

The Moor Family

This information has been taken from the history articles compiled by Margaret Peacocke and some photos and text are edited from "Early Settlement of Port FitzRoy" by Cyril Moor.

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A group of friends made a life-changing decision to come by sailing ship to the opposite side of the globe. They included two sisters and their brother, Hornby who had married Elizabeth Moor and his cousin Susan had married Elizabeth's brother John Moor. All emigrated from a little village Theddlethorpe near Louth in the late 1850s. Both Susan and John Moor are buried at Karaka Bay as is their son, William who came with them as a baby from England.

Of the first group who arrived in New Zealand in July 1859 on the 'Whirlwind', the Moors and the Flinns were the first European settlers at Port FitzRoy. John Moor had successfully applied for the position of tenant farmer to supply fresh provisions to the village serving the copper mine. The 700-acre farm was on a piece of land called Mohunga (which included Nagles Cove) on the south side of the peninsular between Port Abercombie and Katherine Bay.

The mining company went into liquidation in 1868. Many miners and tenant farmers left the island to look for work elsewhere. There are two conflicting stories about what happened next. One is that the miners mentioned accepted land in lieu of wages and that John Moor claimed ownership of his land because he was owed money for vegetables and meat. The other suggests that Edward Paddison, William and Thomas Edlington, George Stark, John Moor, William Flinn and Emilius Le Roy bought land. Whichever is accurate, we know that Edward Paddison became the owner of 1,000 acres at Karaka Bay adjoining John Moor's land and stretching right around to the inner harbour including the land on which 'Glenfern' stands. George Stark spent several days searching before choosing his 100 acres at Whangapoua. The Edlington land was at the northern end of Whangapoua Beach in the area called Tapuwai.

Once the mining company closed, there was no need for boats to visit this part of the island making the settlers even more isolated than they had ever been.

The Moors, Paddisons and Flinns (with their six children) were the only families remaining in the area around Port FitzRoy. The only other people nearby were the Maori at their settlement at Katherine Bay (Motairehe). However, at this time, the southern end of the island around Tryphena was starting to be populated through the subdivision of 40-acre lots under the Government's immigration scheme.

Farming was not a success in the early days as the land was mainly steep, rugged and covered in bush. It was a struggle to survive with neither equipment nor capital. When the mine was wound up, the Moors had five children to support

In 1877, a law was passed making primary education in New Zealand "free, secular and compulsory". It took some time for application of this change to reach Great Barrier Island as it was not until 1879 that the settlers of Port FitzRoy formed a school committee with John Moor as the manager.

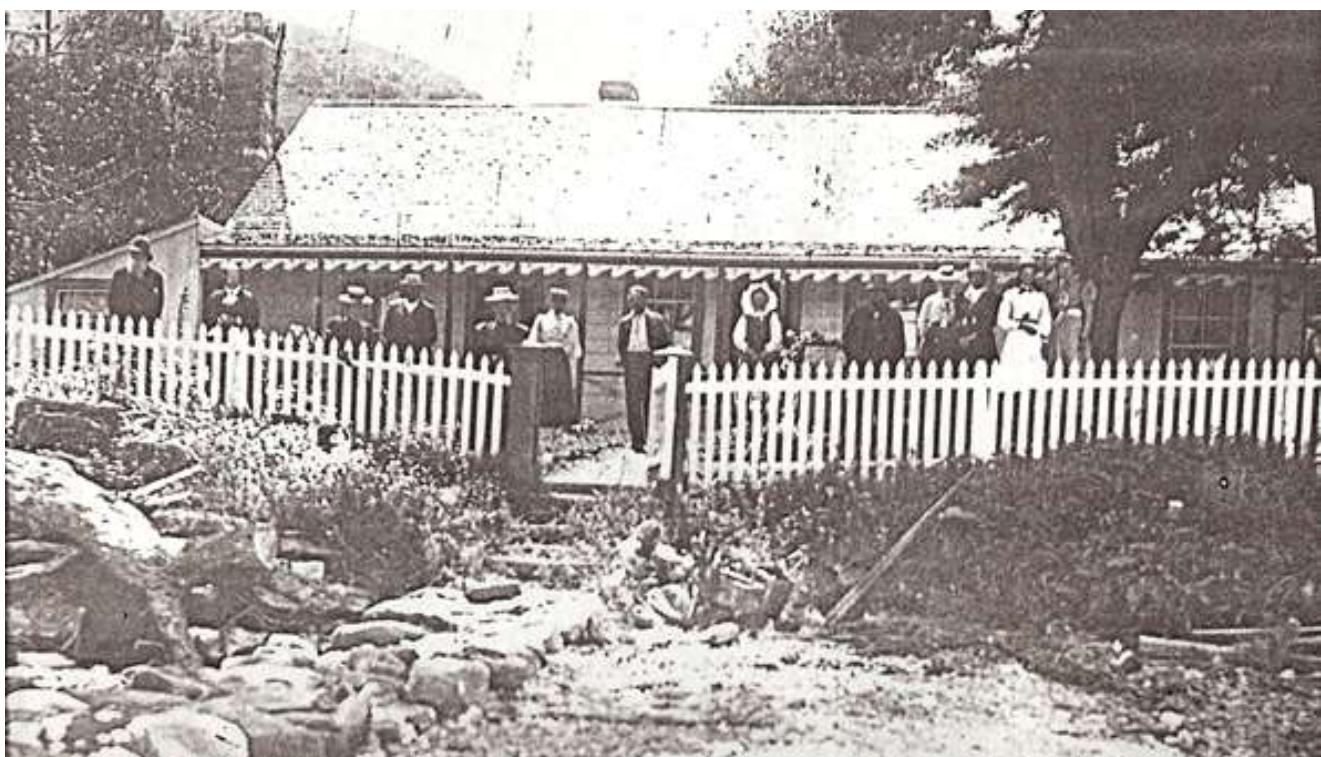
In September 1879, the first teacher was appointed to the island - Mr R Kinross. When he arrived, there was no school or school house, so he spent a week at a time living with each of the three families in the area – Moors, Paddisons and Flinns - and teaching the children of the household while he was there. The Moor children were 'admitted' on the Great Barrier School Register on 1 September 1879.

In late 1892, Allen & Susan Taylor were planning to sell Kaikoura Island to try their luck with one of Allen's brother in South Africa. A potential buyer was brought over from Auckland by another brother on the weekly steamer. Susan was due to go to Auckland on the next boat to await the birth of her second child, but the baby arrived early. The three men went in a small sailing boat to get assistance

for her. Later, Allen's brother returned to the house with the tragic news that the boat had capsized and the other two men had perished. Allen Taylor was buried at Karaka Bay on the land of his widow's father's friend.

Susan, Eleanor (Nellie) and Millicent, the new baby, left on the next steamer to travel to Thames to spend some time with her parents but this did not end her association with the island as she married William Moor (son of John and Susan Moor) in about 1899. While Susan was expecting their child, William was taken ill with appendicitis and died of peritonitis and buried next to his friend, Allen at Karaka Bay. Susan gave birth to another daughter, Minnie Moor. As there is no evidence of Minnie being enrolled at FitzRoy School, I assume that the family moved away from the island. In 1879 the settlers had formed a school committee and the first entry in the school register dated 1 September 1879 was fifteen year old Sarah Moor, who left school on 5 December 1879 after a mere three months of formal education.

John and Susan Moor lived at Mohunga from 1859 until about 1906. They brought up their seven children there. In 1900, their elder son, William died when appendicitis turned to peritonitis. He was buried with his two close friends who had also died at a young age – Allen Taylor and William Cooper.



The home of John and Susan Moor at Mohunga, Port Abercrombie. Although across the Bay from where the Sterlingshire was built there is a permanent creek. I wonder if Abercrombie had it erected during the building of the vessel. I am sure that the Moor brothers did not have enough money to pay their fares out to N.Z. for neither took up the 40 acre government grant to which they would otherwise have been entitled. The empty house was destroyed shortly after they left the island (p. 132). John and Susan are shown on the extreme left.

After William's death, John and Susan struggled to manage the farm. They were getting older and their daughters had all moved to Auckland. Although the Paddison boys helped them out, records show that their farm changed ownership in May 1906. They followed their daughters to Auckland where they lived until their deaths in 1911. Burial with their son on the island where they had spent so many years must have seemed the logical choice of resting place, so they too were buried in the tiny graveyard on the Karaka Bay property of their neighbours of 47 years, the Paddisons.



This is John and Susan Moor's family. At least those still alive in 1906 soon after selling at Nagle Cove and moving to 24 Wharfe Road, Herne Bay. Annie then John and Susan and Minnie and standing Susan (Sue) and Sarah.

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John Moor died on 20th June 1911 of a fractured skull after being knocked down by a tram in Ponsonby Road, Auckland, aged 79. His wife Susan had died on 1st April 1911, aged 86. They were living at 12 Dublin Street, Ponsonby.

Name	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Miscellaneous
John Moor	1832	1911		Arrived in NZ on "Whirlwind" in 1859
Susan Moor	1825	1911	Wife of John Moor	
William Moor	1859	1900	Son of John & Susan Moor	Married Allen Taylor's widow

Feedback from readers

My great grandmother, Sarah Moor was born on Great Barrier Island on 1 December 1862. Her mother was Susanna nee Phillips and her father was John Moor, both from Theddlethorpe, Lincolnshire. I have an extensive Phillips/Moor family tree compiled by a fifth cousin in England if there are others with this heritage who would like to see it or add to it contact Judith by email j.n.tizard@gmail.com