

MANCHESTER, Fredric Clinton (1874-1961)

Nellie Billiau
1956
Unknown Michigan Newspaper



History in the Making Old Story to Mendon Man

MENDON – Frederic Clinton Manchester is an octogenarian now, and is living a quiet secluded life with his wife, Nellye, in a little white cottage on the St Joseph River in Mendon, Mich. As he puts it, he has lived three whole lifetimes in his one 80-year span, for he has been a registered pharmacist, a professional entertainer, a gold miner, a composer, and a dance teacher; he has seen about as much of life, and of history in the making, as any person alive today.

Fred was born Aug. 28, 1874 son of Roscoe Llewellyn and Anna Louise (Dutter) Manchester, in Schalersville, O. His father was a circus horse trainer and his mother later became an entertainer and physical culture instructor. Still later, she became connected with the Spiritualist Church and was an ordained minister in that sect. This was after she had divorced Manchester and had married J. Shaw Gillespie.

FRED'S BOYHOOD was colorful enough, for the family was always on the move and he was forced to leave school early and shift for himself. He began to make his way first as a hotel bell-hop and shoeshine boy, even peddling newspapers to turn a dime. This was in Bradford, Pa., at the time of the famous Johnstown flood, and Fred saw the swollen flood waters (covered with burning oil from the bursted pipelines of the Pennsylvania oil wells) as they flowed past Bradford.

From Bradford, he went to Lockport, NY where he became a pharmacist apprentice, and worked for three years for a dollar a week. Moving again, this time to Port Huron, Mich., he earned the vast sum of \$8 a week in another drug store and saved enough to start his studies at Ann Arbor University, graduating in due time, and passing his examination as a registered pharmacist at Starr Island, in the St. Clair Flats.

He returned to Port Huron to work in another drug store, and contracted typhoid.

After six months of illness, in broken health, his dreams of a career as a pharmacist gone, he hit the open road with a big medicine show in Flint, wandered about with this and that stock company, and at one time managed a large theatre in Everett, Wash.

In his stock company operations, he was injured in a fall, his injury became infected, and his doctor ordered him to a warm climate. His stepfather, who was now an accountant for Westinghouse in Pittsburgh, asked for and received a transfer to San Francisco, Calif. The family moved there in 1904, two years prior to the great

earthquake of 1906.

. . .

AFTER A PERIOD of recuperation, he returned to show business, working with Frank Bacon, author of the successful play, "Lightning," and was a singer, dancer, light comedian, and a dramatic actor.

Six months before the earthquake, out of work again, he encountered a man named Hoyt from San Luis Obispo who had invented and patented a special type of riffle capable of sifting the very fine 'flour' gold from the beach sand at Point Sal, near Pismo Beach. The existence of this gold had been known for some time, but no one had ever been able to separate it before, nor has anyone since according to Manchester's knowledge.

Being a chemist, Fred was interested and after consulting with his stepfather, decided to invest their savings, \$15,000, in the enterprise which appeared to be a sure thing. They built two barges, dug a great hole in the beach, floated the barges in the hole, and mounted the riffles on the barges, using a 100-H.P. gas engine to pump the sand and water through them. All this took time and the company had extracted only a small amount of the gold when a great tidal wave struck the beach, destroying all the equipment and carrying it into the ocean.

Manchester left the scene of his buried hopes and returned to his apartment in San Francisco. He drove a team of horses to Guadalupe and traveled by train to San Francisco, arriving there about 4 A.M.

At 5 A.M. the next morning, the earthquake occurred. Now he lost the remainder of his possessions, but he was not hurt, physically. Many others were, however, and many were killed, so Fred fell to making good use of his pharmaceutical knowledge, and helped in the care of the injured.

. . .

J. M. ROBINSON, who knew Fred's mother, Anna Gillespie, and had heard of their trials, came to San Francisco and persuaded Fred and his parents to accompany him to the Okanagan Valley in British Columbia, where he was developing towns and fruit areas. Fred became Robinson's confidential assistant in the development of Naramata, smallest of the three cities developed by Robinson. Peachland and Summerland had already been developed.

Robinson was backed financially by Sir Thomas Shaunessy (sic), president of the C.P.R. Railroad in Canada. Fred's mother was very active as a hostess in entertaining the big brass who came on business, and working in an advisory capacity with Robinson and Fred. She also wrote some inspiring poetry, extolling the region, its myths and traditions, and gave Naramata its name.

Fred was operating a hotel for Robinson when he met Nellye Taggart, from Akron, O. who had been employed there as a hostess. In 1912 they were married in Los Angeles, returned to Naramata, staying until 1913 when they took a trip to Europe.

While in British Columbia, Fred played for dances, entertained with his acting, and song and dance acts, operated a drug store on a commission basis, and drew a good salary from his work for Robinson, so money was no object on the European tour. They traveled through England, and some in France; returning to Naramata six months later.

In 1916 Anna Gillespie went to Battle Creek, where she served the First Spiritualist Church as pastor, until shortly before her death in April of 1926.

In 1925, when Anna was very ill, Fred and Nellye bought a second hand Ford, packed all their belongings in and around it, and drove the 3500 miles to Battle Creek; Fred opened a dancing academy in the Knights of Pythias Hall and also taught dancing privately in their home.

A short time before his mother died, Fred accepted a position as pharmacist in what is now Hudson's Drug Store in Three Rivers. In 1927, he purchased the Mendon Drug Store, where for 15 years he was the village druggist, doctor, served on the village council, composed and wrote the lyrics for the song, "St Joe River," published it, and was president of the St Joseph County Fish and Game Association. He and William McCoy, an engineer, developed the fish rearing ponds at Sturgis Dam, northwest of Centreville on the St Joseph River.

...

IN 1942, Fred and Nellye sold their home in Mendon and the store and Fred worked as State Drug Inspector in the northern part of the Lower Peninsula. They bought a cottage on Blue Lake, near Mecosta, living there ten years while he went from drug inspector to relief druggist for various drug stores in the area. For recreation, he fished and hunted.

It was so isolated there in Winter, they decided to return to Mendon. Now, between fishing, gardening, helping Nellye with the housework, reading all the library's books, walking miles daily, doing 21 pushups and other setting-up exercises daily, and cutting brush, he still complains he has nothing to do.

You just can't keep a good man down.

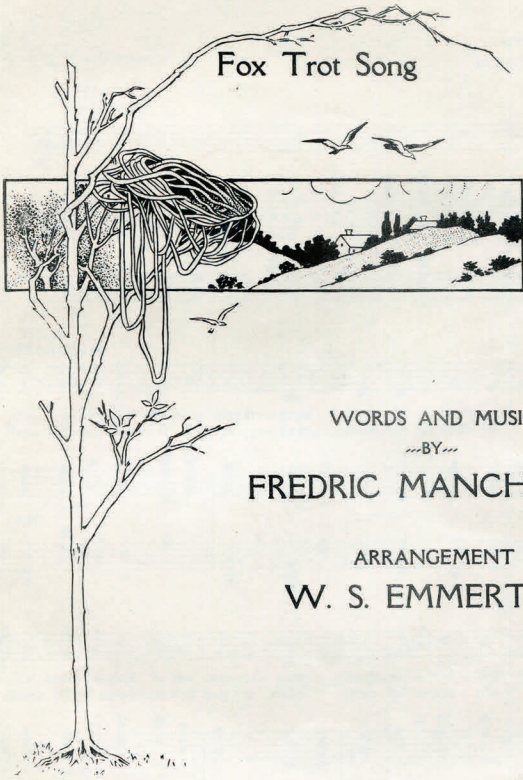


Fred and Nellye Manchester. Possibly taken around the time of their marriage in Los Angeles, California on September 7, 1912.

Fred
Mark and Nellie
Manchester.
Fred wrote the song
"The Old Okanagan"
Mark his brother was
first electrician here.
The power plant, first
of its kind in the
Valley was situated
down by the lake
where the Fish Hatchery
now is.
They were sons of
Mrs Gillespie, spiritualist
medium.

Photo from the Naramata Museum file for Fred Manchester. Origin unknown.

THE OLD OKANAGAN



Fox Trot Song

WORDS AND MUSIC
---BY---
FREDRIC MANCHESTER

ARRANGEMENT
W. S. EMMERTON

PRINTED BY
DIGGON-HIBBEN LIMITED
VICTORIA, B. C.

The Old Okanagan

Words and Music

by Frederic Manchester

Out in the West where the pine trees grow, there is a promised land
Out where the gold in the sunset's glow, touches a valley grand
We often sing of the blue grass state, and good old Tennessee
I want to lean on an old front gate, way out in old BC

Refrain

In the old Okanagan, old Okanagan. That's where the sun shines for me
In the old Okanagan, my Okanagan. Under an old apple tree
That's where big red apples grow, and peaches oh boy
I'll say so, in the old Okanagan, the old Okanagan. Where you will all
want to be

In the home of the old Okanagan Lake, home of the swift canoe
Home of the pleasures that help to make, home for a people true
And tho' I travelled the whole world round, on land or over sea
There's only one place that I have found where it is home to me

Refrain

UNITY CLUB CONCERT

NARAMATA OPERA HOUSE

THURS. MAY 28--8.15 P. M. 1914.

ADULTS 50C.

CHILDREN 25C.

PROGRAM

1. BOX AND COX ONE ACT FARCE
 Mr. Box Harry Mulford
 Mr. Cox Lewis Block
 Mrs. Bouncer Mrs. Lewis Block
 2. INTERNATIONAL RAG ENTIRE CHORUS
 3. RECITATION (Selected) Mr. Stanley Wright
 4. THERE'S A GIRL IN THE HEART OF MARYLAND
 Miss Violet Mitchell and Chorus
 5. HE'D HAVE TO GET OUT AND GET UNDER
 Mr. Fred Roe and Men's Chorus.
 6. DINAH
 Mr. Fred Manchester and Dancing Girls
 7. VOCAL SOLO (Selected) Mr. B. Newton
 8. ALWAYS TAKE A GIRL NAMED DAISY
 Margaret Mitchell and Donald Manchester
 9. MONOLOGUE
 Mr. Fred Roe
 10. THE TANGO TEA
 Introducing the Tango.
 Mr. and Mrs. Fred Manchester with Entire Chorus
- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>LADIES CHORUS</p> <p>Mrs. Lewis Block
 F. Manchester
 Peter Roe</p> <p>DANCING GIRLS</p> <p>Mrs. W. Nuttall
 Miss Ruth Chambers
 Emma Davies
 Lois Wells
 Violet Mitchell
 Vera Roe</p> <p>ACCOMPANIST
 DIRECTOR</p> | <p>MENS CHORUS</p> <p>Mr. F. Roe
 G. Brock
 H. Mitchell
 W. Talbot</p> <p>B. Cash
 R. Boothe
 R. Roe
 W. Nuttall
 N. Mitchell</p> <p>MRS. F. J. LANGUEDOC
 F. C. MANCHESTER</p> |
|---|---|

GOD SAVE THE KING

Ferry will leave Summerland 7.45 sharp. Returning after Concert.

RETURN FARE 25 cents.

Anna Louise Gillespie

1-Johannes Michael Dotterer

born: 1683
died:

2-Matthias Dotterer

born: 1717
died: 1760

3-Solomon Dotterer

born: 3 May 1759, Pennsylvania, British Colonial America
died: 13 Aug 1832, Chestnut Hill, PA

4-Henry Sider Dutter

born: 1778
died:

+ Susanna Myers

born: 1786
died:

5-George Colin Dutter

born: 26 Oct 1813, Nescopeck, Pennsylvania
died: 18 Jul 1876, Steuben, IN

+ Anna L. Breidinger

born: 1819, Pennsylvania
died: 1887

6-William Franklin Dutter

born: 1840, Pennsylvania
died: 1905

6-Adam Dutter

born: 1840, Pennsylvania
died: 1851, Pennsylvania

6-Reuben Dutter

born: 1842, Pennsylvania
died: 1905

6-Peter Dutter

born: 1844, Pennsylvania
died: 1919

Anna Louise Gillespie

6-Sarah Dutter
born: 1846, Pennsylvania
died:

6-Susan Dutter
born: 1851, Pennsylvania
died:

6-George W. Dutter
born: 1853, Pennsylvania
died:

6-Harriet Dutter
born: 1856, Ohio
died:



6-Anna Louise Dutter
born: 1858, Shalersville, OH
died: 1926, Battle Creek, Michigan

+ J. Shaw Gillespie
born: Jan 1868, Ireland
died: 1921, Battle Creek, Michigan

+ Roscoe Llewelyn Manchester
born: 30 Sep 1848, Auburn, OH
marr: 5 Dec 1872, Mantua, OH
died: 13 Apr 1945, Grand Rapids, Michigan



7-Frederic Clinton Manchester
born: 28 Aug 1874, Shalersville, Ohio
died: 13 Jan 1961, Centreville, Michigan



+ Nellye Bertha Taggart
born: 1880, Ohio
marr: 7 Sep 1912, Los Angeles, CA
died:

7-Mattie K. Manchester
born: 1877
died:

7-Mark S. Manchester
born: 1878, Michigan
died: Apr 1948, Seattle, WA

Anna Louise Gillespie

+ Myrtle Edna Laird
born: 5 Apr 1885, Angels Camp, CA
died:

6-Adele Della Dutter
born: 1862, Shalersville, OH
died: