

CROKER PRIZE FOR BIOGRAPHY 2022

2203 The Untold Story of 'Queenie' Foulds

by Jade Manly

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Where did I come from? Well, on my mother’s side there is Cornish and English ancestry and the main surnames include Dansie, Virgin, Dunstall and Taylor. Most of these ancestors immigrated to Australia and settled in rural or regional areas of South Australia (SA) and Victoria (VIC). But, what about my father’s family?

Like many other Australian women, my mother was impacted by domestic violence. Being estranged from my father, there was no-one I could ask about my heritage. I knew very little about my paternal ancestry and this is what sparked my interest in family history and genealogy.

I began my journey by asking my mother what she knew about my father’s side and came up with a list of names to research. I then verified the details using the New South Wales Births, Deaths and Marriages website. I scoured TROVE for any mention of these names and eventually signed up to Ancestry.com in the hope of learning something new. I soon discovered the name of my paternal great grandmother, Elizabeth Mary Irene Foulds or “Queenie” for short.

Elizabeth was born in 1908 to parents Frances Louisa Bowers and Allan Foulds who resided in far west New South Wales (NSW).¹ Allan’s family immigrated to Australia from Stevenson, Ayrshire, Scotland.² Allan and Louise were married in Melbourne, VIC on 26 November 1896.³ Allan worked as an opal miner in White Cliffs, NSW where his wife Frances intended to purchase an allotment of land.⁴ Allan became bankrupt in 1903 after failing to generate adequate income from mining.⁵ After a brief time in Wilcannia, the family relocated to Broken Hill and took up residence in the South of the city.⁶ Elizabeth had five siblings named Archibald, William, Janet, Ruth and Grace who passed away in 1907.⁷

I was unable to find much about Elizabeth’s youth apart from a brief mention in the classifieds section of the local newspaper. A bereavement notice placed in the *Barrier Miner* on 23 August 1930 by Mr. R. Rendell acknowledges Elizabeth and another woman named Mrs R. Baynes for assisting his family during their time of grief.⁸ This notice provides insight into Elizabeth’s character as she is thanked for her ‘sympathy and kindness.’⁹

When Elizabeth was 20 years of age, her older brother Archibald (affectionately known as Archie) passed away suddenly whilst working on Broughton Vale Station.¹⁰ The station was owned by their uncle, Angus Robert Foulds and was located approximately 56 miles from Broken Hill. Based on newspaper articles about the incident Archie had complained of having a sore head and suffered from fits or tremors due to a previous accident in 1927.¹¹ He died on 7 June 1928 after an operation at the local hospital.¹² A coronial inquest was held during the following week and Archie’s death was attributed to natural causes.¹³ Archie’s remains were interred at Broken Hill Cemetery according to Presbyterian rites.¹⁴ This incident undoubtedly had a profound impact on Elizabeth and her family.

Elizabeth married Thomas John Frederick Manly on 29 December 1931 in Broken Hill.¹⁵ The couple had three sons Allan, Keith and John, who died in 1939 at just three years of age.¹⁶ Thomas was a labourer from Illewong, NSW and his parents were Peter Frederick Manly and Margaret Ethel Payne. Thomas enlisted in the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) on 8 July 1941 and worked as an aircraft hand or machinist.¹⁷

Earlier that year, Elizabeth moved to Adelaide and gained employment at Patawillya Maternity Hospital as a cleaner or domestic.¹⁸ My grandfather Allan Albert Manly resided with her and was enrolled at Glenelg Infants School.¹⁹ Based on his schooling record, Allan was nine years

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old and his earlier education had been conducted via correspondence in NSW.²⁰ In the remarks section of the document the school has recommended that Allan be placed in an Opportunity Class at Norwood.²¹

Thomas filed for divorce in 1943 on the grounds of desertion, claiming that Elizabeth had been absent for a period of three years.²² Elizabeth made a submission that she would accept the divorce on these grounds, but wished to apply for custody of Allan.²³ Elizabeth stated that the weekly income from her husband was only 14 shillings a week and that she supplemented her income by working as a housemaid at the Royal Adelaide Hospital.²⁴ In her submission she stated that she had no property or other means and did not have an order in place for alimony.²⁵ During the court proceedings, Allan was placed in a boy's home run by the Salvation Army in Kentwood.²⁶ The issue of custody wasn't resolved until 20 April 1945, and Elizabeth was unsuccessful in gaining guardianship of her eldest child.

During the same year, Thomas married Mary Jane McGrath in Canowindra, NSW.²⁷ Despite, the fact that Thomas' character is described as being 'very good' during his time in the RAAF, I located several newspaper articles which suggest otherwise. In 1929, Thomas was convicted of stealing four motor coils and was sentenced to one month imprisonment.²⁸ But, this was not an isolated incident. In 1948, Thomas raped a 14-year-old girl who was staying at the family home to care for their youngest child whilst his wife Mary Jane was in hospital.²⁹ A Jury found him guilty and he was put on bond for a period of five years.³⁰ However, the Judge inferred that he may have been too lenient stating that 'I have grave doubts whether I am doing right or not.'³¹

Elizabeth continued to live and work in Adelaide and eventually passed away on 8 April 1982.³² Apart from these scant details I still know very little about her later life. I can only imagine how difficult it must have been losing custody of her children and being married to someone capable of such violence. I have been unable to find a photograph of 'Queenie' but I do hope that there is some sort of resemblance. I would like to think that she would have been short, dark-haired and sassy – just like me!

¹ Birth of Elizabeth Mary Irene Foulds, 1908, *Australia Birth Index 1788-1922*, Registration Number 1939.

² Passengers in History - Florentia, 8 March 1849 - 19 June 1849, London - Port Adelaide, *South Australian Maritime Museum and History Trust of South Australia*, <https://passengers.history.sa.gov.au/node/945593>.

³ Marriage of Allan Foulds and Louise Frances Bowers, 1896, *Australia Marriage Index 1788-1950*, Registration Number 6709; 'Marriages. Foulds – Bowers', *The Age*, 30 November 1896, p. 1.

⁴ Entry for Allan Foulds, 1903, The Darling, White Cliffs, New South Wales, *Australia Electoral Rolls 1893-1949*, Elector Number 3419; Entry for Frances Louisa Foulds, 11 Feb 1899, Kirk, Yungnulgra, White Cliffs, Wilcannia, *Applications to Purchase Land in Virtue of Improvements [7465]*, Department of Lands, Registration Number 99-1424.

⁵ Entry for Allan Foulds, 16 January 1903, *Bankruptcy Index 1888-1929*, NSW State Records, File Number 15425.

⁶ Entry for Allan Foulds, 1913, Willyama, Wilcannia, New South Wales, *Australia Electoral Rolls 1893-1949*, Elector Number 127.

⁷ Death of Grace Elizabeth Sophia Foulds, 1907, *Register of Birth, Deaths and Marriages NSW*, Registration Number 8322/1907.

⁸ 'In Memoriam. Mr. R. Rendell and Family', *Barrier Miner*, 23 August 1930, p. 2.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ 'Death of Man in Hospital', *Barrier Miner*, 7 June 1928, p. 4; 'Death of Mr. A. Foulds', *Barrier Miner*, 14 June 1928, p. 3.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² Death of Archibald Robert Angus Foulds, 7 June 1928, *Register of Birth, Deaths and Marriages NSW*, Registration Number 10057/1928.

¹³ 'Death of Mr. A. Foulds', *Barrier Miner*, 14 June 1928, p. 3.

¹⁴ 'Funeral Notices – Foulds', *Barrier Miner*, 8 June 1928, p. 2.

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- ¹⁵ Marriage of Thomas John Frederick Manly and Elizabeth Mary Irene Foulds, 1931, *Australia Marriage Index 1788-1950*, Registration Number 3094.
- ¹⁶ Death of John Frederick Manly, 16 November 1939, *Register of Birth, Deaths and Marriages NSW*, Registration Number NSW BDM, 26828/1939.
- ¹⁷ Record of Service - Thomas John Frederick Manly, Service Number - 37711, National Archives of Australia, NAA: A9301, 37711, 4591555, pp. 1-107.
- ¹⁸ Divorce papers for Thomas John Frederick Manly - Elizabeth Mary Irene Manly, NSW State Records, 13/07/1943 to 20/04/1945, Item Number 2046/1943, pp. 1-49; Roll Record of Allan Albert Manly, *South Australia, School Admission Registers, 1873-1985*, Glenelg Infants School, 1941.
- ¹⁹ Roll Record of Allan Albert Manly.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*
- ²¹ *Ibid.*
- ²² Divorce papers for Thomas John Frederick Manly - Elizabeth Mary Irene Manly, p. 3.
- ²³ *Ibid.*, p. 23.
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*
- ²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 47.
- ²⁷ Marriage of Thomas John Frederick Manly (*sic*) and Mary Jane McGrath, 1945, *Register of Birth, Deaths and Marriages NSW*, Registration Number 20412/1945.
- ²⁸ 'Alleged Theft - Defendant is Remanded', *Barrier Miner*, 12 April 1929, p. 5; 'Theft of Motor Coils - Young Man Gaoled', *Barrier Miner*, 15 April 1929, p. 3.
- ²⁹ 'Actual Belief as to Age', *Barrier Daily Truth*, 2 June 1948, p. 1; 'Man Guilty of Serious Offence', *Barrier Miner*, 2 June 1948, p. 2.
- ³⁰ Thomas John Frederick Manly, *Criminal Depositions (Deposition Books) Index 1849-1949*, NSW State Records, Series: NRS 849, Item No: 19, Page No: 132, Entry No: 274 40; 'Judge puts Man on Bond for 5 Years', *Barrier Miner*, 3 June 1948, p. 3.
- ³¹ 'Judge puts Man on Bond for 5 Years', *Barrier Miner*, 3 June 1948, p. 3.
- ³² 'Elizabeth Mary Irene Manly', *Centennial Park*, <https://www.centennialpark.org/memorial-search-list/elizabeth-mary-irene-manly-151559/>.