

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]

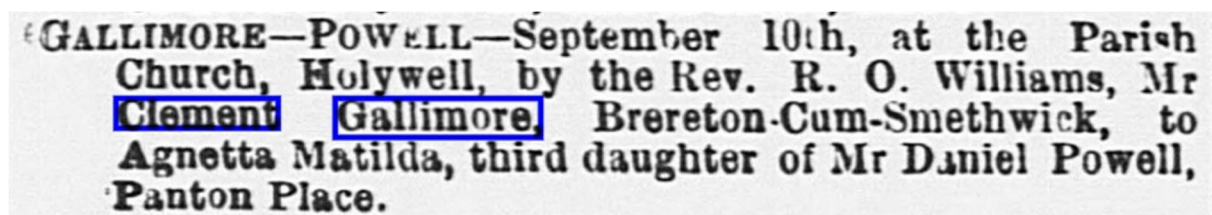


This lovely young lady is Fanny Gwendoline Gallimore, who trained to be a teacher at Crewe Teacher Training College. She was born on 19th March 1892. Her birth was registered in Holmes Chapel. Later, on 17th April of that year she

was baptised in Church Hulme, which is a chapelry in Sandbach. It was in the civil parish of Holmes Chapel with a population of 866 in 1901.

Fanny's father was Clement Gallimore, mostly recorded as a joiner but also in various records as joiner and builder, on his marriage certificate, but cabinet maker in other records. Clement was baptised on 24th February 1861 in Brereton cum Smethwick, Cheshire, the son of Josiah, a shop keeper and Fanny. Fanny's mother was Agnetta Matilda Powell, daughter of Daniel Powell, a tailor and Martha Jane Powell, born in Holywell, Flintshire.

It may be wondered how Clement and Agnetta met as Holywell is just over 50 miles away from Brereton. Perhaps Clement had had a joinery job which had taken him to Holywell and had met Agnetta in that way but, they had met, and the Wrexham Advertiser on Saturday, 13th September 1890 reported that they were married in Holywell.



GALLIMORE—POWELL—September 10th, at the Parish Church, Holywell, by the Rev. R. O. Williams, Mr Clement Gallimore, Brereton-Cum-Smethwick, to Agnetta Matilda, third daughter of Mr Daniel Powell, Pantan Place.

Clement was recorded as a builder and the witnesses were Arthur Powell and Andrewetta Jane Powell.

They made their home in Brereton and Fanny, their first daughter was born on 17th April 1892 and on her baptism Clement was recorded as a joiner. By the time son, Arthur was born in 1895 the family had moved a few miles up the road to Crewe, Crewe being by now a well established thriving railway town with opportunities in several occupations, mostly connected to the railway. That

being the LNWR (London and North Western Railway). Clement did indeed use his joinery skills for that company. Two more children followed, Florrie in 1897 and Cyril in 1900.

Clement appears in several of the railway's records and from these it would seem that the employment was on short term contracts, with the men being taken on, laid off and then re-employed. The family now is living at 9, Gresty Road in Crewe.

By the beginning of the 20th century schooling was compulsory and the first record for Fanny is on 6th September 1905 in Crewe Secondary School, the grammar school. Being an academic school this was good preparation for her career on which she was to later embark. She gained the preliminary certificate in 1909, a qualification which enabled her to enter the Crewe Teacher Training College on 15th September 1909.

By entering into the teaching profession she was following in the footsteps of several members of the maternal side of her family. It was the beginning of a more regulated aid for those wishing to follow the education path, an exciting career, especially for women, at a time when women were fighting for more recognition and rights.

The pupil-teacher system which had been in place for several years was replaced in 1907 by a bursar system. There had been schools which had been established by charities and were training schools and colleges. Those who had begun their careers as pupil-teachers aged 18 could apply for the Queen's/ King's Scholarship Examination (later the Preliminary Examination) for a certificate. Those who

passed could train for 2 or 3 years. Voluntary societies ran these residential courses.

From 1890 universities became involved with teacher training but it wasn't until 1902 with the Education Act that Local Education Authorities were to establish the training of teachers which was in effect a form of higher education. In 1904 municipal training colleges were recognized with grants from 1905. So Fanny was among the leading women to undertake training at the newly established college in Crewe.

Teacher training was both a step forward for women and advancement in recognized career paths but it was also a step back and a severe limitation on their future lives. They were being recognised in a career, but, that lead to a very difficult life-style choice – a career in teaching, or, to marry, because, if they chose to marry, then after embarking on training and establishing themselves, they had to give it up, as women were not allowed to be married teachers – as opposed to men.

Fanny had ready made mentors to inspire her, Agnetta, her mother, was recorded in the 1881 census when aged 17 as a pupil teacher and 10 years later Agnetta's sisters, Anne Marie and Andrewetta were also recorded as assistant teachers. The family illustrates the difficult choices which women made. Fanny's mother, although beginning her life as a teacher, must have met Clement Gallimore and made what probably was a life changing decision between career and beginning a family. An even more difficult decision as her two sisters were also teachers. Anne Marie and Andrewetta on the other hand remained teachers probably all their lives, at the school where they are recorded in 1927, The

Greenfield Council School in Holywell and could well have been referred to by the villagers as “The Miss Powells” as they lived together with their mother.

Fanny did follow in her mother’s and aunt’s footsteps but moving with the times she went into formal training and entered the Crewe Teacher Training College on 15th September 1909. Her first position year was 1911 but as registration started much later Fanny was registered on 1st September 1920 at Broad Street Infants School. Her registration number was 57027, the fee being £1.1.0d (a guinea). I was unable to locate any registration for Fanny’s aunts, even though they were teaching after registration.

The 1920s saw a difficult time for the family. On 19th February 1921 Fanny’s father died at 9, Hungerford Road. Probate for the £493.19.11d went to Agnetta. Clement being buried 4 days later, he was aged just 60. Fanny’s grandmother, who had lived with her daughters since husband Daniel had died in December ¼ 1909, he had been buried at St. Peter’s Burial Cemetery on 4th October 1909, also died in March ¼ 1923, also buried on 17th January 1923, aged 84.

Anne Marie died in 1932 but Andrewetta was registered in the 1939 Register as born on 19th March 1869 and a retired school teacher, she died in hospital aged 84 in 1953 but a hint at the closeness of the family was indicated in the probate of Andrewetta’s will. Probate was to Fanny and Florence Agnetta Nield (Fanny’s sister). Florence however had not followed the maternal side of the family, instead following her father, Clement, to work in the general office of the LNWR Railway as a clerk. Whether she met Albert Nield at work or was he a friend of her father, Albert being a loco engine driver and fireman also for the LNWR?

They married in 1928. The 1939 Register recorded that by that time they had quite a large family and they were living in Chester.

Fanny's brother, Cyril, first went to the Borough School and then to the Grammar School. If it is the correct record then sadly he died when he was just 17. I cannot find an army record for him and the death is registered in the Nantwich district. Her other brother Clement Arthur, did go into the army and there are records for 3 regiments, probably as battles wiped out the men they had to join up with other regiments. He did however survive the war and on discharge went to work with the horses on a farm in Astbury, Cheshire. He died in Prestatyn, North Wales on 16th December 1968 leaving £1715.

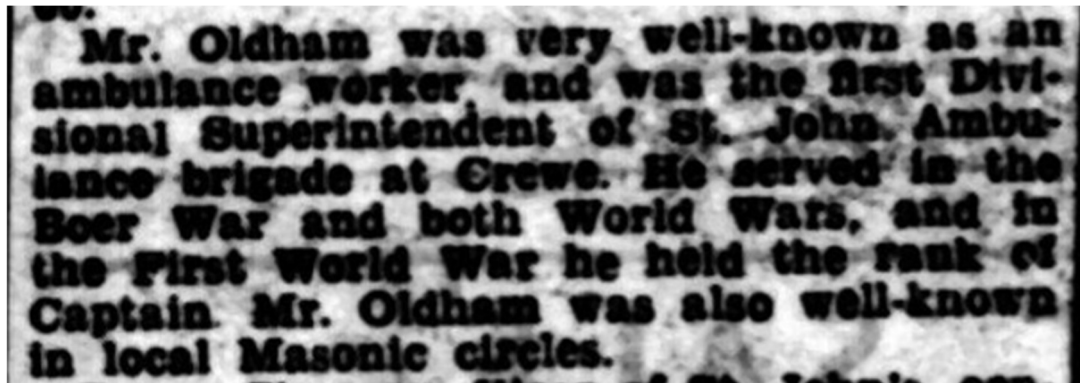
But what of Fanny? In 1939 she was living with her widowed mother at 9, Hungerford Road, Crewe and was a school teacher, but interestingly the name Gallimore is crossed through and Oldham printed above. In the 1939 Register this is indicative of a marriage by the person and the new name that of the spouse. Often there is a date written in the left hand column but not in Fanny's case.

A search revealed that in January 1948 that Fanny Gwendoline Gallimore married widower, Frederick Hope Oldham. Fanny was 56 years old and Frederick 76. Frederick was an overseer in the Post Office. The 1921 census describes the occupation as overseer of sorters, allocating duties and dealing with rush periods and emergency work.

Frederick's father, Alfred was a police officer from Mottram, Cheshire. His mother, Emily Coker, was from Tramere which was where Frederick had been

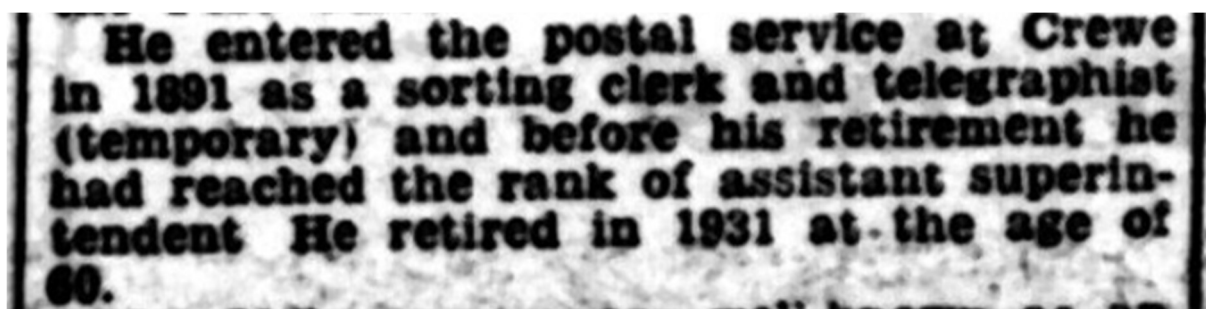
born on 1st October 1871. His siblings had been born in various places in Cheshire, probably the family moving with Alfred's job. By 1891 the family were in Crewe. In the March ¼ 1902 Frederick married Ann Jane Jackson.

Frederick's military service was recorded in his obituary in the Nantwich Chronicle of September 24th 1955



Mr. Oldham was very well-known as an ambulance worker, and was the first Divisional Superintendent of St. John Ambulance brigade at Crewe. He served in the Boer War and both World Wars, and in the First World War he held the rank of Captain. Mr. Oldham was also well-known in local Masonic circles.

On 23rd July 1910 Frederick was awarded an Order for Long and Efficient Service in Ambulance Service. His work record was also listed Frederick and Ann had been married 44 years when on 8th February 1946 Ann passed away. She left the large sum of £4260.11.6d



He entered the postal service at Crewe in 1891 as a sorting clerk and telegraphist (temporary) and before his retirement he had reached the rank of assistant superintendent. He retired in 1931 at the age of 60.

Two years later Frederick and Fanny were married, sadly, Frederick passed away after 7 years of marriage to Fanny on 12th September 1955 at their home, Ashdene, 163 Gainsborough Road in Crewe. He left £9267.4.3d and Fanny was

granted probate. Fanny headed the long list of mourners at the funeral service at St. John's Church.

Without a death certificate it is difficult to know why Fanny's death on 23rd November 1975 was registered in Trafford, Greater Manchester. She was aged 83. Her address for the probate was "Ashdene, 7, Greenside Drive, Hale, Altincham. The amount of probate was £10,083.



(Image, Google maps)

Sources include records supplied by Margaret Roberts who has worked on the original college documents.

Census records from Ancestry and Find My Past

FreeBMD

Cheshire Parish Registers (FMP)

Newspaper reports (FMP)

**Narrative by Ann Simcock
Few Forgotten Women Team**