

Stuart and Clara  
McMaster pose  
beside their  
piano. Their musical  
fame has spread  
near and far.

The gifts given by Clara and J. Stuart McMaster are not limited to the Christmas season. They are given all year round — wrapped in friendship and tied with melody.

Wherever comfort can be bestowed in song, the McMaster's are there. As one writer has said, "No one can



gauge the immensity of their contribution, gladly and freely given.

"With a matched harmony that is peculiarly theirs, they have comforted the sorrowing, touched the hearts of scores of missionaries, leaving for fields of labor, brought life to countless parties, enriched many a wedding, and added to the spirit of worship in meetings without number."

The music of "Amahl and the Night Visitors" is familiar to the McMaster family, and especially to Clara who played the role of Amahl's mother when the presentation was new to Salt Lake City audiences.

Back in 1941, Clara and Stuart portrayed mother and father in the Aaronic Priesthood pageant, "Prepare Ye the Way," presented in the Mormon Tabernacle on Temple Square.

Following their performance, members of the Presiding Bishopric (Bishop LeGrand Richards and his counselors Bishop Marvin O. Ashton and Bishop Joseph L. Wirthlin) sent this message to the couple: "Only through the sustaining power of our kind Heavenly Father could you possibly have accomplished what you did in the pageant.

"You touched the hearts of thousands and brought honor and dignity to the roles of mother and father. You were imbued with a spirit and bearing that could only be motivated by the power of God."

Mr. and Mrs. McMaster appreciate the gift of music that has blest their



## A FAMILY TRADITION

# Love Of Music



By DOROTHY O. REA

She tried out her original compositions on her own children and has succeeded in having 20 songs for children published.

For the past 20 years, Clara has been a member of the soprano section of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir.

"Some of the most remembered moments of my life are those when I was singing with the choir. The inspiration of singing at Mt. Rushmore — at the presidential inauguration — in Carnegie Hall — the fair. It has all been so wonderful. I think the most exciting memory was that of singing a small solo part accompanied by the

power of God.  
Mr. and Mrs. McMaster appreciate the gift of music that has blessed their home through the years. When Christmas morning comes this year, the family will gather to sing the sacred songs of Christmas. The children will sing their songs of Santa, snow and toys.

At the home, 1420 Kensington Ave., will be gathered sons and daughter, Brent W., Ogden; Thomas W., John S. and Mrs. J. Gene (Diane) McCoun, all of Salt Lake City, with partners and children.

It is natural that the family is musical, since music is a family tradition extending back to pioneer times.

Stuart said, "My grandparents, Robert L. and Pricilla Noble Fishburn, were both converts from England. They fell in love while pulling a handcart and singing together as they came across the plains. They sang for many occasions after arriving in Salt Lake City and were honored to have the opportunity to sing for Pres. Brigham Young."

Clara started her musical activities at the age of four years. She sang her first song in public in the little town of Beaver Dam, Utah, where she was born. She was the youngest of 11 children born to Joseph H. and Lydia Ella Hancock Watkins. The family lived on the farm until they moved to Brigham City. It was here, Clara met Stuart. As students, they sang together in programs and in Gilbert and Sullivan operettas.

Stuart's life had been different than it might have been. He was born in Brigham City, a son of Thomas M. and Lavinia Fishburn McMasters. When he was only seven, his father was killed,

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leaving a widow and two small sons.

It was necessary for Stuart to work for his education. He became well known throughout the area for his work with The Harmony Nighthawks, one of the most popular combos in Utah some 40 years ago. Stuart's evenings were spent on the stage in Salt Lake City theaters or in dining rooms of the large hotels. He played the banjo and the trombone and sang popular songs of the prosperous "Twenties."

Daytime found him hard at work as a brilliant student of law at University of Utah. On June 17, 1927, he married the sweetheart of his school days in the Salt Lake Temple.

He went on with his music and studies and became a successful attorney. He joined the legal staff of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation in 1934 and became field solicitor in 1955. He became regional solicitor in 1963. He received the Distinguished Service Award from the Federal Employees' Assn. He has served as president of Utah chapter of the Federal Bar Assn.

He has served as a bishop and served in his stake presidency, being an active and devout Church member throughout his life. He is now a patriarch and rejoices that "all the children were married in the temple and all are active in the Church."

Clara has worked in all the auxiliaries, holding positions of leadership. At the age of 12 years, she was sustained as primary organist in her ward. Today she is a member of the General Primary Board, assigned to music.

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The well known McMaster duet, started as husband and wife singing together around the house for their own amusement or to please the children.

They were asked to do a small skit for a ward Relief Society party in the old Seventeenth Ward. They delighted the audience with "If I Knew You and You Knew Me."

As far as they can remember, this was the beginning of their vocal contributions which long ago passed the 8,000 mark.

"We have no idea how many times we have sung together. . . . But it might well average out at once a day since we started."

About 25 years ago they sang at a missionary farewell for a young friend. Only a few weeks ago, they sang for that missionary's son as he prepared to leave for his mission.

Their Christmas mail this year, as in years past, is filled with expressions of gratitude and good will from those whom their voices have comforted.

Clara and Stuart do not think that any should feel obliged to them. "Music is a gift from God. It is only precious when it is shared. We have been honored in being asked to sing for our friends."

In addition to all else, Clara is president of Salt Lake Opera Appreciation Club. She also teaches about 15 piano students.

A friend expressed appreciation to Clara by giving her a framed sampler which reads, "Who teaches a child to love music, teaches a child to live."