

The Clarke Farm - Anne Clarke Fortescue



Fortescue, Anna Clark (1888-1985)

Anna Clark Fortescue was an early resident of the Inglewood community, in what is today the northern part of the city of Sammamish (King County). Her parents arrived in Inglewood in 1906, and in 1908 she joined them at their farm in what is today (2008) part of the Meadow Creek subdivision on the south side of Inglewood Hill Road, half a mile west of its intersection with 228th Avenue NE. Between 1908 and 1920 Fortescue taught at the Inglewood Grammar School, Pine Lake, and Happy Valley schools (as well as two other schools in the state), but Inglewood was her longest run: She taught there a total of six years. This account, written by Sammamish Heritage Society historian Phil Dougherty, is the story of Fortescue's life on the Sammamish Plateau in the early years of the twentieth century as she described it in a March 1978 interview with the Marymoor Museum. The account reprints Dougherty's articles, "A Local Life: Anna Mary Clark Fortescue" (*Sammamish Review*, May 21, 2008, pp. 10-11) and "Anna Fortescue Teaches The Youth Of Sammamish" (*Sammamish Review*, May 28, 2008, pp. 10-11) and is reprinted with the kind permission of the Sammamish Heritage Society.

Anna Mary Clark Fortescue was born in Jamestown, North Dakota, on June 10, 1888, the daughter of William Clark (1856-1918) and Ann Gordon Clark (d. 1924), both Scottish immigrants who came to America in the early 1880s. Anna, also known as Ann, spent most of her childhood in Brainerd, Minnesota. William Clark worked as a machinist for the Northern Pacific Railroad, but in 1904 quit his job and that autumn sold the family house in Brainerd.

William Clark seems to have had an adventurous streak. The United States had begun work on the Panama Canal earlier in 1904, and he learned that the U.S. government was looking for steam-shovel men to work on the canal. He applied, was accepted, and went to Panama in January 1905. But he soon came down with malaria, and in April returned to Brainerd, where his family had rented a house. Meanwhile, early in 1905 Anna's two older

sisters, Elsie and May, came to Seattle and started work in millinery (women's hat making) and dressmaking. In June 1905 the rest of the Clark family moved to Seattle and joined them, though William soon took off again, this time for Alaska, where he panned for gold for several months near Nome.

The Clarks rented a home, then a small apartment, in Seattle. In 1906 they bought an 80-acre farm in the Inglewood community, at what would much later be known as 22253 Inglewood Hill Road. Forty of the acres were timber. The remaining 40 had been logged but the logs had not been removed; William burned them during his first winter there. The farm, located on the south side of Inglewood Hill Road, had a log house which Fortescue said she thought was 33 years old at the time the Clarks bought it. (This seems unlikely, as there is no known record of non-Indian settlement on Inglewood Hill before the late 1880s.) The house was two stories tall, with one bedroom, a living room, kitchen, a pantry off of the dining room, and a kitchen.

In a 1978 interview with the Marymoor Museum, Fortescue explained that the Clarks bought their 80 acres from "a man named [Freeman] Gardner." Mary Gardner, Gardner's wife, was running the Inglewood post office when the Clarks arrived. In 1906 the post office was in the old Gunther store building, in what Fortescue described as a "tall building" located on the east side of East Lake Sammamish Road just north of Inglewood Hill Road. But, she added, "Then they moved the post office down to Sammamish Mill at Sammamish, out on that peninsula there at Sammamish." Joseph Weber had two shingle mills in the tiny community of Sammamish when the post office moved there in June 1907, and he became postmaster then. Today we know this peninsula as Weber's Point.

When her parents moved to Inglewood in 1906, Fortescue had two years of high school remaining until graduation. She was attending Seattle High School (later renamed Broadway High School) on Capitol Hill, and since there were no high schools in Inglewood, she stayed behind in Seattle and lived with her older sisters when her parents moved. (Shortly after their arrival in Seattle, Ann Clark had bought a millinery store for her daughters Elsie and May; the store had three rooms in the back, and Fortescue boarded there with her sisters during the school year.)

But she came to Inglewood on the weekends and during the summer to stay with her parents. Traveling to Inglewood from Seattle was a much more roundabout adventure in 1908 than it is in 2008. She explained: "There was a train that left King Street Station at somewhere around 4:30 or quarter to five ... it went to Redmond, it went to Woodinville, back to

Redmond and on up to Snoqualmie. There was a station down at the foot of the [Inglewood] hill in a little house where they could store freight, right down by the lake. The wagon road [East Lake Sammamish Road] traveled above the railroad, and the railroad was close to the water. It would be around 6:00 or after by the time we got out to Inglewood. Then there was another way we could come, and that was to come across the lake on the ferry. Go out to Madison Park, cross the lake on the ferry [to Kirkland], take the stage to Redmond, and then take the train from there. That was the cheapest way, because the ferry was only five cents ... I've forgotten what the stage charged, about 15 cents or something. At first they had a horse stage ... then near 1910 [they got an automobile stage.]”

Fortescue recalled the horse stages being drawn by two or possibly three horses. Both types of stages typically carried about eight people.

Fortescue graduated from Seattle High School in 1908, and said she attended a “special normal school” that summer in Seattle. “Normal schools” were common in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. They were created to train high school graduates to become teachers, and their purpose was to establish teaching “norms” or standards, hence the name “normal school.” She attended summer normal classes every summer through 1911, at least two of those years at the University of Washington. But she was able to start teaching in the autumn of 1908. She applied for a position at the Inglewood Grammar School, and was accepted. The pay was \$50 a month. She moved in with her parents on their farm, fortuitously located only a half-mile from the school. The school was located on the southeast corner today’s NE 8th Street and 228th Avenue SE, about where the 76 service station is today.

When Fortescue arrived at her parent’s farm about September 1908, the Clarks were either just completing or had just completed a new farmhouse on their property. She said it was built with lumber from the “Monohon mill,” and described the house: “Dad built it for \$600, a seven room house It had three bedrooms upstairs and one bedroom down, kitchen, dining room and then a living room. Outdoor plumbing,” she laughed, meaning an “outhouse” or “backhouse” served as the family toilet. Like most other area families, the Clarks used well water for drinking, cooking, and bathing. And they used either kerosene lamps or candles (or both) for lighting, since electricity wouldn’t reach Inglewood Hill until the 1920s, after they had left.

The farm had a number of outbuildings, and a windmill “behind the hill behind the house,” said Fortescue. Clark also left the original log house standing on his property during the years the family was there, which they later occasionally used for square dances. Like many farm families of the

day, the Clarks had livestock: a few pigs, and several cows. The family also had several hundred fruit trees on the farm, including cherry and apple trees. They grew strawberries and rhubarb, and probably some other vegetables as well. On occasion they traded fruit or dairy products with the Redmond Trading Company for things they needed at home. Sister May made clothes for the family until she married in 1913 or 1914 and closed her millinery store.



Fortescue taught at the Inglewood Grammar School for the 1908-1909 school year. The next year she taught at the Pine Lake school, located on the northeast corner of SE 24th Street and 228th Avenue SE in Sammamish, where Discovery Elementary School is today. Although she earned \$10 a month more at Pine Lake, she returned to Inglewood for the 1910-1911 school year, and stayed there until 1914. The Inglewood Grammar School was a one-room frame building (though it did have a cloakroom), with a large wood stove in one corner which local residents helped to keep stocked during the cold weather months.

Fortescue taught anywhere from 15 to 25 students in Inglewood, and often had several (some years as many as five) Native Americans in her class from the Snoqualmie Tribe that lived near the lake. She taught students from first through eighth grade -- students were seated in rows according to their grade -- and occasionally had an older student help her. Most people walked or rode horses to school (horses could hang out and graze in a pasture next to the school during school hours); a few may also have ridden bicycles to school, as did at least one teacher that worked with Fortescue later in the 1910s. While the automobile was becoming prevalent in Seattle by the 1910s, this was not the case in Inglewood, where there were few roads capable of handling cars, and not many families could afford them in any event. Cars would not really become common in Inglewood until the 1920s, after the Inglewood Grammar School had closed.

There was a vibrant social life on the Sammamish Plateau during the 1910s. Fortescue recalled, "We had dances in the neighborhood up there. People opened up their homes and they'd have square dances, and sometimes

there was phonograph music. And after Dad built the new house, why then we used the old log cabin for dances. It was one big room, it was about 20 feet square, and you know that was bigger than most of the people had in their homes!"

Plays were also popular, as were "box socials" or "basket socials" (Fortescue used both terms). These socials were in essence bring your own dinners and chat, and people brought their dinners in decorated boxes or baskets. It was a good opportunity to get together and socialize, and people often met in the small rural schools or in people's homes. Fortescue met her husband, Ernest, at such a social at the Pine Lake school in the autumn of 1917.

Like her father, Fortescue evidently had an adventurous streak, and she got bored in Inglewood. She explained, "Every year they'd hire me over again. Finally I rebelled and got in school up at Enumclaw instead." In 1914 she moved to a small Danish community near Enumclaw named Flensted (which is today part of Enumclaw). She taught there for a year while boarding with a nearby family. The next year she went to Grant County and taught at the Bailey school for two years, perhaps living during that time with her sister May and her husband, who lived nearby.

Fortescue returned to the Inglewood area in 1917 and for two years served as the principal of the Happy Valley school, which was located next to the Happy Valley Grange Hall. The Happy Valley Grange Hall still stands today on NE 50th Street, just north of the Sammamish city limits. This was a bigger school, with two rooms. She taught what she called the "upper grades" in addition to serving as principal. When the Happy Valley school was consolidated into Redmond in 1919, she returned to the Inglewood Grammar School and taught there for its final year before this school was also absorbed by Redmond after the school year ended in 1920.

Anna Clark and Ernest Fortescue were married in her parent's home on June 12, 1919. Her father had died the previous summer, and her mother couldn't live alone, so the newlyweds stayed with her mother on the Clark farm for nearly a year. About March 1920 Ann Clark sold the farm and moved to Seattle with her son Will.

Ernest moved to Rose Hill (Kirkland) and Anna rented a home in Inglewood until the school year ended. She then joined her husband in Kirkland. Together they had a daughter, Ermagene (b. 1921) and two sons, Ernest (b. 1923) and Kenneth (b. 1925). Husband Ernest worked as a mail carrier until a stroke in 1944 forced him into retirement; he died in 1950. Anna remained in Kirkland, passing away on October 8, 1985, at the age of 97.

The Clark farmhouse survives today, although it was moved in the late 1970s about one-half a block west, to its present location at 420 222nd Avenue NE in Sammamish. The farm itself is now, at least in part, taken up by the Meadow Creek subdivision.

Sources:

*Lucile McDonald, Kathryn Martin, Lilly Mae Anderson interview of Anna Clark Fortescue, Marymoor Museum, Redmond, WA, March 15, 1978 (Eastside Heritage Center, Eastside Women's History Project), taped interview in possession of Sammamish Heritage Society; Anna Clark Fortescue, "History of the Clark Family and Descendants," typescript dated March 15, 1980, in possession of Sammamish Heritage Society; HistoryLink.org Online Encyclopedia of Washington State History, "Sammamish Neighborhoods: Inglewood -- Thumbnail History" (by Phil Dougherty), <http://www.historylink.org> (accessed April 30, 2008); Obituary, Anna M. Fortescue, (*Bellevue*) *Journal-American*, October 10, 1985, p. B-6; *Polk's Oregon, Washington and Alaska Gazetteer, 1905-1906* (Seattle: R. L. Polk & Co., 1905); *Polk's Oregon, Washington and Alaska Gazetteer, 1907-1908* (Seattle: R. L. Polk & Co., 1907).*

By Phil Dougherty, July 22, 2008