

## Fletcher Moor and Victorian Ventnor

As part of our ongoing events to promote the County Record Office, we have been undertaking research into a family local to a particular town/area and then creating a display in order to showcase the relevant documents and resources available at the Record Office. The display we designed for the event at Ventnor Library highlighted our research about Fletcher MOOR and his family, who lived in Ventnor for many years before moving to Ryde.

Fletcher MOOR was born in 1826 and was baptised at St. George church in Hanover, Westminster, Middlesex. His father, also Fletcher MOOR, was a master tailor in Marylebone. From looking at the parish rate books, we can see that Fletcher moved to Ventnor sometime in 1845. Ventnor had started expanding in the 1830's as it became a fashionable place to visit due to the beneficial qualities of its climate. It gained a reputation as a winter health resort and was nicknamed "Mayfair-By-The-Sea" due to the number of well-to-do Londoners who were visiting at that time.

Fletcher MOOR married Christiana MANNING in Ventnor in 1845. His occupation on the marriage certificate is listed as "pianoforte manufacturer". Christiana had been living in Hayes in Middlesex, but the MANNING family had previously lived in Marylebone, so it is feasible that she and Fletcher knew each other before she came to Ventnor. She was the daughter of Samuel MANNING, who was a famous sculptor who made portrait busts, statues and monuments. His works can be seen in churches and cathedrals all over Britain and other parts of the world. He died in 1842. An article about the genealogy of the MANNING family, which featured several generations of artists and sculptors, can be seen at:

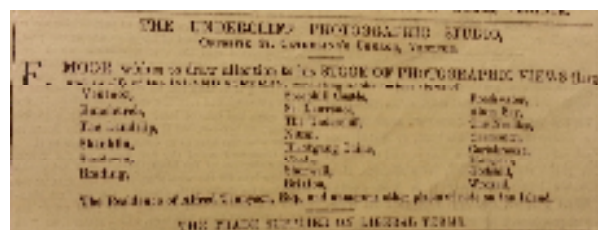
<http://www.thegortonconnection.co.uk/manningPage.html>

Fletcher and Christiana were married for only a year when Christiana died in 1846. A year later, in 1847, he married Charlotte BERRESFORD in Stepney, London. Charlotte was the daughter of Thomas BERRESFORD who was a customs officer in London. Thomas had died in 1825 when Charlotte was only a few months old.

Fletcher MOOR was engaged in several businesses in Ventnor. The directories of 1855 (Post Office Directory of Hampshire), 1857 (Craven & Co.'s Directory of Hampshire) and 1883 (Steven's Directory of the Isle of Wight) show that as well as being a pianoforte tuner, he was a photographer, a printer, a bookseller, a bookbinder, a stationer and an "agent to the Standard Life and County Fire Insurance companies". He ran the Marine Library with a reading room where he stocked the "periodical publications of the day" as well as the daily and weekly papers. It can be seen in this illustration, situated across from St. Catherine's church:



Mr. MOOR was also the editor of the Ventnor Times newspaper, which was part of the Isle of Wight Advertiser. Not surprisingly, there were several adverts in each edition featuring his various business ventures, including this one from 1868:



Charlotte and Fletcher MOOR had six children, five of which survived to adulthood – one daughter died aged 8 months old. In 1851, the family were living at the Marine Library on Church Street in Ventnor. Fletcher’s profession is described in the 1851 census as “a book and music seller”. Charlotte MOOR died in 1857 aged 32, after, according to her obituary in the Isle of Wight Observer, “an illness of 18 months duration”.

Fletcher MOOR’S next wife was Sabina Nina BURGESS from Chelsea, London, who was descended from a well known dynasty of painters. They were married in 1859 at Kensington. Sabina’s father had been Henry William BURGESS, a successful artist who had exhibited works at the Royal Academy and was the official landscape painter to King William IV. He died in 1839. More information about Henry William BURGESS can be found at: [http://wikivisually.com/wiki/Henry\\_William\\_Burgess](http://wikivisually.com/wiki/Henry_William_Burgess)

Fletcher and Sabina had one daughter, Constance Nina, born in 1860. This marriage was not to last long, however; Sabina Nina died in 1861 and is buried in Barrow-Upon-Soar, Leicestershire. We have been unable to ascertain why the MOORS were in Leicestershire at that time.

Fletcher’s last wife was Ann Jane WILSON whom he married in Winchester in 1865. Her father was the Reverend William WILSON, who had been the headmaster of Hull Grammar School from 1824 until 1836 (when he passed

away). Fletcher and Ann had two sons, both of which went to Cambridge University. They initially lived in Trinity Road, "Bon Garden" in Ventnor, but they had moved to Ryde by 1881 to Beaufort House, on Partlands Avenue. In the 1881 and 1891 censuses, he is described as a newspaper proprietor. Ann Jane MOOR passed away in 1898 and there was an eloquent obituary for her in the Isle of Wight County Press.

By 1901, Fletcher was living in Glencoe, in Yelf Road in Ryde with his son Arthur Henry MOOR (who was a solicitor) and two servants, one of which was a sick nurse, so his health must have been declining at this point. Fletcher MOOR died in 1901.

All of Fletcher MOOR'S children eventually left the Isle of Wight so none of his descendants live here. His son Horatio MOOR followed in his grandfather's footsteps and became a vicar. Interestingly, one of his other two sons, Joseph Walter MOOR, became a photographer like his father. Joseph lived in Falmouth, Cornwall and is recorded as being deaf on the 1911 census.

Fletcher MOOR and his family were chosen at random to be the focus of family history research, but his involvement in the expansion of Ventnor as a popular holiday destination as well as the fact that he had four wives (two of whom were part of highly regarded artistic families) made it a very interesting case study.