

## Mahoe 263 McKays Line, Beaconsfield



**Architect:** Possibly C.L. Daniel (also builder)

**Construction date:** 1890-1907

**Visible materials:** Timber cladding & joinery, corrugated steel roofing

**Architectural style:** Victorian/Edwardian Queen Anne

**Use/building type:** House

**Date and Compiler:** Ian Bowman, 2015, Val Burr 2019

**Heritage New Zealand listing:** -

**Proposed category:** B

### PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL HISTORY

Mahoe is said in older Historic Places Trust records covering this property, to have been built between 1890 and 1899. The homestead was described in those records as being colonial with wooden walls and an iron roof. It was also described as having a straight verandah, fretwork and finials, and its architect was referred to as “*Davies*” – although the latter is likely to be incorrect. While the information sighted during this study suggests a more likely construction date of 1892, there remains uncertainty over whether the 1892 house was in fact this house. However, the 1892 house was evidently the work of ‘C.L. Daniel’ who referred to himself as its builder at that time. He was also a well-known Feilding architect who lived at Beaconsfield. He is likely to have been the aforementioned ‘Davies’ mentioned in the early Historic Places Trust records.

It is possible that the name of the house was altered at an early date, and this may be providing some conflict as to the age of the house.

### Background

The earliest Certificate of Title sighted for this study was WN31/5. This was issued to William Russell of London, England, on 10 December 1882. The initials “M.D.” after his name suggest that he was a medical doctor. The property then consisted of 311 acres. In 1890, the property was transmitted from the estate of William Russell, to George Russell and Charles Brook Stilby as executors.

In 1891 Russell and Stilby transferred the property to William Green and Charles William Maclean. While it is unclear what Green and Maclean did with the property, it is known that the two business partners were involved (as owners?) with the property Killeymoon at Bulls at the time of Maclean's death on 14 January 1895, aged 34. Around 1,000 people attended his funeral at the town, and a clearing sale of around 110 dairy cattle and 1,760 sheep was held at Killeymoon a year later. William Green, described as a well-known Rangitikei settler and sportsman, then died in November 1904.<sup>1</sup>



**Figure 1** This photo, which is credited to Massey University for unknown reasons, is from an undated NZ Historic Places Trust file on the house compiled by Megan Buzzard. This copy of Megan Buzzard's file was located in Manawatu District Council's Building Permit file on the house. The whereabouts of the original copy of this photo is not recorded in the NZHPT file.

### Frederick Eugene Pickering (1870-1941)

Later in 1891, after only a few months in their ownership, the property was transferred from Green and Maclean, to Frederick Eugene Pickering, who was described as a farmer of Feilding. The transfer is dated 28 August 1891. While Pickering almost certainly became the builder of this present house, it is not clear if this is his original house on this property.

The first reference to the Pickerings' 'original' house, was an advert in the *Feilding Star* dated 22 October 1892 (p. 3). This records C.L. Daniel, Builder, as calling for tenders for painting and papering F.E. Pickering's residence in Mackay's Line (sic), Beaconsfield.

On 13 December 1892, Pickering married Helena Agnes Beattie, at St. John's Church, Feilding. He was the second son of the late Eugene Haynes Pickering, of Caston, Norfolk, and of Mamhead, near Exeter,

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<sup>1</sup> *Feilding Star*, 9 July 1895, p. 2; 14 August 1895, p. 3; 16 August 1895, p. 2; 17 August 1895, p. 2; 23 January 1896, p. 2; 25 January 1896, p. 1; 17 November 1904, p. 2

Devon. She, meanwhile, was the third daughter of the late James Beattie, and Mrs Beattie, of 'The Willows', Feilding.<sup>2</sup>

The couple's first child, Nina, was born on 12 September 1894. However, on 3 July 1896, the little girl, known as 'Nelly', died at Beaconsfield, aged 2.<sup>3</sup> She shares a grave at Feilding Cemetery with her uncle, Ernest William Pickering, who had committed suicide aged 25 on 21 December 1893.<sup>4</sup>

After Nelly's death, her parents went to England for a 'couple of years', and possibly this was when their only son, Eugene, came to be born at Liverpool, England – which was also his father's birthplace. Eugene then appears to disappear from the family story, so presumably he died young. The couple were back in New Zealand when their daughter, Dinah, was born on 7 November 1899.<sup>5</sup> The *Feilding Star* of 8 November 1899 (p. 2) announced her birth at "Thistledene", Beaconsfield, on November 7<sup>th</sup>. Another daughter, Joan, was born to the couple, at "Thistledean", Feilding, on 15<sup>th</sup> August 1902.<sup>6</sup>

It is not clear yet if 'Thistledean/Thistledene' and 'Mahoe' are the same house renamed, but certainly the Pickering's farm was named 'Mahoe' by June 1907, when Frederick Pickering called for tenders to fell bush. Specifications for these tenders were available to be seen at the office of the architect, C.L. Daniel – suggesting an ongoing relationship between Pickering and Daniel<sup>7</sup>. In addition, and mentioned due to a possible connection, a young employee of C.L. Daniel over a six-year period, Robert Avon Beattie, could have been a close relative of Helena Pickering, nee Beattie. He left the area in 1914 and was killed in the war in 1916, aged 26.<sup>8</sup>

The Pickering's clearing sale was held on 26<sup>th</sup> May 1915 - the sale advertisement referring to there having been two farms that had just been sold by Pickering, and that the auction was to take place at the homestead, 'Mahoe'. The clearing sale (following the sale of the two farms) included 2,500 Romney sheep, 67 cattle, 6 horses, other assorted livestock, various farm and household goods, and a 20 h.p. two-seater Hupmobile motor car.<sup>9</sup> The clearing sale was evidently very well attended and very successful.<sup>10</sup>

The Pickering family appear to have moved to Clive, in Hawkes Bay, where Helene died on 10 June 1927 at Greenfields, Clive. In 1934, Frederick returned to England, evidently with the intention of remaining there. However, he returned to New Zealand before WWII, and died at Hastings Hospital on 26 August 1941, aged 71. The couple are buried at Taradale Cemetery.<sup>11</sup>

### The Shannon Brothers

In 1915, the property was transferred into the names of Arnold Buddle Shannon and Norman Vance Shannon, both farmers of Waituna West, and as tenants in common with equal shares.

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<sup>2</sup> *Feilding Star*, 15 December 1892, p. 2

<sup>3</sup> Births, Deaths & Marriages Online, Ref: Birth: 1894/13264; Death: 1896/5988: <https://www.bdmonline.dia.govt.nz/>

<sup>4</sup> *Feilding Star*, 3 July 1896, p. 2, 22 December 1893, p. 2 (x2); *Wanganui Herald*, 21 December 1893, p. 2. Manawatu District Council: [http://www.mdc.govt.nz/online\\_services/find\\_it/cemetery\\_search](http://www.mdc.govt.nz/online_services/find_it/cemetery_search) (Search word: 'Pickering')

<sup>5</sup> Births, Deaths & Marriages Online: Ref: Birth: 1899/9785: <https://www.bdmonline.dia.govt.nz/> ;

'Pickering's of Cheshire: Information about Frederick Eugene Pickering': <http://www.genealogy.com/ftm/s/t/o/Connie-Stover/WEBSITE-0001/UHP-0238.html>

<sup>6</sup> *Feilding Star*, 16 August 1902, p. 2. Note that 'Thistledene' is a placename in England.

<sup>7</sup> *Rangitikei Advocate & Manawatu Argus*, 19 June 1907, p. 3

<sup>8</sup> *Northern Advocate*, 1 November 1916, p. 3; Auckland Museum: Online Cenotaph: Robert Avon Beattie: <http://www.aucklandmuseum.com/war-memorial/online-cenotaph/record/C924>

<sup>9</sup> *Rangitikei Advocate and Manawatu Argus*, 19 May 1915, p. 1

<sup>10</sup> *Feilding Star*, 28 May 1915, p. 3

<sup>11</sup> 'Pickering and Related Family History: Frederick Eugene Pickering of Liverpool and New Zealand': <http://www.pickeringfamilyhistory.com/frederick-eugene.php>

The brothers were sons of Ezekiel Vance Shannon and his wife Amie Sophia (nee Buddle). Irish-born Ezekiel Shannon, in turn, was the younger brother of George Vance Shannon, who was on the Board of the Wellington and Manawatu Railway Company – and as a result, the Horowhenua town of Shannon was named after him. The story of the wider Shannon family is covered in the book, *A Shannon Family: From Antrim, Ireland to New Zealand*, compiled by members of the Shannon family and published in 2000.

Ezekiel and Amie Shannon settled in Marton in 1877, and then acquired land by ballot in the Waituna area in 1888. The family moved there in 1893. Before the outbreak of WWI, all but one of the couple's seven sons (the eldest son, Athol) were farming together as 'Shannon Bros.' Some of their many farms were owned individually, while others, as Mahoe would soon be, were jointly owned. WWI saw the four youngest sons enlist, while the second and third eldest sons, Arnold (born 1879) and Norman (born 1881) took care of the family's farm duties.<sup>12</sup>

At the time Arnold and Norman purchased Mahoe, labour was becoming increasingly hard to find due to the men going off to war. By August 1917, the Army was trying to conscript Norman. At the First Wellington Military Appeal Board sitting in Palmerston North on 10 August 1917, Norman explained his circumstances: "*Norman Vance Shannon, farmer, Waituna West, appealed on the ground of public interest and undue hardship. He stated he was single and 37 years old. He had six farms totalling over 3600 acres, all in different blocks, but did not manage them all. The most distant from the homestead was 17 miles. The total stock comprised 8800 sheep and 210 head of cattle. He put in a statement of his financial position. He had six brothers, four of whom had gone to the front, and one had been killed. Appellant said he did shearing work, and last year shored 7000, including 2500 for neighbours. He had no assistance on the homestead block. The appeal was adjourned sine die on the usual conditions.*"<sup>13</sup>

In May 1918, Norman's case was reviewed by the Military Appeal Board. He stated that labour was harder to get now, and that otherwise his position was unchanged. The Board then reserved its decision.<sup>14</sup>

Norman remained living at the family's original homestead farm ('Momona'), and it was Arnold who lived at Mahoe after his marriage in 1919 to Kathleen Millicent Alcorn. The couple raised their four children there. The Mahoe Romney Stud was also established there under his watch. The stud was eventually dispersed in 1937, and Shannon Bros. ceased farming in partnership in 1950.<sup>15</sup>

In 1952, Norman Vance Shannon's share of the property was transferred to Arnold Buddle Shannon. Then in 1956, the property, with the exception of Lot 1, Plan 18853, was transferred to Arnold's four children: David Rayner Shannon, Selwyn Buddle Shannon, Kathleen Patricia Shannon and Amie Honora Oxley, as tenants in common in equal shares. CT WN31/5 was then cancelled. The site of the house Mahoe was on the aforementioned Lot 1, Plan 18853 (12 acres), and this remained in the ownership of Arnold Buddle Shannon.

Arnold Shannon was killed in a car accident on 19 December 1957 aged 78, and Norman Shannon died on 25 July 1958, aged 78.<sup>16</sup> Their obituaries are as follows:

*"DEATH OF FORMER CHAIRMAN: Reference to the death of Mr. A. B. Shannon, a former chairman of the Oroua County Council, was made at the monthly meeting of the council when the*

<sup>12</sup> The Shannon Family, *A Shannon Family: From Antrim, Ireland to New Zealand* (Feilding, 2000), p. 50-52

<sup>13</sup> *Feilding Star*, 11 August 1917, p. 4

<sup>14</sup> *Feilding Star*, 28 May 1918, p. 7

<sup>15</sup> *A Shannon Family*, p. 52, 72-73

<sup>16</sup> Births, Deaths & Marriages Online: Deaths 1958/20975 (Arnold) & 1958/28928 (Norman): <https://www.bdmonline.dia.govt.nz/>

*chairman, Cr. B. McLeod and Cr. V. B. Short both mentioned the great work Mr. Shannon had done over the years in the interests of the ratepayers and the community as a whole. A motion of respect and sympathy was passed in silence and it was agreed that a request be made to the relatives for a photograph to be presented to the council.”<sup>17</sup>*

*Also: “Died As Result of Accident: The District Coroner, Mr. T. L. Seddon, has returned a Verdict that Arnold B. Shannon, of Cheltenham, was found to have died as a result of an accident when a motor-car which he was driving ran off the road at Makino, 150 yards north of Junction Road turnoff, and collided with a power pole.”<sup>18</sup>*

*“Obituary: MR N. V. SHANNON, OF WAITUNA. A sheep farmer and member of one of the best known pioneer families of the district, there passed away on Friday last Mr Norman Vance Shannon, of Waituna West. He was in his 79th year and had been in poor health for some time. Mr Shannon was regarded as the backbone of the Oroua Sub-Union, and was elected president of the Manawatu Rugby Union in 1956, being the first sub-union member to hold that high office. Mr Shannon was the patron of the Oroua Sub-Union for many years. The present patron of the Oroua Club, Mr A. Wood, said that Mr Shannon was one of the most popular Rugby personalities the sport had (illegible) in the district, and similar sentiments were expressed by Mr J. Payne, the chairman of the Manawatu Rugby Union. The funeral took place on Monday.”<sup>19</sup>*

In 1959, Lot 1, Plan 18853 (the house site) was transmitted to David Rayner Shannon and Selwyn Buddle Shannon, as executors, and then transferred into the name of their sister, Kathleen Patricia Shannon, who was described as a schoolteacher of Feilding. It was then immediately transferred from Kathleen Patricia Shannon to David Rayner Shannon, described as a farmer of Cunninghams (a name for the local area). David Rayner Shannon owned the surrounding land at this point, totalling 131 acres – under CT WN968/21 (issued 1961). This land was duly sold to Christopher Charles Shannon, a rural valuer of Christchurch, in 1978, but David Rayner Shannon then leased it back for a 10-year term (starting 1 October 1977 – suggesting the sale date was on that date and not in 1978). The part of the lease that covered Lot 1, Plan 18853 (the house site), was then surrendered in 1980.

### **Subsequent Owners**

Immediately after the lease on the property was surrendered in 1980, ownership of the house site was transferred to P and B Sinkinson with 5.9019 ha of land (CT WN20C/924). It was next transferred in 1985 to D and B Bell of Feilding who subsequently purchased another piece of land from their neighbour, Down End Land Company Ltd, bringing the holding up to 12.2626 ha (WN30D/614; 1987). In 1999, the property was transferred to C Hart, S Coutts and J Coutts. Then in 2001, it was transferred into the names of the current owners, R Hayden, D Hayden and M Lawrence.

The Building Permit records held by Manawatu District Council contain limited information on alterations to this house. For example, there is a reference to firebox repairs in 1996, followed by other matters relating to fireplaces in 2001 and 2008. The bathroom and toilet were also altered in 2008.

## **ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN**

### **Planning, style, construction**

The building was only able to be inspected from the road, which is some distance to the house. The following assessment is based on long distance photography, google aerial maps and images included

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<sup>17</sup> *Feilding Herald*, 20 February 1958, p. 2: <http://feildingphotos.mdc.govt.nz/nodes/view/18697#idx23130>

<sup>18</sup> *Feilding Herald*, 20 February 1958, p. 4: <http://feildingphotos.mdc.govt.nz/nodes/view/18697#idx23131>

<sup>19</sup> *Feilding Herald*, 31 July 1958, p. 4: <http://feildingphotos.mdc.govt.nz/nodes/view/18718#idx23259>

in the historic narrative. No plans of the building have been sighted and the interior could not be inspected.

This single storey, timber framed house is designed in the Victorian/Edwardian Queen Anne style with a compact plan. The house is aligned north west/south east with the main gable the full length of the house to the south side. Adjoining this gable is another at right angles at the east/front of the house with another gable extending to the north from it and parallel with the main gable. A further gable extends from this gable to the south at the rear. Each of the visible gables has a decorative gable screen with scrolled half finials. Pairs of brackets support the eaves. A verandah extends around the east and north elevations, which is supported by double posts and simple Art Nouveau styled shallow arched brackets. There are several chimneys in the centre of the house.

The house has corrugated steel roofing, timber rusticated weatherboards and timber double hung sash windows.

### **Style background**

The Victorian/Edwardian Queen Anne style was a revival style of late 17th and 18th century architecture popularised by British architects Richard Norman Shaw and William Eden Nesfield in the 1870's initially for large country houses. American architects Charles McKim and Henry Hobson Richardson also adapted the style and less academic versions of the American and British styles were used in New Zealand.

The Victorian/Edwardian Queen Anne style was part of the picturesque movement and commonly the houses were designed to be asymmetrical, with conical towers and tall chimneys to create an interesting skyline and interplay of complex forms. Details often included flying gables, gable screens, double hung and casement windows, window or door hoods, square and canted bay windows, prominent chimneys, decorative entry porches and exposed eaves. Other key New Zealand characteristics of the style include highly decorated gable forms, half timbering effects, bay windows and wide verandahs.

Single storey versions of the style were typically less decorative.

Art Nouveau inspired lead lights were also common with the style.

### **Setting**

The house is set well back from the road within open, flat farmland with access to it from a long, treed drive off McKay's Line. Mature trees surrounds the house.

## SUMMARY OF HERITAGE VALUES

Mahoe has **low to high local** significance for **physical, historic and cultural** heritage values.

The house has **moderate architectural** and **high representivity** values as a good example of the smaller, single storey Victorian/Edwardian Queen Anne style. It has planning, forms, silhouette, materials and many details characteristic of the style. Being representative of the style and there being a number of houses of a similar style and quality it has **low rarity**.

The house has **low technological** values with timber framing, wall cladding and joinery with a corrugated steel roof, typical of the period.

The exterior appears to have **high authenticity** with few minor modifications recorded.

Mahoe has **moderate associative** values with the Pickering and Shannon families, who were well known and respected early settlers in the Manawatu in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Shannon family owned the site of the house for 65 years.

The design and construction of the house has **moderate pattern** values reflecting the growth and development of farming in the Manawatu from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Given the range and levels of heritage values, Mahoe has **moderate education** values as it can contribute to an understanding of settlement, emigration, and the architectural history of the Manawatu.

## SOURCES

### Printed sources

The Shannon Family, *A Shannon Family: From Antrim, Ireland to New Zealand* (Feilding, 2000)

### Online

Auckland Museum Cenotaph Database: <http://www.aucklandmuseum.com/war-memorial/online-cenotaph> (Search words: 'Alvan Ezakiel Shannon', 'Graham Vance Shannon' and 'Ronald Lenon Shannon' – as per footnotes)

Billiongraves: <https://billiongraves.com> (as per footnotes)

Births, Deaths & Marriages Online: <https://www.bdmonline.dia.govt.nz/> (as per footnotes)

Horowhenua Kete: <http://horowhenua.kete.net.nz/en/site/topics/2205-river-and-rail-the-story-of-shannon>

Life lines – A Genealogy Blog: How did Beattie Street get its name? :

<http://niddfamily.blogspot.co.nz/2013/10/how-did-beattie-street-feilding-get-its.html>

Manawatu District Council: [www.mdc.govt.nz](http://www.mdc.govt.nz): Cemetery database, maps (as per footnotes and text)

Manawatu District Libraries: Photo collection: 'Feilding Herald': <http://feildingphotos.mdc.govt.nz/> (as per footnotes)

MyHeritage.com: [https://www.myheritage.com/names/kathleen\\_alcorn](https://www.myheritage.com/names/kathleen_alcorn)

Palmerston North City Council Cemetery database:

[http://gis.pncc.govt.nz:8080/page/dbo/GIS\\_CemeteryWarrant/28910](http://gis.pncc.govt.nz:8080/page/dbo/GIS_CemeteryWarrant/28910)

Papers Past: <https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers> (*Feilding Star*, *Northern Advocate*, *Rangitikei Advocate & Manawatu Argus and Wanganui Herald*) [as per footnotes and text]

'Pickering and Related Family History: Frederick Eugene Pickering of Liverpool and New Zealand':

<http://www.pickeringfamilyhistory.com/frederick-eugene.php>

‘Pickering of Cheshire: Information about Frederick Eugene Pickering’:  
<http://www.genealogy.com/ftm/s/t/o/Connie-Stover/WEBSITE-0001/UHP-0238.html>

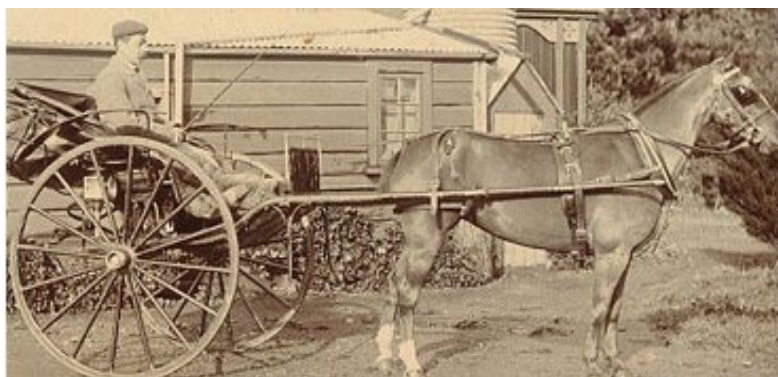
**Other Sources:**

Manawatu District Council: Building Permit file on this house (including the NZ Historic Places Trust file on the house compiled by Megan Buzzard); Certificates of Title

**IMAGES**



**Figure 2** A piece of the distinctive features of Mahoe is just visible at the right of this photo – namely a set of the house’s double verandah posts. (Source: ‘Pickering and Related Family History: Frederick Eugene Pickering of Liverpool and New Zealand’: <http://www.pickeringfamilyhistory.com/frederick-eugene.php> )



**Figure 3** A piece of the distinctive architectural features of Mahoe is visible at the right hand end of the building in the background of this photo. (Source: ‘Pickering and Related Family History: Frederick Eugene Pickering of Liverpool and New Zealand’: <http://www.pickeringfamilyhistory.com/frederick-eugene.php> )



**Figure 4** The Mahoe property in relation to McKays Line (Source: Manawatu District Council website - January 2016)



**Figure 5** A closer view of the layout of the Mahoe property (Source: Manawatu District Council website - January 2016)