

Back To Nelson

(Weblink MA Back to Nelson)

After the great floods at Upper Moutere, George and his family abandoned the land and returned to the township of Nelson

On the 16 July 1844, 122 German immigrants in Nelson were naturalised. The ordinance reads as follows;

All and singular the persons who are particularly described in the schedule here unto annexed shall be to all intents and purpose whatsoever within the colony of New Zealand, deemed and taken to be and to have been, from the fourteenth day of June, One thousand Eight hundred and Forty Three natural born subjects of her Majesty as if they had respectively been born within the realm of England.

Our family was listed in the Ordinance book as:

MAUSSEN G. Hch Conrad	Gardner
MAUSSEN Joh Cath Elis	Wife
MAUSSEN Car Louise Henrt	
MARTIN Joh Carl Hch	Son of wife

The New Zealand Company was in a bad financial state and in March 1844 the Company began to collapse. The Company was the main employment force in the district. This made the task of finding a job for George very hard indeed. Starvation hit the land and this was to last for the next 16 months. In order to survive the settlers dug up the potatoes they had planted peeled them to eat and planted their skins and eyes hoping for a crop to grow. Many families lived on potatoes for a whole year. The women and children looked wretched and haggard. In these hard times they were known to boil sow thistles, hunt and kill wild pigs and fish, which enabled them to survive. After a long period of time when they managed to get some flour, most found that they had lost the taste for bread and did not like it. Mother made clothes out of bushel sacks trousers and all. Nobody worried about the look of the clothes as everyone was in the same predicament, not just the German families. If the men could find work they would only expect payment of 2 shillings a day. All they could do was plant gardens to help feed their families and many a mother went to bed hungry.

The ship "Skiod" arrived in Nelson on the 01 September 1844 with more German Immigrants aboard. Many of these immigrants along with some of the Sat Pauli settlers later left for Australia. Those who had the means paid for the passage but some of the fares were paid by the Lutheran parishioners in Australia. There was a steady flow of ships from Nelson to the Australian ports of Hobart, Adelaide and Sydney. The main ships used by the German families were "Sisters", "Sir John Franklin" and the "Palmyra" which left Nelson on the 21 August 1845.

Life was much easier for the Germans settlers who arrived on the "Skiod" and remained in Nelson. Most were employed on land that the KELLING brothers managed and this was good quality land. In Australia Gold was discovered and Nelson began to supply the goldfields with food. This soon helped the settlers in Nelson to prosper and improve their living standards. On arrival in the township of Nelson George, Johanna and their family went back to living in the New Zealand Company barracks. The 1845 census reads:

Town section 178 – Hardy Street - New Zealand Company Barracks
 178 – MENSEN Henry – Hardy Street
 Adults, 1 male, 1 female, Children, 1 male, 1 female, Family total 4
 Tenant living in Earth house.

The Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle newspaper

Nelson Saturday 07 February 1846

List of persons qualified to serve as Jurors in the district of Nelson in the colony of New Zealand for the year 1846-7

- Henry MANSEN occupation labourer address Hardy Street

Note the jury list enabled me to follow our family's movements and also recorded all the different spellings of the family surname.

The Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle newspaper

Nelson Saturday 06 February 1847

List of persons qualified to serve as Jurors in the district of Nelson in the colony of New Zealand for the year 1847-8

- Conrad MANSEN occupation gardener address Hardy Street

Note the jury list enabled me to follow our family's movements and also recorded all the different spellings of the family surname.

Conrad and Johanna had a son Carl Friedrich Heinrich MANSSSEN was born 18 July 1847 Nelson. His parents were recorded as Johanna Catherine Elisabeth and George Heinrich Conrad MANSSSEN. Carl's godparents were Friedrich Michael Daniel SCHUMACHER and Friedrich H TIESJEN. The Lutheran Church Minister Rev J W HEINE baptised Carl on 21 May 1847 [sic] in Nelson. The date (month) of the baptism was written incorrectly. Carl Friedrich Heinrich MANSSSEN was later known as Charles Frederick Henry MANSSSEN.

(Reference Stoke museum research centre Nelson Lutheran Church register page 1 Nelson)

One of the godparents Friedrich Michael Daniel SCUMACHER came to New Zealand aboard the ship St Pauli the same vessel as the MANSSSEN family.

The Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle

Nelson Saturday 06 November 1847

List of Unclaimed Letters – Post Office Nelson 05 November 1847

- MANSSSEN H G C

(Reference National Library of NZ newspaper section The Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle 06 November 1847 page 1)

Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle 05 February 1848

M = MANSSSEN Conrad Labourer, Nile Street West.

(Reference National Library of NZ Papers past on line database Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle 05 February 1848 Volume VI Issue 309 page 191)

The Nelson newspaper "Examiner" printed details of men on the Nelson jury list. This enabled me to follow our MANSSSEN family's movements

Year	Name	Address	Occupation
1848-49	MANSSSEN Conrad	Nile Street West	Labourer

Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle 09 September 1848 article about 1849 census H C MANSSSEN

(Reference National Library of NZ papers past database Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle 09 September 1848 Volume VII Issue 340 page 111)

The Nelson Examiner Saturday 27 January 1849

Notice to squatters in New Zealand Company land as from the 1st July last they will have to pay rent.

(Reference Alexander Turnbull Library book volume 1846-1856 AP 530 Je 7-D The Nelson Examiner Saturday 27 January 1849)

Conrad MANSSSEN was living on NZ Company Land so would have to pay rent.

Two years later Rev HEINE wrote an article about the German Community in Nelson. It appeared in the 1849 New Zealand Journal Volume 1 page 194 and mentions our MANSSEN family but with different spelling of the name,

Mansen is a gardner, and has a wife and three children. He employs himself in gardening for others and for himself. His wife is a sempstress. His garden is one acre in size, planted with all sorts of vegetables and trees. He has a cow, three two-year-olds [sic], twenty goats, three pigs and several chickens.

That same year Nelson had another census taken. The 1849 census was more detailed than the first. The household now numbered five. They were living on tenant-occupied land in Shakespeare Walk. George's details read: born German, trade Gardner and religion Lutheran. The family owned 34 goats. Their house was made of wood with the roof of other materials. Two acres of land was fenced and cleared. An acre was planted in wheat, ¼ acre in garden, and ½ acre in other crop and vined. Two males and one female could read and write, while one female could read only.

Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle 24 February 1849

M = MANSSEN Conrad Labourer, Nile Street West.

(Reference National Library of NZ Papers past on line database Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle 24 February 1849 Volume VII Issue 364 page 205)

Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle 31 March 1849

M = MANSSEN Conrad Gardner, Nile Street West.

(Reference National Library of NZ Papers past on line database Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle 31 March 1849 Volume VIII Issue 369 page 17)

The Nelson newspaper "Examiner" printed details of men on the Nelson jury list. This enabled me to follow our MANSSEN family's movements

Year	Name	Address	Occupation
1850-51	MANSSEN Conrad	Nile Street East	Labourer

The Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle 05 February 1850

Meeting of Labourers to Seek Compensation

Mr MANSSEN stated some of the hardships, which the German immigrants had sustained at the Moutere. To that district (a distance of thirty-two miles in the country) they had been compelled to go to their work and to take land there. After breaking up the land and putting in the seed, the floods destroyed all their labours, and shortly afterwards the Company broke up, and left them quite helpless. [There are numerous other details of the meeting]

After some remarks from other speakers the following Resolution were put and carried unanimously –

1. That it is the opinion of this meeting that the mechanics and labourers of Nelson are entitled to compensation from the New Zealand Company, in consequences of the suffering and losses they have sustained. Proposed by Mr T Berry Seconded by My D Henderson
2. That Messrs J P Robinson, J Kidson, J Clarke, A McGee, **H Manssen**, I M Hill, J Watts and W Coppins, be appointed a committee with power to add to their number to collect the requisite evidence and prepare a memorial thereon to the New Zealand Company showing the Justice of our claims to compensation.

(Reference National Library of NZ Papers past database Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle 05 February 1850 Volume VIII Issue 409 page 176)

The Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle 27 April 1850 page 35

An article regarding 'Memorial of Mechanics and Labourers claiming compensation from the New Zealand Company is lengthy. It is signed by George MANSSEN and many other early Nelson settlers of all nationalities.

Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle 16 February 1850

M = MANSSSEN Conrad Labourer, Nile Street east

(Reference National Library of NZ Papers past on line database Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle 16 February 1850 Volume VIII Issue 415 page 200)

Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle 27 April 1850

Memorial of Mechanics and Labourers claiming compensation from the New Zealand Company - Report on the meeting held on 13 April – The paper is lengthy

Listed was J.C.MANSSSEN

(Reference National Library of NZ Papers past on line database Nelson Examiner and New Zealand Chronicle 27 April 1850 Volume IV Issue 425 page 34)

On the 08 July 1850 Mary Elizabeth MANSSSEN was born. George and Johanna's family was growing and starting to prosper, along with many other families in the Nelson area.

Girl (Mary Elizabeth) MANSSSEN was born 08 July 1850. Her parents were Johanna Catherine Elizabeth formerly MARTIN and George Henry Conrad MANSSSEN occupation gardener. G H C MANSSSEN gardener of Nelson registered the birth on 09 August 1850. The registrar was John POYNTER.

(Reference RGO NZ birth registration 1850 folio 230 line 103 web reg. 1850/Nelson district)

Mr SPAIN was appointed Land Commissioner and began to investigate claims on land that had been purchased from the Maori people. The records can be found at Archives New Zealand in the Old Land Claims records. The New Zealand Company claims were examined and in time the titles for the land given. The settlers were able to re-select their land and gain title to the properties. In 1850 the New Zealand Company ceased its operations in Nelson. With the opening up of rural land in Nelson and Wairau, farms began to grow. Employment increased and the less fortunate settlers began to save and many purchased their own farms. An expedition to survey a road from Nelson to Blenheim was opening up the land in Happy Valley, Whangamoia and Rai Valley. The New Zealand Company Charter reverted to Imperial Government and Nelson now stated to prosper and grow.

The Nelson Examiner Saturday 15 February 1851 – Jury List

- Conrad MANSSSEN occupation labourer address Nile Street East
- William PAGE occupation Labourer address Halifax Street

The Nelson Examiner Saturday 07 February 1852 – Jury List

- Conrad MANSSSEN occupation labourer address Nile Street East
- William PAGE occupation Labourer address Halifax Street

George his wife and children moved from Nelson and settled in Suburban North early in 1853. The next part of the family's life is recorded in the next section titled 'Home in Wakapuaka'.
