

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]

Nellie Guest's Story

Nellie Guest was born on 12 November 1891¹ in Patricroft², a suburb of Manchester near Eccles. Her parents, Thomas Guest and Emma had married in Birmingham, St Martin on 5 July 1876³. Thomas was a printer. Both he and Emma signed their names. Nellie was living with her parents, sister and three brothers at 20 Tetlow Grove in Eccles in 1901³. Elizabeth, 24, was a spool winder Joseph, 22, was a tailors' cutter: William, 19, was a mercantile clerk and James, 15, was a carpenters' apprentice. Nellie was the youngest, aged 9.

By 1911, Thomas, a letterpress printer, wife Emma and daughter Elizabeth were living at 511 Buxton Road in Stockport⁴. Nellie had attended Stockport High School, passing the Cambridge Local Senior Examination prior to 1 August 1909. This required her to pass Arithmetic, English language and literature, History and Geography as well as either Mathematics, Botany, Chemistry, Physics or a foreign language. Nellie enrolled in the Cheshire Country Training College, Crewe on 15 September 1909 naming her father T Guest Esq. as her guardian and providing the Buxton Road address¹.



*Image of CTCC student Nellie Guest, 1910, CCTCC Archives,
Unpublished data, under the care of the Family History Society of Cheshire, Crewe*

Nellie attended CCTCC for 2 years, paying fees of £10 per annum. As Crewe was too far away from Stockport for Nellie to commute to the college daily, she stayed in The Hostel, accommodation provided for female students by CCTCC. Students of any denomination were accepted on the condition they attend worship at a local church. Visitors were permitted between the hours of 10am and 12 noon on Saturdays. The college year ran from 15 September to 7 July with a three week break for Christmas a further three-week holiday at Easter. The students attended classes from 9.30am to 4 pm daily with the exception of Sunday. No classes were held on Wednesday or Saturday afternoons. Nellie would have undertaken approximately 5 months of practical training in local schools during her two years at CCTCC⁵.

In 1911, Harriet Alice Carson, 45, the Vice Principal of CCTCC lodged the census return for The Hostel. She was one of 10 single women listed along with Emily

Ward, 34, one of the college lecturers, Nellie Guest, 5 other students aged from 18 to 20, a cook and a housemaid⁶.

The college had a broad curriculum. Besides the basic subjects of English, Mathematics, History, Geography, Biology and Nature Study and Scripture, students had a grounding in Physical Education, Rural Science, Singing, Music, Hygiene and Drawing. Female students could opt to specialise in the teaching of infants or juniors in their second year. Nellie graduated in July 1911, passing her option of music. Under the terms of her admission into CCTCC, she was required to teach for the next five years in an Elementary or Secondary School which was in receipt of Government Grants⁵.

No further records can be found for Nellie in England. CCTCC produced a 21st Anniversary Book in 1929. It was recorded that Nellie was unmarried and living in Australia⁷. Her brother James, a carpenter/joiner, married in Sydney in 1919⁸. Did brother and sister emigrate together? Or did one follow the other? Neither can be found on a passenger listing. James and his wife died in Sydney in 1963⁹. There is no record of Nellie marrying or dying in New South Wales, Queensland or Victoria. She just disappears.

Narrative by Karen Cousens

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

2. 1901 England census RG13; Piece: 3661; Folio: 80; Page: 8

3. Library of Birmingham; Birmingham, England, UK; *Birmingham Church of England Parish Registers*; Reference Number: Dro 34; Archive Roll: M122

4. *The National Archives of the UK (TNA)*; Kew, Surrey, England; *Census Returns of England and Wales, 1911 RD443, Stockport, Cheshire, Piece 21379*

5. *Cheshire County Training College, Crewe, Prospectus 1908-1914, Unpublished data, under the care of the Family History Society of Cheshire, Crewe*

6. *The National Archives of the UK (TNA)*; Kew, Surrey, England; *Census Returns of England and Wales, 1911 RD449, Crewe, Cheshire, Piece 21767*

7. *1908-1929, Souvenir of the 21st Anniversary, CCTCC, Unpublished data, under the care of the Family History of Cheshire, Crewe*

8. *Sydney, Australia, Anglican Parish Registers, 1814-2011 [database on-line]*

9. *Botany Bay Family History Society; Collection Title: Woronora Cemetery Transcriptions*