

# Local Jurist Suggests Fraud in Divorce Case

District Judge Clel Georgetta, who was millionaire Tommy Manville's attorney in a divorce obtained from his ninth wife in 1955, said yesterday, "It is my own personal opinion that a fraud has been perpetrated upon the California court."

Reference was made to a Santa Monica Superior Court which ruled last Thursday the divorce was not legal because Manville's wife, Anita Frances Roddy-Eden, failed to meet Nevada residence requirements. The California jurist then granted actor John Sutton's request to annul his marriage to the former dancer.

Since the 1955 Reno divorce, Miss Roddy-Eden married Sutton, and Manville claimed his 11th wife in January, German-born Christiana Erdlen, a former waitress.

"When Anita Manville obtained a divorce from Thomas Manville here in 1955, she testified she had spent more than the required six weeks in Nevada.

"As I recall it, she made one or two trips to California to see a medical specialist and was gone only a very short time; one or two days, which she made up by remaining in Nevada longer than six weeks."

Testimony of the former Mrs. Manville, said Judge Georgetta, "was corroborated by two long-time residents of Nevada, who have good reputations for truth and honesty. I consider these two witnesses entirely trustworthy."

## Accurate Testimony

In a statement made earlier in the year by Washoe County District Attorney William Raggio, he said, "The two witnesses (Emily Wood and Margaret Hud-

son) that testified are persons of good character, highly respected in the community, and I have no reason to believe that the testimony given by them is other than accurate and valid."

Raggio said yesterday that John Sutton appeared in his office recently, but that Sutton offered no evidence to counter evidence which was presented at the divorce hearing.

He also said that Miss Roddy-Eden failed to keep an appointment in his office when she was in Reno in January.

She made statements earlier in the year disclaiming valid Nevada residence and came here to consult with Attorney Maurice Sullivan. An appointment was scheduled with Raggio then, but she did not show up.

Sullivan said yesterday that the former Mrs. Manville had not contacted him since then.

"As I understand it," said Judge Georgetta, "Anita Sutton made demands on Manville and threatened to have the Reno divorce set aside. Her demands were rejected." This was done after a story appeared in the press that Manville was about to remarry.

## Blackmailed

"Then Anita Sutton made a dramatic announcement to the press that she had paid thousands of dollars to some unknown, unnamed blackmailer who she said knew her Reno divorce was not valid," he said.

Referring to her consultation with Sullivan about the possibility of having the divorce set aside so she would still be married to Manville, Judge Georgetta answered, "I think the reason is quite obvious."

"Her most recent husband, actor John Sutton, filed an action in a California court to have his marriage annulled on the ground his wife is still married to Manville.

"The evidence he presented is her deposition saying she did not live in Nevada for the required six weeks time. In other words, she apparently cooperated in the California annulment proceeding.

"This woman has now placed herself in a dangerous position. She has opened the door to a prosecution for perjury, which carries a penalty of imprisonment from one to 14 years," said Judge Georgetta.

He pointed out she testified under oath in the Nevada action that she lived in this state more than six weeks. She then turned around in the California action and testified by deposition — also under oath — that she did not live in Nevada more than six weeks.

"Both cannot be true," said Judge Georgetta.

When asked where he thought she did tell the truth, he said, "What she said in the Nevada court is corroborated by two very dependable witnesses.

"What she said in the California court, as far as the press story goes, is not corroborated by any other evidence.

"It is my own personal opinion the lady has committed perjury in the California court — and has perpetrated a fraud upon that court," he concluded.