

EDITORIAL DIGEST & MANUSCRIPT FILE

PROJECT Negroes of N.Y.  
 EDITOR: FILE TITLE & NO.: Biographies  
 REPORTER: Cellert ART. NO.: 23  
 DATE: - COPY TITLE: Emanuel A. Middleton  
 WORDAGE 360  
 REWRITE: INDEXED BY: *Lannon* DATE: *7-6-42*

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Negro in New York

Laurence Gellert

Problems and career of the  
Negro Song Writer.

*Verbatim Account of A. E. Middleton*

Manuel A. Middleton was born April 18th, 1911 in Fuchey, Ark. Was taken to St. Louis ~~and~~ at the age of three months. He stayed there until the age of six and was taken back to the South remaining for four more years. Then he was again taken back to St. Louis to finish grammar school and high school. Left St. Louis in 1926 to see the World on a dime. First stopped in Chicago where got a job with Clarence Muse singing in Dark Town Follies. Stayed with this show until the show played New York. Knocked around New York a few months; then went back to Chicago. Got a job in a night club "DREAMLAND", manager encouraged me to study voice culture. He was the first person to encourage me at all, others either ignored such talents as I had or else laughed at my voice because it had a natural operatic timber. Went out to Los Angeles hiking, hitching, every-which way. Got some work as an extra in pictures. Began studying voice and piano seriously with a Mrs F. Williams. Left Los Angeles to tour Northern Coast, Portland, San Francisco, etc.. Came back to Chicago and planned to get in some more studying of advanced music. In 1930 was a tough year, couldn't get any sort of a job. Managed somehow to live. All I could do toward my studying was to buy some books on Harmony, sight singing, etc., which I couldn't make head or tail of. I might just as well have bought me a ~~XXXXXX~~ volume of Greek. Caught a ride to New York with some friends. Got a job with a show ~~on~~ Sugar Hill which lasted two weeks, on Broadway. Then got a job in ~~the~~ Saratoga Club in Harlem, saved up enough to get in a few licks of study. Studied voice, violin, harmony, sight singing with L. Robinson. Later attended Julliard Institute and Columbia, where I studied advanced Harmony, composition and orchestration under Prof.

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SethBingham. Found myself in need about 1935, W. P. A. turned out to be a God-send. I got on Federal Theatre Negro Project at the Lafayette Theatre, managed to do some really serious and advanced studying. Got married. When Federal Theatre closed I opened up a little music shop and clerking there gives me long spells of time with a piano to do a whole lot of tinkering and composing. Just at the moment I'm rehearsing a group of thirty voices - swing choir - I hope to do things with them. Gus Smith has a full length review for which I did the music. Lots of people like the show and maybe - one of these days, soon, I'll manage to break through

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