

The Duder Family book exerts



11 Church Street, Devonport, which Robert bought for his bride Polly. It remained in the family for almost ninety years; one of the best known houses in Devonport.

And what of family life? Richard like his elder brother John remained a bachelor: Robert married in 1880 when he was not quite thirty, and bought his bride Mary Ann (Polly) Wyles the house at 11 Church St. As a girl she had admired it and dreamed of living there. The house, built in the 1860s (and still a Devonport landmark), had sixteen rooms and forty-four doors. Polly was a great reader and was interested in everything new. It is said that she was the first in New Zealand to have an X-ray; at an exhibition she volunteered her hand to show the new-fangled invention.



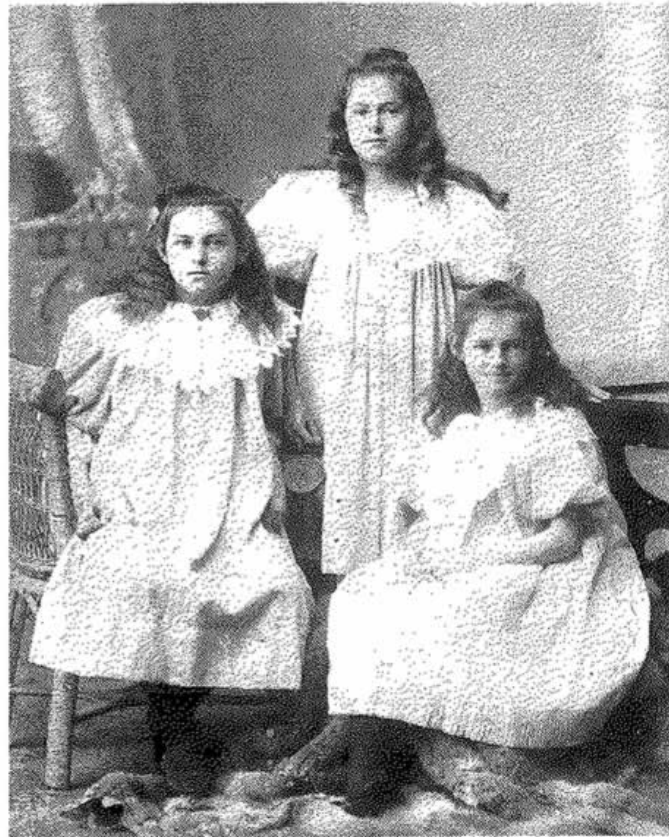
Mary Anne Duder (Polly, nee Wyles) wife of twin, Robert. Mary Caughey



Mignonette Duder, born in 1882.

Robert and Polly had five daughters. Isabelle, born in 1881, was the first child baptised in the new Holy Trinity Church. She became the wife of George Best, having two sons. As a young man, Jim injured an arm working at the family brickworks, and later worked for a Wellington newspaper. Owen Best lived at Kerikeri growing citrus fruit.

Second was Mignonette, born in 1882, who as a teenage girl suffered from goitre. Inadequate treatment left her with a swollen neck and prominent eyes. Perhaps because of this Min never married and lived all her life in the family home in Church St with her mother Polly. They turned the house into four flats, which remained until it was sold in 1967. In the 1970s it was superbly restored as a family home by Mr Ted Oldfield and his sister. Despite her handicap Min was a popular member of the local scene playing, singing and acting at many



The three younger daughters of Robert and Polly, (l to r) Ivy, May and Floss. Pictured about 1897.

concerts and soirees. She was also a very accomplished sports-woman. In 1908 her sister May had tiny twins, Harry Walter and Marion, known as Mick and Molly, and found it very difficult to manage with one-year-old Jack as well. So Mick was brought to his twenty-six-year-old aunt Min, and she brought him up just as if he was hers.

May was married to Walter Bowler, later Commissioner of Native Lands and they had one more child, Margery. Both daughters died in 1948, Molly tragically in a traffic accident while walking on the road in Taranaki where she lived.

The fourth daughter born to Robert and Polly in four years was Ivy who married J J Hudson, a bank manager. They went to live in the South Island, in the Christchurch area. On a farm just out of Christchurch, still live son and daughter Richard and Zoe. In her youth Zoe was a noted golfer, winning the New Zealand title in 1949-50. Ivy's eldest son Bob retired some years ago from farming and lives at Airlie Beach in Queensland. Their sister, Pauline Thompson, now a widow, lives in Christchurch and the youngest, Kathleen Apsion owns a nursing agency in Guildford, England.

The youngest of the five girls was Florence (Floss) who married Te Kuiti lawyer and Mayor, George Finlay. He later was a senior puisne judge, earning a knighthood. Their only daughter Mary is married to Sir Harcourt (Pat) Caughey, former All Black and senior member of Smith and Caughey Ltd, Auckland's oldest department store. They also carried on the Duder habit of having a set of twins, a girl Rodnie, and a boy, Simon.



Polly Duder (right front) with four of her daughters, Ivy (left back) behind her husband-to-be James Hudson, Mignonette (centre back) and Floss (centre front). Behind Polly stands Belle, with her husband George Best in front and their son Jim, Polly's first grandchild. Taken about 1907. Note the two planters, made at R & R's brickworks. Mary Caughey

