

**‘Oakley’s Creek’. Te Auaunga Awa. Stories from the forgotten upper catchment.
Part 2. *But Wait There is More!* The John Moore Reserve and the Hochstetter
swamp history. By John P. Adam.**

Part 3 : The Tutt families Wesley Mission Trust Board farm.

Part 4 : The Hayr family farm of Mount Roskill.

Part 5: Motorway gardens near Melrose Road 1990s

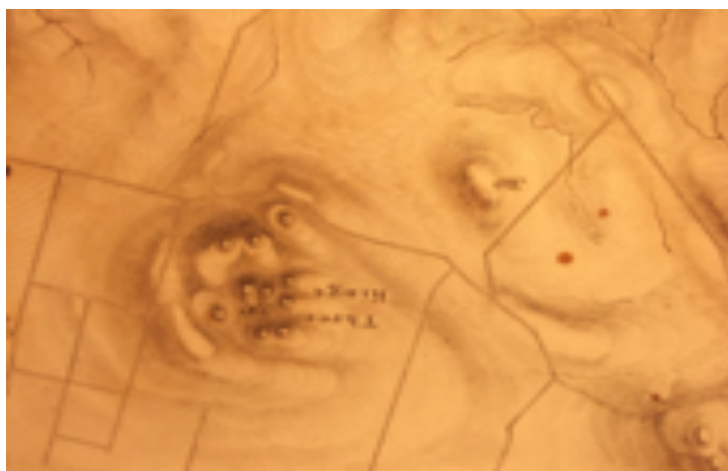


Figure 1. Top left. The John Moore Reserve entrance off Bremner avenue, Mt Roskill. Top right. A native mahoe tree, *Melicytus ramiflorus*, growing against the high sided spring fed Oakley Creek drain that has probably existed in this form for at least the past 100 years. Bottom. The horizontal hatching visible on this British Naval map of the Manukau Harbour places streams flowing away from the centrally located hatched swamp. Part of the British Naval Map illustrating Mount Roskill/ Te Papapa. Source: NZ Map 890 ‘Manukau Harbour.’ Surveyed by Commander B Drury... RN. 1853. D995.11291j 1861. London: Hydrographic Office of the Admiralty 1861. 63 x 93 cm. Black on White. Auckland City Libraries Map Collection.

2.0 Mount Roskill Farm

Joseph May emigrated from Cornwall and began to manage and then buy farmland at Mount Roskill that he first called Puketapapa (1848) and Mount Roskill (1869) probably first named the district as such in 1862.¹ He presented a notable paper to the Auckland Farmers Club in December 1854 that described *The Soils in the Neighbourhood of Auckland*.² He also wrote two popular books in the 1860s

¹

² *Daily Southern Cross* 2 January 1855.

the aspirational landscape sought after by farmers in the old and new worlds.⁸ The meadow sward was dominated by fescue grasses and clovers. Controlled flooding of this environment was undertaken early in the season to raise soil temperatures to create an early flush of meadow grass, and kill both soil and weed pests and provide nutrients in the water.



Figure 3. This map dated to 1890s records a small remnant of the Swamp above the two '1's. It has shrunk in size but probably drawn here because of its economic value as a water supply for livestock.

The end of Agriculture and arrival of the urban landscape

Joseph May sold his farm to George Winstone who then leased much of the farm to dairyman. They were proving fresh milk and butter as a locally distributed town supply.

The sale by auction last Friday of the dairy herd on Mount Roskill farm demonstrated how Auckland city is expanding. For over fifty years this farm has been one of the main sources of Auckland's milk supply. With Mount Roskill in the centre surrounded by rich volcanic fields, this was one of Auckland's choicest farms, and perhaps the best known to the citizens. In mushroom season at break of day, a hundred people were often seen gathering in the fields.

This farm is now being converted into a beautiful park and suburban residential area. In the early part of the year, the first subdivision was offered for sale, and in the place of the former delicacy, houses are now springing up like mushrooms. The first sections were eagerly sought by home builders, so that practically the whole of these are now sold.

The owner, therefore is now roading a further area of the estate, which will shortly be offered to the public. For further information, please apply to Richard Arthur, Queens Street, opposite Town Hall – (Ad).⁹



⁸ i. Cook, Hadrian and Williamson, Tom. 1999. *Water Management in the English Landscape. Field, Marsh and Meadow*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press. 256p. ii. Hatvany, Matthew G. 2003. *Marshlands: Four Centuries of Environmental Change on the Shores of the St Lawrence*. Laval, Quebec: Les Presses de L'Universite Laval.

⁹Auckland Star 4 October 1926.

Figure 3. panorama from Mount Roskill/Puketapapa in the summer of 1921 with foreground position of the swampland in pasture leased by farm tenant to George Winstone, Arthur Wallbank, who grazed a milking herd here. A series of drains or ditches with hedges dissect the landscape. Mangawhau Mt Eden (top left) and Three Kings (far right). Driveway planted in radiata pine trees (centre to right) planted by Joseph May. Source: 'Sir George Grey Special Collections, Auckland Libraries, 4-8406. 4-8407.



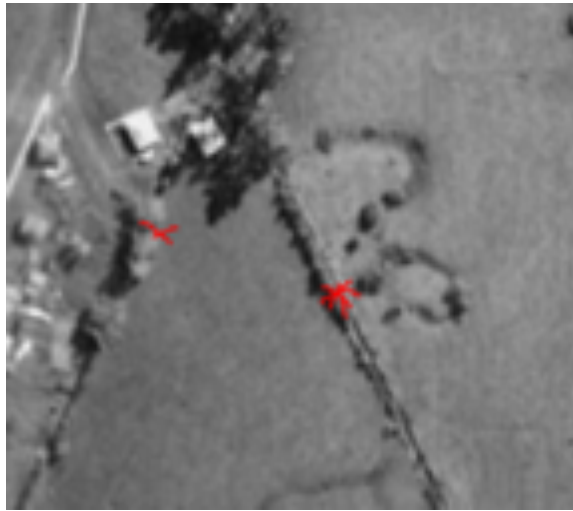
Figure 4. Geology by Ferdinand von Hochstetter (1829 -1884) in 1859, cartography by A. Petermann in 1862, published in *Geologisch-Topographischer Atlas von Neu-Seeland in 1863*.

But wait there is more....

The 'swamp' on the Hochstetter map (above) that is drawn as an oblong shape with a boundary will be what Joseph May described in an advertisement dated 22 April 1851 for the Alexander Kennedy's farm quoted in the *Daily Southern Cross* that was quoted as a 50 acre swamp and 'recently enclosed with a ditch'.

The discovery of these two maps confirms that a swamp was there until 1859 and the bank marked is the same bank that Joseph May constructed?

Two arteries of the Upper Oakley Creek streams cross the local motorway from west to east opposite the Mount Roskill Grammar School complex that are visible in the 1940 aerial map that is published on the Auckland City Council GIS historic map site. Both streams are clearly visible with the northern one marked by a row of trees (oak) and the southern one a long straight open ditch/drain as a boundary feature? Between them on the surrounding paddocks one can see the historic physical imprint of a serpentine oxbow formed old stream beds suggesting that this drainage complex when it was in flood flowed across this landscape. This evidence of the 1940 historic image captured streams would confirm that a red sedges discovered in early January 2020 are still growing in a landscape that predates the overlaid motorway landscape (1990s) that features dense plantings of *Phormium tenax* and other native shrubs. Considering the 1858 Hochstetter map of this area suggests that this landscape complex is a response to the previous large wetland that was probably 18 hectare enclosed by some form of embankment as described in the Auckland Farmers Club essay read by Joseph May in 1853.



Conclusion

The John Moore Reserve has an old drainage system that lies at the bottom of the park and forms the boundary with local school grounds. Spring water is flowing along this an open straight deeply dug drain that as it flows north forms a boundary between the housing, up hill, and the school grounds. On the uphill side of the drain the cut through reveals a below ground profile and growing on the surface of this upper cut are a range of naturalised native trees including Mahoe, *Melicytus ramiflorus*; Karamu, *Muehlenbeckia*, Karo and weed trees such as *Acmena* and Wild Cherry, *Prunus sp.* Where did the Mahoe come from? Did the seed grow out of the cut profile when the housing was constructed in the 1960s? The water flowing here in January 2020 was clear and I observed at 1.30pm about five to six adult Pukeko and the same number of young (one week?) Pukeko chicks feeding along the open water surface. Some adult birds flew out of a nearby community garden. There is no raupo *Typha sp.* growing in this section of the creek. A red native sedge is growing here that has not been planted and it is present in the nearby creek .

This drain runs into the nearby School drain coming from a westerly direction from Keith Hay Park. The precise position of the historic 50 acres swamp/wetland would be useful to locate that would require both a geologist and archaeologist to survey and draw this using historic maps.

Bibliography

May, Joseph. The Soils of the Auckland Province. *The New Zealander*, 1846

Cook, Hadrian and Williamson, Tom. 1999. *Water Management in the English Landscape. Field, Marsh and Meadow.*

Tutt Mission Farm lease. *Auckland Star* 16 March, 1918. [Sale of livestock and chattels.] for part 3

Meadow pasture hay cut or grazed by stock in long grass made a meadow by control of swamp water table. Raupo replaced by meadow grasses, buttercup, speedwell, sorrel, vetch, plantain, yarrow, clover.



The lands illustrated about Puketapapa that are drawn there are as a 'swamp' (note key attached) positioned on the south-east side of Mount Puketapapa. I had overlooked this document when writing the draft story about the catchment perhaps because I had found an 1870 map that Thomas Kirk had drawn to illustrate his paper that was published (text only) by the Royal Society of NZ. The Kirk map was drawn in colour and marked both larva flows and wetlands and probably drew on the von Hochstetter map that would have been printed in books published into the 1860s. This past week while writing this I also checked an 1853 British Naval Map by Drury of the district and there is a hatching written on the same space that is very very faint but visible and I attach the part of the original map.



Figure 3. The farm buildings in the left foreground of this February 1921 image were occupied by a farm tenant to George Winstone, Arthur Wallbank, who grazed a milking herd. In the middle ground is the Mission Farm with cows grazing. The William Tutt homestead top far right. Source: 'Sir George Grey Special Collections, Auckland Libraries, 4-8404. 4-8405. 4-8406.