

# *This is A Few Forgotten Women Story*



*This story was written in August 2023 as one of a series resulting from the 'A Few Forgotten Women Friday' collaborative research project, investigating the lives of women who enrolled in the first two cohorts [1908 & 1909] of Trainee Teachers at the Cheshire Country Training College, Crewe [CCTCC]*

## **Elsie Robinson's Story**

Elsie Robinson was born on 29<sup>th</sup> April 1888<sup>1</sup> the second child to George Robinson and Jane nee Dodd<sup>2</sup>, her birth was registered in the second quarter at Northwich<sup>3</sup> Cheshire. Her christening was on 27<sup>th</sup> May 1888 at the local parish church, and the family were living at Gladstone Street, Over<sup>4</sup>, Cheshire. Her parents had been married by banns on 26<sup>th</sup> September 1885 at the same church as where she had been baptised. George's occupation at that time was listed as a clerk.

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<sup>1</sup> CCTCC Student Registers [1908-1935]: CCTCC Archives, Unpublished data, under the care of the Family History Society of Cheshire, Crewe

<sup>2</sup> Cheshire Diocese of Chester Parish Marriages 1538-1910 via FindMyPast

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/certificates/indexes\\_search.asp#Results](https://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/certificates/indexes_search.asp#Results) Volume 08A, Page 281

<sup>4</sup> England, Cheshire Parish Registers, 1538-2000 assessed via Family Search

By the 1891 Census they had moved to Quarry Bank Terrace, Runcorn, Cheshire where her father was the manager of a salt works and the children with Elsie were William and Edith.<sup>5</sup>In 1901 the family occupied 10 Church Street, Davenham, Northwich, Cheshire. George is now a mercantile clerk with his wife Jane are their children William, Elsie, Edith, and Raymond<sup>6</sup>.

In 1901 Elsie was awarded one of 34 scholarships that enabled her to attend a grammar school.<sup>7</sup> She went to Northwich High School<sup>8</sup> where she sat the Preliminary Certificate in 1908, she passed, and this enabled her to gain entry to a teacher training college. It was not until 1904 when the Board of Education permitted LEAs to create centres for teacher training<sup>9</sup>. Hence, the Cheshire County Training College, Crewe came into existence in 1908. It gave the opportunity for both females and males to become accredited teachers. Into this new environment Elsie enrolled on 15<sup>th</sup> September 1908<sup>10</sup> and her father was named as her guardian and it showed she lived at Beech Cottage, Davenham, Northwich, Cheshire<sup>11</sup>. During her time at the college about a quarter of her study was taken up by teaching under observation at both urban and rural schools within the area.

Sadly, George Robinson died aged 48<sup>12</sup> on 16<sup>th</sup> July 1909,<sup>13</sup> so he never saw Elsie complete her teacher training. He had been the postmaster at Davenham and was the chairman of the Cheshire Bowling Association and was an active member of the

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<sup>5</sup> RG12/2833/149/28/159 assessed via FindMyPast

<sup>6</sup> RG13/3346/16/24/131 assessed via FindMyPast

<sup>7</sup> Manchester Evening News 25 May 1901

<sup>8</sup> Beech Cottage, Davenham, Northwich, Cheshire

<sup>9</sup> [https://archives.history.ac.uk/history-in-education/sites/history-in-education/files/attachments/teacher\\_training\\_-\\_up\\_to\\_the\\_1960s.doc](https://archives.history.ac.uk/history-in-education/sites/history-in-education/files/attachments/teacher_training_-_up_to_the_1960s.doc)

<sup>10</sup> CCTCC Student Registers [1908-1935]: CCTCC Archives, Unpublished data, under the care of the Family History Society of Cheshire, Crewe

<sup>11</sup> Beech Cottage, Davenham, Northwich, Cheshire

<sup>12</sup> [https://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/certificates/indexes\\_search.asp#Results](https://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/certificates/indexes_search.asp#Results) S Quarter in NORTHWICH Volume 08A Page 137

<sup>13</sup> Northwich Guardian 24 July 1909

parish church.<sup>14</sup> It appears that Elsie took after her father as she was an active member of the church and society.

Elsie took her final examination at the college in 1910<sup>15</sup> and became credited teacher. Following on from her training at CCTCC she had several teaching posts in different schools in Cheshire, including being assistant headmistress at Wharton Church of England School.<sup>16</sup> Her career culminated in her becoming headmistress at the Dierden Street Church of England School, Winsford.<sup>17</sup>

On the 1911 Census Elsie is still at 10 Church Street, Davenham with her widowed mother who is the postmistress and her brothers William, Raymond, and Ronald. Her maternal grandfather is also living in the household.<sup>18</sup>

During WWI Elsie was a civilian member of the British Red Cross<sup>19</sup> in the voluntary aid detachment known as VADs. Her service began on 18<sup>th</sup> October 1918, and she worked at Winsford Lodge Hospital as a nursing assistant and her part time work totalled 266 hours. Her address at this time was given as the Post Office, Davenham, Northwich.<sup>20</sup>

The 1921 Census sees Elsie living with her mother Jane still the postmistress and her sister Edith who is also a teacher and their younger brother Ronald who is still at school; the address is 9 Church Street, Davenham<sup>21</sup> - has the numbering changed or is just an error?

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<sup>14</sup> Staffordshire Sentinel, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire 17 July 1909

<sup>15</sup> CCTCC Student Registers [1908-1935]: CCTCC Archives, Unpublished data, under the care of the Family History Society of Cheshire, Crewe

<sup>16</sup> Evening Sentinel 15 July 1938 assessed via FindMyPast

<sup>17</sup> Winsford Chronicle 29 May 1980 assessed via FindMyPast

<sup>18</sup> RG14/21708/8 assessed via FindMyPast

<sup>19</sup> Winsford Chronicle 29 May 1980 assessed via FindMyPast

<sup>20</sup> <https://vad.redcross.org.uk/record?rowKey=177624>

<sup>21</sup> RG15/16951/119/RD 447 RS 4 ED 8, 9, 6 E assessed via FindMyPast

Elsie and Edith left from Liverpool 25 July 1926 on the Aurania and travelled to Montreal, Quebec Canada both are listed as teachers and the passenger lists state they are only visiting<sup>22</sup> the country. They return on 30 Aug 1926 from New York, USA and arrive in London their address is shown as 9 Church Street, Northwich<sup>23</sup>.

In 1929 the 21<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Old Students Association of CCTCC was celebrated, Elsie was made a life member at this time. Elsie was an active member of the WI at Davenham.<sup>24</sup>

By the time of the 1939 Register Elsie is living at Vermont, London Road, Northwich with her retired mother and her sister Edith, both of them are certified teachers and her sister is also an air raid warden.<sup>25</sup> Jane Elsie's mother died in 1947<sup>26</sup> aged 72. The sisters carried on living together at Vermont until late 1975 when Edith died.<sup>27</sup> they had shared a home for most of their adult life.

Still living at Vermont, 407 London Road, Davenham Elsie died at the age of 92 on 3 May 1980<sup>28</sup>. Her funeral service was conducted by the Rev. M Pemberton at Davenham parish church, and the cremation was at Altrincham.<sup>29</sup> Probate was granted to Marjorie Robinson (Elsie's niece)<sup>30</sup> at Sheffield on 24 June 1980 her estate was valued at £47,424.<sup>31</sup>

### ***Narrative by Fiona Ranger***

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<sup>22</sup> Canada, Incoming Passenger Lists 1865-1935 assessed via Ancestry

<sup>23</sup> UK and Ireland, Incoming Passenger Lists 1878-1960 assessed via Ancestry

<sup>24</sup> Winsford Chronicle 29 May 1980 assessed via FindMyPast

<sup>25</sup> RG101/4095G/023/43 assessed via FindMyPast

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.freebmd.org.uk/cgi/search.pl> June Q Northwich Volume 10a, page 407

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.freebmd.org.uk/cgi/search.pl> Dec Q Vale Royal Volume 35, page 921

<sup>28</sup> <https://probatesearch.service.gov.uk/search-results>

<sup>29</sup> Winsford Chronicle 29 May 1980 assessed FindMyPast

<sup>30</sup> Winsford Chronicle 9 October 1980

<sup>31</sup> <https://probatesearch.service.gov.uk/search-results>