



Frank Randle (born Arthur Hughes, also known as **Arthur McEvoy** or **Arthur Twist**; 30 January 1901 – 7 July 1957) was an English comedian.[1] A contemporary of fellow Lancastrians [George Formby](#) and [Gracie Fields](#), he was regarded as more subversive, perhaps explaining why the immense popularity he enjoyed during his lifetime has not survived him.[2]

He was the leading actor in ten comedy films between 1940 and 1953 all of which had Randle's trademark subversive sense of humour. The first was [Somewhere in England](#) and the last [It's a Grand Life](#).

Life and career

Randle was born in [Aspull](#), near [Wigan](#), Lancashire, to an unmarried Rhoda Heathcoate Hughes. He left school aged 13 and worked in a variety of menial jobs until two years later when he joined an [acrobatic](#) troupe.[3] He took the name Arthur McEvoy after his mother married Richard McEvoy. In 1928 Randle began to tour as a comedian, principally in Lancashire and Northern England.[4] Randle appeared on stage carrying a red warning lamp, similar to the type found around road works, declaring "Look what some dam'd fool left in t'road".[5] He developed his own show, [Randle's Scandals](#), which in the 1950s featured [Roy Castle](#). [6]

Randle's mischievous wit led to a running conflict with Harry Barnes, a police chief of the Lancashire seaside resort of [Blackpool](#), who frequently banned him from performing in the town's venues. He was prosecuted in 1952 on four charges of obscenity and fined £10 on each count.[7] Randle responded to his critics in robust fashion, frequently throwing his false teeth into the audience and once bombarding Blackpool from an aeroplane with toilet rolls (according to an episode of [Rude Britannia](#), broadcast by the BBC on 15 June 2010, the toilet roll bombardment actually took place over [Accrington](#), not Blackpool).[8] Randle's police charge sheet is lodged with [Lancashire Archives](#). [9]

On the outbreak of the Second World War, and having failed his medical to join the [RAF](#), Randle joined the [Home Guard](#) and established a career in film. His iconoclastic portrayal of the underdog, flouting authority and disrupting the establishment, found a ready audience in a population suffering the privations of war. He took equity in [John E. Blakeley's](#) Manchester-based [Mancunian Film Studios](#), appearing in eight of its productions. In his last film, [It's a Grand Life](#) (1953), his co-star was [Diana Dors](#). [10]



Frank Randle's grave

With the decline of the [variety](#) in the 1950s, Randle's popularity faded. Pressed by debts and tax arrears, and suffering from the consequences of a life of [alcohol abuse](#), he was made [bankrupt](#) by the tax authorities in 1955.[2] He died in Blackpool of [gastroenteritis](#) in 1957 and is buried in [Carleton Cemetery, Blackpool](#).[11]

He had married May Annie Victoria Douglas, known as Queenie, in 1928 in [Greenwich](#), London. There were no children but [Manchester](#) artist [Arthur Delaney](#) was alleged to be Randle's illegitimate son by fellow performer Genevieve Delaney (also known as Eve Delaney).

Randle's comedy achievement was celebrated in "Grin up North", a major touring exhibition that looked at the unique Northern sense of humour. He was most recently featured in an episode of BBC 4's Rude Britannia shown in June 2010.[2]

In 2007 a celebratory plaque paid for by members of the Cuthbert Club was unveiled to Randle on Blackpool's [North Pier](#).[12] In 2010 the same organisation paid for the refurbishment of Randle's gravestone, which was unveiled in July 2010.

Source <https://www.revolvy.com/page/Frank-Randle>