among the departed; Alphonse Laux; Joseph Dwenger, at present Bishop of Fort Wayne; Henry Drees, at present Provincial of the Society of the Most Precious Blood, and Christian French.

In June, 1866, Rev. N. R. [Nicholas Raymond] Young, a man of superior talent and piety, arrived as the first stationary pastor of Kenton. Soon after this, Father Kelly, pastor of St. Joseph's Church at Dayton, Ohio, died, and the parish, one of the first in the arch-diocese, was offered to Father Young, but this truly humble priest begged his bishop to permit him to remain with the young and poor congregation of Kenton. The request was granted. After difficult missionary labor in Hardin County for three years and some mouths, Father Young asked to be removed to West Liberty, Logan County, which place he had already been attending from Kenton, and where he had just started a congregation and fitted up a large building for a chapel. He lived at West Liberty until good Father Coveney was cruelly assassinated by a brutal ruffian in his own little house near the

church at Bellefontaine, when he was called to that place, the last charge in his life. Father Young was a member of the Dominican order before he came to Kenton, and had been vested with many distinguished positions in that community. He died near Washington, D.C., on the banks of the Potomac, on the very estate where he first saw the light of day, in his fifty-eighth year, July 24, 1876, while on a visit to his home. The uncle of Father Young, Rev. [Nicholas] Dominic Young, O. P., that grand old Dominican patriarch, who, sixty-five years ago, was the only Catholic priest in Ohio, outlived the subject of our sketch by several years. Father Young's memory is held in benediction by all who had the happiness to know him. After Father Young had left, Father N. McGrath visited Kenton several times, not with any appointment as pastor, but only by request of Father Young, who still felt concerned for his former spiritual children.

At first divine service was held in different private dwellings, but especially in the houses of Messrs. Toner, McGuigin and Matthews, afterward in Kenton at the homes of John Gorius and Thomas Cunningham. The little frame building of Mr. Gorius, erected on Lot No. 8 in Samuel Mentzer's Addition to Kenton, is still standing.<sup>10</sup> The house fronts on East Columbus street and is now owned by John Bloom. In it, His Grace, the Most Reverend John Baptist Purcell, Archbishop of Cincinnati, administered the sacrament of Confirmation for the first time in Hardin County. After the erection of the large brick block on the southeast corner of the public square by Jeremiah Crowley & Co.<sup>11</sup>, the hall in the third story was rented and fitted up for Catholic worship. On the 19th of January, 1852, John Gorius, Francis Laubus and John G. Ritzler, as Catholic committeemen, bought of Christopher Willeke in their own name, two lots in Thomson's Addition, extending across into J. H. Houser's Subdivision and fronting on East Ohio street, in consideration of \$65, for the

purpose of erecting thereon a house of worship.<sup>12</sup> These lots, the first Catholic church property in the county, are at present owned by Mrs. H. Newcomb et al., for, although the deed had already been made out to the Bishop, they had to be disposed of, as the greater part of the congregation was displeased with the location.

On the 14th of January, 1862, Lot No. 32 was bought from E. C. McVitty for \$162.50, located on the northwest corner of Cherry and North streets.<sup>13</sup> On this site Father Patrick Henneberry began the present church in the year 1864. On July 10 of the same year, Archbishop Purcell laid the corner stone in the presence of a large concourse of people. An anecdote is related, that the platform which had been erected for the officiating clergy and their assistants gave way and all thereon came to the ground except the Archbishop, who had quickly stepped upon the corner stone, and being just ready to speak to the people, he took occasion from the little accident to tell the audience that whosoever stood in the Church of Christ (as he did then on the corner stone), should never fall to the ground.<sup>14</sup> The church committee at that time consisted of Messrs. Bernard Matthews, Frank A. Schwarz<sup>15</sup>, Sr., Jeremiah Crowley, Sr., and John G. Ritzler. Mr. Matthews was Treasurer. His books are still extant. They have been kept with great order and accuracy. The contract for building the church was awarded to Ambrose Burkhard.<sup>16</sup> According to the original plan, the church should have been much longer, together with a beautiful steeple, but before the building could be put up, labor and material became so much higher that the first plan had to be abandoned and the present brick structure, 40x60, was erected. Father Dwenger collected for this church, outside of Kenton, \$2,000.

The dedication of the church took place on Sunday, December 9, 1866, during the pastorate of Father Young. Archbishop Purcell again officiated.<sup>17</sup> Mary Immaculate was chosen

patroness of the church, but as the 8th of December, the feast of the Immaculate Conception, was not then a feast of obligation, the Sunday following the feast was selected for the dedication.

The first parsonage was a small frame building on Lot No. 3 in Simeon Jenning's Addition on North Detroit street<sup>18</sup>, subsequently owned by Rev. J. L. Phillips, of the Baptist Church. This house being situated too far from the church, Father Young sold it in 1869 and built the present large and comfortable brick dwelling on Lot No. 33, west of the church, which was purchased of Bernard Matthews for \$128, February 8, 1864. Father Young had left, however, before the house could be completed, and its first occupant was Rev. Augustine M. Quatman, the second stationary pastor at Kenton, who arrived about Christmas, 1869. Father Quatman had just been ordained, but he preached eloquently in both English and German. The people were much attached to him, and were sorely grieved when, at the end of only four months, he was removed by his own request.

(To be concluded)

#### NOTES

1) Rev. Anthony S. Siebenfoercher, author of this sketch, was born in Matri in the Austrian Tyrol on February 16, 1844. He came to America with his parents in 1855 and settled in Tiffin, Ohio. He began his studies for the priesthood at St. Thomas Seminary in Kentucky in 1863 and completed them at Mt. St. Mary Seminary in Cincinnati. He was ordained by Archbishop Purcell on December 21, 1871 and seven days later arrived in Kenton. His thirty-three years at Immaculate Conception Parish were ones of remarkable growth, fueled by his dedication and devotion to the people, despite constant shortages of funds. In 1905 his health began a rapid decline and Archbishop Moeller

transferred him to Mt. St. Mary's Seminary as a spiritual director. He died in Dayton on November 8, 1911. The *Graphic News-Herald* of Kenton noted that his "name has always been a synonym for charity, and loving kindness, and long suffering, and self-sacrifice, and temperance, and faith made perfect in works." In all his years in Kenton, "there was never a cry of distress that he didn't hear and answer; no one ever hungered long after Father Siebenfoercher learned that one was hungering; and no one ever suffered long from winter's cold when the reverend Father had it in his power to warm him."

2) Garrett and Woods seem to have left no record of their presence in Goshen Township. Norback appears as John Norbeck, who in July of 1834 entered the northeast quarter of the southeast quarter of Section 24, Goshen Township (now on County Highway 265, just inside the Hardin County line). He also entered land in Williams County. John McCormick in September of 1834 entered the southwest quarter of the northwest quarter of Section 26, Goshen Township (east of Township Road 235, one-quarter mile south of County Highway 110). (Auditor of State, Land Office, *U.S. Lands - 18 Ranges, North & South*, Vol. 3, pp 285-286)

3) Edward McGuigan (ca 1800-1864) was born in County Tyrone, Ireland about 1800, as was his wife Ellen Tally (died 1849). They arrived in Hardin County in July, 1834, having formerly lived in New York.

4) Michael Toner (c 1810-1867) immigrated from Ireland via New York.

5) See separate article in the upcoming August *Bulletin* for Bernard Mathews and his son-in-law Daniel Flanagan. The story of his grandson Thurman Flanagan is expected to run in November.

6) An earlier version of this history, no doubt by

the same author, appeared in the 1879 *Atlas of Hardin County* by H. G. Howland, C.E., page 22. With Mr. Mathews it mentions P. Haley as a surviving early Catholic of Goshen Township. Patrick Haley (also Haly and Hale) was born in County Sligo, Ireland in 1812 and his wife Susan in Ireland in 1805. They were married in New York City and came to Ohio in the fall of 1837, walking from Sandusky while carrying their goods and their infant son. Their son John, a farmer and drain tile manufacturer in Goshen Township, was elected representative to the Ohio House in 1875 and 1877.

7) See the *Bulletin* of February, 1983 for a sketch of Father Thienpont's life. He assisted the pastor of Tiffin from 1834 to 1835, then was stationed at Dayton until 1844, with care of Troy, Piqua, Urbana, Springfield, etc.

8) Rev. Joseph McNamee was pastor at Tiffin from 1839 until 1847. See Juergens' *History of the Diocese of Cleveland* for details. Rev. Maurice Howard was pastor at Springfield from 1851 and cared for a wide mission territory. See the *Bulletin* of March, 1988 for Rev. James Meagher. Early in 1852 Magher was sent to Urbana to organize a parish; he was transferred to Columbus that July but continued to visit Urbana until 1853. Rev. Thomas Sheahan (Cornelius M. Sheehan, per Lamott) attended Kenton from Bellefontaine and then from Piqua, 1854 to 1856. Rev. Austin A. Grogan was pastor at Urbana from 1855 until his death in 1859. To these must be added Rev. Michael Kennedy, who attended Kenton from Piqua in 1857 and Rev. John F. McSweeney, who attended Kenton from Marion and then from Bellefontaine, 1858 to 1861. This leaves a gap as to what priest tended the flock at Kenton from 1847 until 1851.

9) The name is signed Kreuzsch in the baptismal register.

10) John and Barbara Gorius were from France

and immigrated to Ohio with their small family in the early 1840s. John had a tailor shop in Kenton. Their house was on the site of the present 432-434 East Columbus St.

11) Jeremiah or Jerry Crowley (ca 1822-1879), a native of Ireland, was a wealthy wholesale grocer in Kenton. His wife Ellen (Hall) was born in County Tipperary in 1834 and came to America in 1850. She and Jerry had one child, born in New York, before coming to Ohio about 1854 and eight more were born here. "In her family circle she was the grand center; always revered and looked up to as counsellor and advisor, and most dearly beloved and admired, possessing at all times that tender and motherly affection that so closely entwines the hearts of those with whom it comes in contact..." After her sudden death in 1876, the people of Kenton turned out *en masse* for her funeral, scarcely one-fourth of those wishing to attend being able to crowd into Immaculate Conception Church. It is not clear which building Crowley made available to the Church. In 1859 Jeremiah Crowley and Henry Dickson bought the northeast corner of Main & Franklin Streets, where a three-story brick building still stands. In 1862 the same partners bought the lot on the southwest corner of the same intersection; Society member James Staudenheimer remembers that a three-story, stone-fronted building stood there until a few years ago. The July 13, 1864 Cincinnati *Catholic Telegraph* mentions this, saying, "A fine hall, in which divine service is held once a month, is reserved for the use of the congregation by a worthy Catholic, Mr. Crowley, at the low rent of \$50 a year." The *Telegraph* of December 12, 1866 makes it clear that the Crowleys often hosted the clergy, when it says that after the dedication of Immaculate Conception Church the clergy and many friends were hospitably entertained, *as usual*, by Mr. Jeremiah Crowley.

12) Hardin County Deed Record L/163, dated Jan. 19, 1852, from Christopher Wielke or



Wiellke. The three trustees sold the lots to Archbishop Purcell in May, 1852 (Deed M/427). There must have been an earlier agreement for the purchase of these lots, for the *Catholic Telegraph* of December 6, 1849 carried this note: "Kenton -- In this place, also on the same road [railroad from Cincinnati to Sandusky], a lot for a church has been obtained. -- The Catholics of the neighborhood are now visited by the priests of Tiffin and Thompson [Precious Blood Fathers], Seneca County."

13) Deed Record W/51

14) This anecdote also appears in the *Cincinnati Catholic Telegraph* of July 13, 1864. In that version, Purcell does not step onto the cornerstone, but the portion of the platform on which he is standing does not collapse. The article also says, "Five Irish Catholics have contributed \$900 [to the lot and construction]; they are Messrs. Matthews, Crawley, Toner, Ballesty, and McGuigan; and two German Catholics, Messrs. Retzler and Burchkardt, gave each \$100. Non-Catholic citizens liberally contributed \$800. ...There are many fallen Catholics all around, and the presence of a zealous and pious priest is much needed to bring back the erring, to preserve the youth and to guide to the Church the enquirers for heavenly truth."

15) Franz A. Schwartz (1813-1885) and his family came from Bavaria to America in 1847 and settled three miles north of Kenton.

16) In the 1987 parish photo directory and history, Father John Wolf gives an account of the tribulations endured during construction of the church, based on letters preserved at the parish.

17) The *Catholic Telegraph* of December 12, 1866 reported that Purcell was assisted by the pastor, Rev. N. R. Young, Rev. Mr. Wiesenberg of Springfield, Rev. Charles Harne of Emmanuel

Church, Dayton, and seminarian Mr. Tilly. The Archbishop spoke in English and Father Harne preached in German. At that time Mass was offered in Kenton every Sunday and once a month on weekdays in Forest, Dunkirk, Washington, Johnstown, and Mount Victory, all in Hardin County.

18) Father Young purchased the lot in 1868 and sold it to Archbishop Purcell May 10, 1868. Purcell sold it to Joshua L. Phillips on Oct. 1, 1868. (Deeds 29/569 and 30/443) The site now is 502 North Detroit Street.



**Book of Baptisms  
Forest, Hardin Co., Ohio  
1865-1881**

Forest is located in the northeast corner of Hardin County, at the former junction of the Pennsylvania Railroad (the existing Conrail tracks) and the Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago & St. Louis Railway, which came north from Bellefontaine via Kenton and continued on to Tiffin and Sandusky. The railroad was a convenient form of travel for the Precious Blood Fathers, who visited Forest from their convent at St. Aloysius, Thompson, some miles northeast of Tiffin. Fathers Kreuzsch and French belonged to this community. Fathers Quattmann, Fas, Dexter, and of course Siebenfoercher were stationed at Kenton.

Forest never progressed beyond the status of station, there never being any church or even church property there.

The handwriting in this little book is difficult to decipher, especially Father French's, and the priests were not consistent in their spelling of the family names, but we hope the effort, despite inevitable errors, will have been worthwhile.

Anno D. 1865

28 March Fabian, born 21 March 1865, son of Ferdinand Kurz and Theodora Daniel; spons. Fabian Speichel? and Genevieve Kurz Math. Kreusch

28 March Catherine, born 19 March, daughter of Louis Bittel? and Genevieve Kurz; spons. Jacob Schoot and Catherine Schoot. MK

6 April Catherine, born 28 March 1865, daughter of James Dalton and Honora Mahanny; spons. Michael Dalton and Catherine Mahanny. MK

23 September Elizabeth, convert, age 45 years, daughter of John Kondy and Theodora Padis... MK

23 September Mary, convert, age 14, daughter of John Kondy and Theodora Padisten? MK

[1866]

12 April Katherine, daughter of Thomas Mungiben and Mary Magdalen; spons. Thomas Mangen and Katherine Cernag in the house? of Besabee Konda. C. French

17 July J...., child of James and Elizabeth Moran; spons. John Weber and Betsaba Centa. Cn. French

17 July Mary Jane, daughter of L... Letsenheiser and Margaret; spons. Andres and Catherine Menges. Cn. French

1 August, 1866 I registered a baptism in the book of the church of Kenton for this mission. [not signed; not French's hand]

1870

22 Feb. Catherine Quinlan, daughter of Don Quinlan and Helen Quinlan, born 27 January 1870, spons. Thomas Shahty and Elizabeth Mungibbons. Augustine M. Quattmann

24 June, 1870 Frederick son of John O'Brien and Elizabeth Buss, born 2 December 1860; spons. James Moran and Elizabeth Kando. N.J.D. Fas

1872

Jan. 11 William Thomas Dorgan son of James and Julia Dorgan, born 20 ---, 1871; spons. James Maning and mother Catherine Maning. A. S. Siebenfoercher

Feb. 4 Dorothy daughter of James Moran and Elizabeth Kando, born Jan. 11, 1872; spons. Michael Moran and Dorothy Kando. AS

April 10 Julia daughter of Morris and Mary Lynch, born 6 April, 1872; spons. Thomas Mongiven and wife Mary. AS

June 5 John, son of Patrick Ford and Mary Ford, born 3 March, 1872; spons. Cornelius Moren and Mary Mongiven. AS

same day Patrick, son of John Curtin and Anna Healy; born 1 June, 1872; spons. Thomas Maning and Catherine Dorgan. AS

1873

Jan. 3 Catherine, born 28 Dec. 1872, daughter of Thomas Shea and Margaret Maning born Lozenheiser; spons. Mary Lynch (and Morris Lynch, not present). AS

March 26 Mary, born 23 March 1873, daughter of John O'Conner and Catherine Quinlan; spons. Thomas Mongiven and Catherine Lillis. AS

July 3 Elizabeth, daughter of Daniel Quinlan and Helen Heahy, born 17 June, 1873; spons. Catherine Connors and James Connors. AS

Nov. 20 Catherine, born 10 Nov. 1873, daughter of John Curtin and Ann Healy; spons. Margaret Shea (and Thomas Shea, absent). AS

1874

25 Feb. (in danger of death) Joseph, born 23 Feb. 1874, son of Joseph Rümeli and Frances Schraner; he died, before which unction etc. were supplied. AS

25 Feb. (in danger of death) James, born 23 Feb. 1874, son of Joseph Rümeli and Frances Schraner; buried on 18 March, 1874; spon. Jacob Schots and Carolina Weiman. AS

18 March Jane, daughter of Morris Lynch and Mary Shehay, born 26 Feb. 1874; spon. Mary Rowler and John Rowler. AS

same day Mary, born 9 August 1871, daughter of Joseph Sims and Mary Metters, Protestants, from Indiana; spon. Julia Ann Dorgan. ("His" grandmother promises to educate Mary in the Catholic faith.) AS

20 May Michael Henry, born 3 May 1874, son of James Moran and Elizabeth Condon; spon. Henry Schott and Bridget Lillis. AS

21 May Elizabeth, born 11 May 1874, daughter of James Dorgan and Julia Ann Metters; spon. James Connors and Margaret Mongiven. AS

1875

May 16 James, born 20 April 1875, son of John Curtain and Ann Healy; spon. Jacob Schotts and Catherine Schotts. A.M. Quatman

June 20 John, born 22 May, son of John Conner and Catherine Quinlan; spon. James Lillis and Margaret Lillis. AMQ

"The last two copied from the Kenton book by Fr. Siebenfoercher."

17 Sept. William, born 27 August, son of James Moran and Elizabeth Kando; spon. Mary Burke? and John Burke? AS

23 ---- Joseph, born 18 March 1876 [sic], son of Joseph Ruemli and Frances Schraner; spon. Mathias Ruemli and Mary Ruemly. AS

1876

23 Feb. Mary, born 3 Jan. 1876, daughter of Jacob Weiman and Carolina Berger; spon. Jacob Schotts and Catherine Schotts. AS

1877

Jan. 1 Mary, daughter of James Curtin and Julia Ann Metters widow of James Dorgan deceased; spon. James Moran. AS

27 Sept. Helen, born 21 Sept. 1877, daughter of James Moran and Elizabeth Condon; spon. Francis Schotte and Catherine Lillis. AS

22 Nov. Margaret, born 26 Oct., 1877, daughter of John Conner and Catherine Quinlan; spon. James Lillis and Catherine O'Donnel. A. D. Dexter

[1878]

19 Dec. John, born 19 Dec. 1878, son of Michael Griffin and Mary Quinlan; spon. G. Shea and M. Manning. ADD

1879

30 Aug. John, born 27 Aug. 1879, son of Mary Haefer and James Bowler; spon. Jacob Schotts and Margaret Haefer. AS

27 Sept. Matthew, born 18 Sept., son of Peter Molony and Margaret Quinlan; spon. John Connor and C. Connor. [hand of A. D. Dexter]

1880

8 May Franz Jacob, born 16 April 1880, son of Jacob Weiman and Carolina Berger; spon. Jacob Schott & wife. AS

18 Nov. Alfred, son of Frederick Hune and Ann Elizabeth Anweg, born 14 Nov.; spon. Honora Griffin. AS

same day Herrmann, son of Frederick Hune and Ann Elizabeth Anweg, born 7 Feb. 1879; spon. Catherine Conners. AS

1881

24 Feb. Catherine, born 1 Feb., daughter of Peter Malony and Margaret Quin; spon. Francis and Catherine Willis. ADD

[Other records of this station can be found in the books of LaRue St. Joseph Parish.]

**Abstracts from  
*The Catholic Telegraph*  
(Continued from Vol. XXIV, No. 5)**

June 22, 1848

Subscriptions:

Levi Anderson, Chauncy, O.

John Cunningham, Londonderry, O.

June 29, 1848

Subscriptions:

Miss Sarah Mills, Lancaster, O.

July 13, 1848

ST. JOSEPH'S, PERRY COUNTY, OHIO

VISIT OF THE MOST REV. ARCH-BISHOP OF BALTIMORE. -- On Wednesday the 14th, June, we were highly honoured as well as gratified by the arrival amongst us in this part of the Diocese of the Most Rev. Arch-Bishop Eccleston. Learning that he intended to take this way on his rout [sic] to Detroit, one of the Fathers met him in Zanesville on the way, and with the worthy Pastor Rev. Father Wilson of that place, escorted him in a private vehicle to Somerset. There, they were agreeably surprised to find a very large procession of the citizens, a good portion of them

being Protestants, formed in the street leading to the Catholic Church to honour his arrival. The Somerset band performing most delightfully, proceeding all in order to the Church. On their arrival at the church, the young ladies of St. Mary's Academy met the procession and falling in the ranks, entered the church inclosure, dressed in the uniform of the Seminary. Arriving at the platform of the door of the Church, one of them turning to the Arch-Bishop made him a beautiful address and well appropriated for the occasion, in the name of all present...

[Eccleston visited St. Mary's Academy. In the evening he visited St. Joseph's Priory. On Trinity Sunday he ordained Rev. Joseph Ryan priest, Albert Bokle and Vincent Daly subdeacons, and Raymond Clary and Dominic Noon to minor orders. On Monday he ordained Daly and Bokle deacons and on Tuesday he raised the same two to the priesthood.]

On Thursday the Arch Bishop visited...the beautiful church of St. Patrick about eight miles from St. Joseph's; he was highly delighted to find so fine and handsome a church in the woods or rather in a place so remote from what is generally called the refined world. The Rev. Father Anthony O'Brien began it and did not cease to labor for it till he had seen it completed. ...The Arch-Bishop spent the night under the hospitable roof of the pious family of the late Alexander Clark, who during his life had been the principal benefactor of St. Patrick's....

[On the Feast of Corpus Christi Eccleston confirmed fourteen young ladies in St. Mary's Seminary.]

(To be continued)

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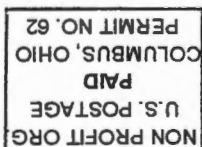
Catholic Record Society – Diocese of Columbus

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