

# Sketches of the Moore Family

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For Ella, September 25, 2018

## Introduction

This is a lightly edited version of an article that appeared as Hammarling [2018], but with additional photographs.

I am the eldest son of Beatrix Hammarling (née Moore), who was the youngest of the eight Moore children Noel, Eric, Marjorie, Winifrede (Freda), Norah (Bardy), Joan, Hilda and Beatrix, and hence I am a grandson of Edwin and Annie Moore (née Carter). Annie Carter was Beatrix Potter's last governess, only about three years older than Beatrix Potter and they became close friends. I am certainly no expert on the Moore family, but I thought that maybe I could give some personal touches, particularly some photographs.



Picture 1: The Eight Moore Children with Annie Moore

In Goodacre [2005], Selwyn Goodacre gave an excellent account of the Moore family, much of which I did not know. Similarly the second chapter of Taylor [1992], gives

a lovely account of the family, special to me because she interviewed my mother who, at the time was the last of the Moore children and became very fond of Judy. Of course, a number of the Beatrix Potter biographies also have information on the Moore family, especially Annie.

At the time of writing there are just four surviving grandchildren, two of Hilda's children Richard and Carolyn, my younger brother Peter, and myself. I am very grateful to Carolyn and Richard for sharing memories with me, particularly of their visits to the Moore home.

## Edwin and Annie Moore

Edwin and Annie Moore married in 1886 and Noel was born the following year. In 1888 they moved to a new house<sup>1</sup> overlooking Wandsworth Common and lived there for the rest of their lives. Edwin died in 1946 and Annie in 1950, so she lived there for about 62 years. Picture 1 was almost certainly taken in the back garden, as was the better known picture of the children in age order shown in both Taylor [1992] and Goodacre [2005]. The clock in Picture 2 is believed to have been given as a wedding present by Beatrix Potter to Annie and Edwin<sup>2</sup>. Pictures 3 and 4 show Annie and Edwin at home.

Picture 5 shows Annie and Marjorie outside the house.

As is documented by Judy Taylor and others, Edwin travelled widely as a civil engineer and, for example, worked on the original Aswan Dam. Politically, he was very left wing and according to my mother, a founder member of the Fabian Society, whereas Annie was a staunch true blue Conservative. That led to many heated arguments at home. The children had a very strict Victorian upbringing which, it seems to me, for some of the children, really had quite an effect on their future lives and perhaps prevented them from realising their true potential. Beatrix Potter had wanted to send one, or more, of the girls to university, but that never happened. My mother recalled her mother saying "You don't want to become a blue stocking, do you?" and not knowing what that meant, she replied "No, of course not." and that was the end of university, which would probably have been the making of her. But, I shouldn't make it sound all doom and gloom, because I gather that there were plenty of very happy times, not least when Beatrix Potter came to visit.

To finish this section, I want to show two pictures which Mandy Marshall of Castle Cottage in Near Sawrey very kindly let me photograph<sup>3</sup>. The first shows my grandmother, Annie, with Beatrix Potter, her brother Bertram and Spot the dog, taken in

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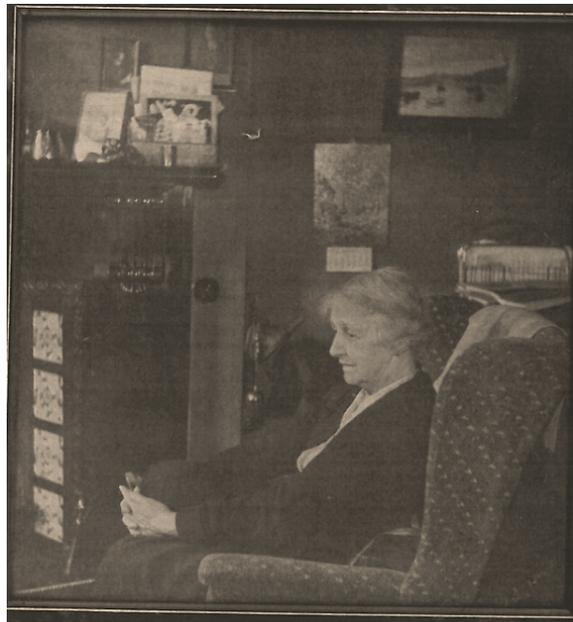
<sup>1</sup>20 Baskerville Road, London SW18 3RW

<sup>2</sup>It was given by Annie to Marjorie who said it had been a wedding present from Beatrix Potter. It is thought to be French and at the time of writing is still in the family.

<sup>3</sup>Pictures 6 and 7



Picture 2: Moore Family Clock



Picture 3: Annie Moore



Picture 4: Edwin Moore



Picture 5: Annie and Marjorie Moore

1883, which is the year that Annie became Beatrix's governess, and the second shows my aunts Norah and Joan with Beatrix Potter, taken in 1913.



Picture 6: Beatrix and Bertram Potter with Annie Carter, 1883

## The House at Wandsworth Common

I may have visited Annie and Edwin's house but have no memory of having done so. I was just five when my grandfather died and eight when my grandmother died. Since I wanted to see where my mother grew up, my wife Pam and I recently decided to visit the house and take a photograph. We gingerly rang the doorbell and, once I had explained my connection, the lady of the house very kindly chatted with us took a photo of Pam and I at the front door and suggested that I take a photo from across the road, see Pictures 8 and 9. Selwyn Goodacre's article shows a picture of the house covered in ivy; as she pointed out, the portico seems to have rather more paint on it now! She also told us that when they bought the house, they had no idea of its history until they started receiving cuttings about Beatrix Potter, which led them to investigate.

Both my cousins Carolyn and Richard have memories of the house, especially as the family were evacuated there for about three weeks during World War II, as they thought it would be safe, although in the event it was quickly decided that they should go to the country. They both remember there being a barrage balloon just along the road. They slept in the cellar, which smelled of apples and to this day



Picture 7: Beatrix Potter with Norah and Joan Moore, 1913

the smell of apples reminds Carolyn of the house! Annie Moore was called Granny and Edwin Moore was Grandpa and they also remember spending Christmases there. The house was full of souvenirs that Grandpa had brought back from his extensive travels. Amongst the African souvenirs was a drum, which Richard and his sister Gill would occasionally bang and get told off by Grandpa. As well as many items from the Middle East, there was an extensive collection of Chinese shoes and shawls, which he bought for the girls and they were played with so much that they eventually disintegrated.

To Carolyn the house always felt cold and seemed enormous. The large main living and dining room was at the front and Richard remembers Christmas day, probably 1937 or 1938, Grandpa was at the head of the very large table carving a large turkey, perhaps supplied by Beatrix Potter, with the three children sat at the other end and some of the aunts sitting down one side.

The family were very musical and the grand piano was in the back room, which the children were discouraged from entering, although they would sneak the occasional peek in.

After the war, Joan and Marjorie were living at the house, looking after Annie and Edwin. In 1951, Eric had a house built for them on the land of his farm at Buxted. They named it Hill Top after Beatrix Potter's now famous house in Near Sawrey, see Picture 10, thought to have been taken in 1951 or 1952. Whilst I don't remember visiting my grandparents' house, I do remember visiting Uncle Eric and Aunts Mar-

Marjorie and Joan in Buxted. Pam and I went there soon after we were married to show Marjorie and Joan our wedding album.



Picture 8: Pam and Sven at the Front Door

Picture 11 is of my mother, the eighth and last of the Moore children, presumably at the Wandsworth Common house.

## Beatrice Moore

Having shown the picture of my mother, I thought it might be appropriate to take the liberty of saying a bit more about her.

Born in 1903, Beatrice Moore was the god-daughter of Beatrix Potter and, of course, named after Beatrix Potter. She is also the Baby of the dedication in *The Pie and the Patty Pan*, “For Joan to read to Baby”, Joan being her sister, the sixth child of Annie and Edwin Moore. Picture 12 is of the Christening bowl and spoon given to my mother by Beatrix Potter. There are miniature watercolour portraits of Beatrice and her sister Hilda, the seventh child, in the dolls house at Hill Top. They were painted by Annie’s sister Rosa and given to Beatrix Potter, see Pictures 13 and 14. Picture 15 shows Hilda and Beatrice with their mother, Annie.

Like many of her siblings, my mother was a talented pianist. I have the programme for a concert given at Clapham High School on the 9th of December, 1921 when she was eighteen, playing pieces by Brahms, Akimenko and Grovlez, the only person to



Picture 9: House at Wandsworth Common, 2017



Picture 10: Marjorie and Joan at Hill Top, Buxted



Picture 11: Beatrix Moore



Picture 12: Christening Bowl



Picture 13: Hilda Moore



Picture 14: Beatrix Moore



Picture 15: Beatrix, Annie and Hilda Moore

play three pieces, see Pictures 16 and 17. Subsequently she taught music whilst studying for her Licentiate of the Royal Academy of Music (LRAM). She told me that she used to go to the local music shop to practice and one day the headmistress saw her and asked why my mother was not using the school piano. She received the answer that it was out of tune. My mother was promptly dismissed from the school! She nevertheless obtained her LRAM and took a three year position in Cape Town, South Africa, teaching music. She loved the country, but hated what we would now call apartheid and left at the end of her contract.

I am not sure what motivated her, but on her return she became a journalist and, as far as I am aware, did not play the piano again for some twenty five years. I had no idea that Mum had been a music teacher and pianist, and we had no piano at home. One day, on coming home from school, I heard a Chopin waltz being played beautifully and assumed that Mum had bought a new record, but on entering the room saw a medium grand with Mum playing. It was a revelation.

Mum was rather the black sheep of the family, very much taking her political views from her father and so she really did not have much contact with the family. She told my brother and I very little about growing up and made little of the Beatrix Potter connection. She used to keep brown sugar in what looked like a wooden bowl. On one visit to see her, Pam decided that the bowl needed a good clean and, to her surprise, discovered that it was not wood, but metal with an inscription BM 3rd Nov 1903. Yes, only then did she tell us that it was her Christening bowl, given by Beatrix Potter! Until then I did not even know that she was Beatrix Potter's god-daughter.

Shortly before World War II, Mum wanted to cover the story of a miners' strike in Sweden and as one needed a visa at that time, she went to the Swedish Embassy. She said later that she went for one sort of pass and received another. Vilgot Hammarling was the Press Attaché and Mum received her visa, together with an invitation to dinner. Vilgot, who of course became my and then Peter's father, had been the

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PROGRAMME

OF

CONCERT

TO BE GIVEN ON

FRIDAY, the 9th of DECEMBER, 1921,

AT EIGHT O'CLOCK.

Picture 16: Front Cover of Concert Programme

## P R O G R A M M E.

UNISON SONG .. "England" .. .. *Parry*  
 TWO-PART SONG .. "Aubade" .. .. *Ireland*

### SELECTED CHOIR FROM FORMS UPPER Vb AND LOWER V.

PIANOFORTE SOLO "Adagio from Sonata Pathétique" .. .. *Beethoven*  
 D. SHREWSBURY.

VIOLIN SOLO .. "Berceuse" .. .. *Carse*  
 M. CÉDARD.

PIANOFORTE SOLO .. "Waltz in G flat" .. .. *Chopin*  
 M. CALE.

SONG .. .. "The Captive Lark" .. .. *Landon Ronald*  
 MISS M. F. JONES.

VIOLIN SOLO .. "Menuett" .. .. *Beethoven*  
 C. ANDERSON.

RECITATIONS .. "Titania" .. .. *An Old Poem*  
 LOLITA HOLLOWAY.

"Off the Ground" .. .. *Walter de la Mare*  
 KATHLEEN WHIBLEY.

VIOLIN SOLO .. "Air Sentimentale" .. .. *Carse*  
 K. MARTIN.  
 (Accompanied by I. FOLKES.)

PIANOFORTE DUETS (a) "Norwegian Dance" .. .. *Grieg*  
 (b) "Hungarian Dance" .. .. *Brahms*  
 C. MARSLAND AND D. CARTER

TWO-PART SONG .. "O Mistress Mine" .. .. *Brewer*  
 THREE-PART SONG .. "Orpheus with his Lute" .. .. *German*

### SELECTED CHOIR FROM FORMS VI. AND UPPER Va.

PIANOFORTE SOLO "Fantasiestück in C minor" .. .. *Schumann*  
 A. RAVENHILL.

VIOLIN SOLO .. "Cavatina" .. .. *Raff*  
 N. TAYLOR.

PIANOFORTE SOLI .. (a) "Sarabande" .. .. } *Grieg*  
 (b) "Rigadon" .. .. }  
 I. McNICKLE.

SONG .. .. "Spring is at the door" .. .. *Quilter*  
 MISS HICKS.

PIANOFORTE SOLI .. (a) "Ballade in D minor" .. .. *Brahms*  
 (b) "Dancing Clouds" .. .. *Akiyenko*  
 (c) "Huntsman's Song" .. .. *Grovelez*  
 B. MOORE.

RECITATION "La Belle Dame sans Merci" .. .. *John Keats*  
 MIRIAM GRAHAM.

PIANOFORTE SOLO .. "Prelude in B minor" .. .. *Mendelssohn*  
 E. ROBERTS.

VIOLIN SOLO .. "Sonata in E" .. .. *Handel*  
 W. DAVIES.

PIANOFORTE SOLO .. "Rondo Capriccioso" .. .. *Mendelssohn*  
 E. DAWSON.

PIANOFORTE SOLO .. "Humoresque" .. .. *Swinstead*  
 T. FAIRWEATHER.

ORCHESTRA "Old English Ballad Tunes" .. .. *Edith Rowland*

"GOD SAVE THE KING."

Picture 17: Concert Programme

London correspondent for a Swedish national newspaper<sup>4</sup>. His English was perfect and his knowledge of England and London in particular, was outstanding, so the Swedish government, seeing that war was likely, had asked him to join the Embassy. He had even translated a number of P. G. Wodehouse books into Swedish. Although offered other positions, he stayed at the Embassy in London for the rest of his working life. Picture 18 shows the four London Hammarlings.



Picture 18: The Hammarlings

My mother remained a journalist well into her eighties and remained a socialist for the rest of her life. Despite not going to university she was a remarkable woman.

## References

- Selwyn Goodacre. Beatrix Potter and the Moores. In *Beatrix Potter's Family and Friends*, volume XI of *Beatrix Potter Studies*, pages 60–69. The Beatrix Potter Society, 2005.
- S. Hammarling. The Moore family – personal sketches. *Beatrix Potter Society Journal and Newsletter*, 176:15–18, January 2018.
- Judy Taylor. *Letters to Children from Beatrix Potter*. Frederick Warne, London, UK, 1992.

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<sup>4</sup>Dagens Nyheter