

This is A Few Forgotten Women Story



This story was written, in March 2023, as one of a series resulting from the 'A Few Forgotten Women Friday' collaborative research project, investigating the lives of women who appear in the 1901 census for St. Joseph's Inebriate Reformatory, Ashford, Middlesex and Farmfield Reformatory for Inebriate Women, Horley, Surrey.

Emily Rosalind Appleyard's Story [alias Grace Emily Appleyard]

Emily Appleyard, who had a worn and destitute appearance, was brought up in custody charged with being drunk and disorderly ...the assistant gaoler said there were at least 150 convictions against the prisoner... Mr Rose [the magistrate] said he must go on applying the clumsy law which so poorly met the case. He committed her to prison for one month.¹

Emily Appleyard was born Rosalind Emily Miles on 20th October 1855 in Birchington, Kent, one of seven children born to John Fox Miles and his wife Martha Ann.² John was a coastguard and during Emily's early life the family

¹ West London Observer, Saturday 21 March 1896, Page 3

² GRO Birth Register Indexes, October Quarter 1855, Thanet

moved around the country during the course of John's work. Emily married Henry Guyton Appleyard on 8 April 1875 when she was just 19 years old, Henry, a fish-salesman in the family business, was 8 years her senior. Emily's mother was a witness to the marriage, which took place in St Peter's Church in Newington, Surrey. It is interesting to note here that Emily transposed her christian names, calling herself and signing Emily Rosalind Miles.³

In January 1878, Henry, along with George Fondsford, appeared at the Old Bailey charged with breaking and entering the house of Ann Frances Cope and stealing a shawl, a clock and some other goods. After receiving a good character reference Henry is sentenced to a year in prison at Clerkenwell.⁴ That must have been a difficult start to married life. The Appleyard family business, Appleyard's Fish and Poultry, was by the late 1800s a large concern and according to the St James Review it was the largest such business in London.⁵ However, even though Henry was the eldest son the business was passed down to his second brother John Flather Appleyard when their father died in 1880.⁶ Maybe young Henry has been disinherited or was in disgrace after his stint in prison?

Emily's younger sister Mary Ann married William Robert Tye in April of 1878,⁷ and within a few short years Mary had given birth to three children. At the time of the 1881 census, William and Mary have a 2-year-old daughter and two sons, a 1-year-old and a 4-day old. Emily can be found living with the couple in Hetton Street, Chelsea at this time, she is noted as being married but has no occupation

³ Marriage Register for St. Peter's, Newington, Surrey

⁴ *Old Bailey Proceedings Online*, January 1878, trial of George Fondsford [22] and Henry Appleyard [30] (t18780114-172); England & Wales, Crime, Prisons & Punishment, 1770-1935

⁵ St James Review, July 1898

⁶ England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1858-1995

⁷ Marriage Register for St. Mark's, Clerkenwell, Middlesex

listed.⁸ Henry is lodging in Hammersmith, close to the family business in Kings Street West and stating that he also is married,⁹ I wonder if Emily is staying with her sister in order to help her out, Mary having just given birth to her youngest child?

Later that year there is a newspaper report in the Islington Gazette of Emily Appleyard, described as a disorderly woman, being charged with being drunk and disorderly on Pentonville Road. Despite being cautioned she paid no heed and carried on annoying male passengers as they passed. Emily professed her apologies and hoped the magistrate would forgive her. She was told to be more careful in the future and handed a fine.¹⁰

I cannot locate the Emily or Henry in the 1891 census, neither are with family members. There then follows a series of events that probably had a profound effect on Emily, firstly on 3 February 1893 her sister Mary Ann died of phthisis, at the age of 31, leaving 3 small children.¹¹ Tragically, later that year her mother also died in an horrific accident. Emily's younger sister Amelia has been refilling a lamp with fuel, but she overfilled it and threw the excess fuel into the hearth which immediately caught fire and spread to the lamp which Amelia dropped in fright and ran next door to fetch her mother. On entering the house Mrs Miles found that the fire had taken hold, in her attempts to extinguish the flames her own clothes caught fire and despite the best efforts of the neighbours and a doctor she was extensively burnt, succumbing to her injuries the next day.¹² In

⁸ 1881 Census, St John's, Fulham, Chelsea, RG11; Folio

⁹ 1881 England Census, Hammersmith, RG11; Folio: 13

¹⁰ Islington Gazette, Monday 5 September 1891, page 2

¹¹ GRO Death Register Indexes, Jan Quarter 1883, Pancras; Death Certificate of Mary Ann Tye

¹² Woodbridge Reporter, Thursday 6 December 1883, page 8; Lowestoft Journal, Saturday 8 December 1883, page 6

May of 1887 John Fox Miles, Emily's father was found dead. He is reported as being 67 years old and a coastguard pensioner living near Church Street in Thetford. He was discovered by a neighbour quite unconscious and slumped over a urinal, a doctor was sent for and pronounced the man dead, the cause being '*failure of the heart's actions, due to an effusion of blood on or in the brain*'.¹³

There after newspaper reports of an Emily Appleyard and a Grace Emily Appleyard start to frequently appear. I pondered at first if these women were two different people but the dates, places, and other information, such as Grace being reported as a fishmonger's wife,¹⁴ led me to suspect they are one and the same person. I searched for a Grace Emily Appleyard but there doesn't seem to be anyone that fits the bill, so Emily possibly used the alias Grace and within the rest of this narrative I assume that they are the same person and will be using Grace or Emily interchangeably depending on the newspaper report in question.

It must be said that the newspapers reports are quite sporadic and the first one I came across, in April 1894, referred to Grace Emily Appleyard, who was attired in deep mourning, as '*an old offender*'. As this event was shortly after the deaths of her sister and mother then this is perhaps no surprise, what did surprise me however was that the reporter went on to say that Grace had twice been sent to a home and that she has been in custody some fifty times previously.¹⁵ I could find no reference at all to these events and so whether the newspapers are not yet digitised that cover the time or it was just not reported I'll perhaps never know.

¹³ Thetford and Watton Times, Saturday 7 May 1897, page 6

¹⁴ Weekly Dispatch [London], Sunday 2 September 1894, page 4

¹⁵ West London Observer, Saturday 28 April 1894, page 2

The next report is in August of 1894 when Grace Emily is charged for the sixtieth time with drunkenness, she could not give any address as a fixed abode as she spent a good deal of her time in prison, but she was not permitted to give that as her address! She had only been released from prison the previous day but as her behaviour had not been very bad on this occasion, she was returned to prison for only fourteen days.¹⁶ Later than month she was again in court, the magistrate Mr Rose, stating that the kindest thing was to send her to prison until the law enabled him to detain her for a considerable period, she was jailed for twenty-one days.¹⁷ In October Grace Emily '*well known to the police*', was removed from the court crying after being once again in the dock on a drunk and disorderly charge. She was said to be the wife of a fishmonger and poulterer, but the couple were not living together and there were three previous charges against her at which she failed to appear, and on the last occasion a warrant for her apprehension was issued. She has been convicted nine times during the year, altogether having been in custody some seventy times. Grace was ordered to find a surety for her good behaviour for three months,¹⁸

'Disgraceful Conduct' screamed the newspapers of March 1895, when Grace Emily Appleyard, a married woman but not living with her husband, was charged with outraging public decency on Hampstead Heath alongside 46-year-old clockmaker Philip Bradford. Bradford had offered the arresting constable a shilling not to charge them, the male prisoner was said to be sober while the female '*rather inclined to be intoxicated*'. A witness corroborated with the

¹⁶ Fulham Chronicle, Friday 3 August 1894, page 4; West London Observer, Saturday 4 August 1894, page 2

¹⁷ Echo [London], Wednesday 29 August 1894, page 3; Weekly Dispatch [London], Sunday 2 September 1894, page 4

¹⁸ Echo [London], Monday 29 October 1894, page 3; Glamorgan Gazette, Friday 2 November 1894, page 3; Illustrated Police News, Saturday 3 November 1894, page 4

account saying that he saw the pair *'lying in a recumbent position on a bank'*. Determined to stop such behaviour the bench inflicted them both with a £5 fine or imprisonment if defaulted.¹⁹ Later that year Grace Emily was once again in custody for her usual crime, this time reported as being her 100th time before the bench and fined forty shillings.²⁰ Another newspaper claimed that Grace Emily had reached her century of imprisonments in August of 1895. Asked if she was a married woman she replied, *'Yes but I am not living with my husband'*, the assistant gaoler further stated that she has not lived with her husband for many years. Mr Rose once again observed that he was reluctant to send her back to jail but that it was perhaps the kindest thing to do as she would be kept from drink and have a reasonable amount of work. In jailing her for a month he said that she would be happier in prison than out of it.²¹

Mr Rose was the magistrate in March 1896 when Grace, displaying a worn and destitute appearance, was brought into his court. With at least 150 convictions against her and two periods in prison he said he must go on applying the *'clumsy law, which so poorly met the case'* and commit her to prison for a month.²² Referred to as Jane Cakebread's successor later that year, having been in custody the day before, Grace was remanded on bail. Mr Rose was said to have looked sad when told that Grace had only been in prison the previous week, when her expressed intention was to go to Gravesend to stay with her brother. On that occasion, Mr Lane QC, thinking that the borough would be relieved of her company, had allowed her to walk free on her own surety of good behaviour for six weeks. The result was that she had been found drunk in Norland Market

¹⁹ Hampstead & Highgate Express, Saturday 23 March 1895, page 3; Weekly Dispatch [London], Sunday 24 March 1895, page 12

²⁰ Kensington News & West London Times, Saturday 27 July 1895, page 6

²¹ Kensington News & West London Times, Saturday 10 August 1895, page 5

²² West London Observer, Saturday 21 March 1896, page 3

within twelve hours of leaving the dock. Mr Rose expressed regret that he could only send her to jail for short periods which allowed her to indulge in her habit in the intervals between imprisonment, further pronouncing that *'as soon as she was out of prison she was back in again'*, she was jailed for a month.²³

*'What's do be done with Grace Appleyard? She boasts a charmed life of inebriety, does no work, and has no home, except when justice, in order to vindicate its honour, and demonstrate its blindness, gives her State employment and gratuitous board and lodgings for a week or two. This morning the fair Grace makes her one hundred and sixteenth appearance, much to the disgust of Mr Lane QC, who finds the social problem personified by the aforesaid Appleyard more difficult of solution than the most intricate chancery puzzle ever propounded. Mr Lane does not know what to do with the lady. The monotony of sending her to prison has begun to pull on him, and he now decides to indulge in a little novelty. It takes the form of an exclamation of despair and announcement to the effect that Grace is discharged. The lady seems somewhat disappointed and not having her usual fare meted out to her. But she has to make the best of things. At all events she enjoys the satisfaction at having placed herself – as far as Mr Lane is concerned – beyond the pale of the law, by her excessive gratuity in breaking it.'*²⁴

This novel way of dealing with Grace perhaps didn't work as well as Mr Lane wanted, she was in custody later that year, when Mr Rose once again went

²³ Yorkshire Evening Post, Saturday 3 October 1896, page 3; Fulham Chronicle, Friday 9 October 1896, page 2; Ipswich Journal, Saturday 10 October 1896, page 6

²⁴ Fulham Chronicle, Friday 18 June 1897, page 2

through the useless procedure of sending her to prison. Grace is reported to have pleaded *'Oh please don't send me there: it only makes me worse when I come out.'* Mr Rose claimed he had no choice but did fine her five shillings or a five stay in prison.²⁵

The following year 42-year-old Grace was not only charged with being drunk and disorderly in Plumstead but also breaking a jug and four glasses at the Prince Arthur public house. She has the previous day been charged with being drunk but discharged on a promise to go to the workhouse, but instead she got drunk again and caused the damage at the Prince Arthur after the landlady refused to serve her because she was already under the influence of drink.²⁶ In December Emily Rosalind Appleyard, noted as *'an old offender'* and 43 years old was charged with being drunk and disorderly and breaking glasses at the One Bell in Crayford. The prisoner has it was stated been repeatedly convicted at Hammersmith and this time she was convicted for one month.²⁷

Emily Appleyard of no fixed abode, admitted the offence of being drunk and disorderly in January 1899 but said she would *'get drunk again the very first chance she got, she then said she was very sorry and if the magistrate would forgive her, she would return to the workhouse in Hammersmith.'*²⁸ A month later Mr Lane, recognising Emily Appleyard said, *'Oh it is Mrs Appleyard?'* when she appeared before him again, fining her twenty shillings for now, he also said that he would send her to an inebriates' home when one was fitted up.²⁹ It wasn't until September that Emily, who had charged a number of times for

²⁵ London Evening Standard, Friday 15 October 1897, page 6

²⁶ Woolwich Herald, Friday 26 August 1898, page 5; West London Observer, Friday 26 August 1898, page 6

²⁷ Woolwich Gazette, Friday 2 December 1898, page 4

²⁸ Gravesend & Northfleet Standard, Saturday 7 January 1899

²⁹ Kensington News and West London Times, Saturday 18 February 1899, page 6

drunkenness over a long period, was brought up on remand with the purpose of being sent to an inebriates' home. There had been several attempts to deal with the prisoner under the new act, but the magistrates had thus far been unable to put it into force as the authorities hadn't had any available institutions to receive her. However, a Roman Catholic home had been found and as she claimed to be of that faith it was deemed a suitable solution. Having been convicted six times already during the year she was sentenced to be detained at St Joseph's Home for a period of two years.³⁰ Another newspaper report of the same court appearance suggests that Emily claimed to be Protestant when asked, but the court missionary disagreed and said she was Roman Catholic. Emily maintained that she had been married in the Church of England but admitted that she had spent some time in a convent. She later supposedly returned to the dock alleging to be Catholic, having been baptised in a convent, she was then sentenced to a stay at St Joseph's.³¹

The 1901 census sees Emily R Appleyard, a 45-year-old widow recorded as an inmate at St Joseph's Inebriates' Home in Ashford, Middlesex.³² The Habitual Drunkards Act of 1879 and the Inebriates Act of 1898 were key in providing '*a series of institutions...somewhere between the care-home, asylum, and prison*'.³³ Drunkenness, especially that of woman, was considered to pose a threat not only to society, marking out a perceived unwelcome feature of public space, but also as a sign of personal immorality. Incarceration in an Inebriate Home saw the removal of repeat offenders from the streets and therefore, not only out of

³⁰ Kensington News & West London Times, Friday 15 February 1899, page 5; Fulham Chronicle, Friday 22 September 1899, page 2

³¹ West London Observer, Friday 8 September 1899, page 3

³² 1901 census for St Joseph's Home for Inebriate Women, Ashford, Middlesex RG13 1171 folios 12-13

³³ David Beckingham, 'An Historical Geography of Liberty: Lancashire and the Inebriates Acts', *Journal of Historical Geography*, 2010, 36, 388-401.

public sight but also out of the way of temptation. These homes were seen to be carrying out a public duty, female alcoholic excessiveness was at this time, linked to promiscuity, the breakdown of families and the spread of alcoholism and insanity to future generations. Women recognized as having a problem with alcohol were therefore prime candidates for such institutions which isolated them from the wider society whilst curbing their habit.³⁴

Whether Emily would have benefitted from her stay at St Joseph's will never be known as she died the following year in Kensington district and was buried in the London Necropolis Brookwood Cemetery on 15 February 1902.³⁵ The London Necropolis had contracts with many London hospitals and workhouses to bury the dead of the poor or those who were unclaimed, Kensington being one such authority.³⁶ A sad and lonely end to her life.

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³⁴ Jennifer Wallis, 'A Home or a Gaol? Scandal, Secrecy, and the St James's Inebriate Home for Women', *Social History of Medicine*, Volume 31, Issue 4, November 2018, Pages 774–795

³⁵ GRO Death Register Indexes, Jan Quarter 1902, Kensington; Register of Burials in the London Necropolis, Brookwood Cemetery

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