

# *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]*

## **Dorothy Jones's Story**

Dorothy Jones was born on 10 November 1891 at Seacombe in Cheshire (on the Wirral peninsula, just across the river Mersey from Liverpool) and was the fourth child of Clara and Thomas Brown Jones<sup>1</sup>. Earlier that year, the 1891 census<sup>2</sup> shows that her parents were living at 89 Buchanan Road, Seacombe, with their daughters Ethel Frances, Clara Josephine and Annie Beechey Jones. Her father Thomas was then a 'Head Accountant' but by the time of the 1901 census<sup>3</sup> the family had moved to 8 Chatsworth Avenue, just a few streets further inland still north of Liscard Road, and he was a 'Head Collector of Rates' for Liverpool

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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 CCTCC Student Registers [1908-1935]: CCTCC Archives, Unpublished data, under the care of the Family History Society of Cheshire, Crewe - also England & Wales, Civil Registration Birth Index, 1837-1915 Q.4 1891 Birkenhead, Cheshire Vol 8a Page 571

<sup>2</sup> 1891 England Census Poulton cum Seacombe RG12; Piece: 2897; Folio: 70; Page: 13

<sup>3</sup> 1901 England Census Liscard, Cheshire RG13; Piece: 3403; Folio: 162; Page: 36

Corporation. Sadly, Dorothy's younger (and only) brother, George Beechey Jones, had been born in 1896 but died in 1901<sup>4</sup> at just four years old.

When Dorothy Jones enrolled with the second cohort of trainee teachers at the Cheshire County Training College at Crewe on 15<sup>th</sup> September 1909, her record stated that she had previously attended Wallasey High School [for Girls] and had achieved a Distinction in English in the Preliminary Certificate Examination that year<sup>5</sup>. She would have attended the Wallasey High School situated on Manor Road near her home in Liscard<sup>6</sup>, as the new Wallasey High School buildings were only formally opened on Mount Pleasant Road in 1909 when Dorothy commenced her teacher training at Crewe.



*Dorothy Jones 1910*<sup>7</sup>

Her home address in 1909 was given as 3 Eaton Street, Liscard, and that is where her parents and three sisters were living at the time of the 1911 census<sup>8</sup>, shortly before she passed her final teacher training examination at Crewe.

Dorothy herself is listed in the 1911 Census as age 19 and one of two female student teachers boarding at 268 Hungerford Road, Monks Coppenhall in Crewe<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> *England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index Birkenhead, Cheshire Q2 1901 Vol 8a Page 355*

<sup>5</sup> *CCTCC Student Registers [1908-1935]: CCTCC Archives, Unpublished data, under the care of the Family History Society of Cheshire, Crewe*

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/artifact/photograph-of-wallasey-grammar-school-girls-manor-road-liscard-1890-1909> also <https://www.wikiwirral.co.uk/forums/ubbthreads.php/topics/479189/looking-back-at-mount-pleasant-road-wallasey>

<sup>7</sup> *Image of CCTCC student Dorothy Jones, 1910, CCTCC Archives, Unpublished data, under the care of the Family History Society of Cheshire, Crewe*

<sup>8</sup> *1911 England Census Liscard, Cheshire RG14; ED 22; Piece 22074; Schedule 90*

<sup>9</sup> *1911 England Census Monks Coppenhall, Cheshire RG14; ED26; Piece 21778; Schedule 268*

The other was Lilian Abbott Gleave, age 20, from Liverpool. Of Dorothy's sisters still living at home, Annie Beechey Jones was also described an Elementary School Teacher in 1911, while her eldest sister Ethel Frances was a Draper's Shop Assistant (and married Matthew Prichard in 1913<sup>10</sup>).

Dorothy Jones' record held by the Teachers' Registration Council<sup>11</sup> (Register Number 26765 on 1<sup>st</sup> July 1919) shows that after her training at CCTCC she had gained a Board of Education Certificate and was Assistant Mistress at Vaughan Road Council School in Wallasey from 1912 to 1922. This tallies with the 1921 Census<sup>12</sup> which records that in fact Dorothy and her elder sister Annie were unmarried Elementary School Teachers both employed at Vaughan Road Council School, while their eldest unmarried sister, Clara Josephine, was not employed outside the home. It is interesting that in 1921 their parents, Thomas (still a Rate Collector for Liverpool Corporation) and Clara (also accompanied by her married sister Ethelind Bell), were away on holiday at Grange-over-Sands on the Lancashire coast, staying at a Baptist Church Holiday Home - 'Moorhurst'<sup>13</sup> (now 'Kents Bank House'<sup>14</sup>) run by the British and Continental Touring Club Ltd.



*Vaughan Road Council School*<sup>15</sup>

<sup>10</sup> *England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index Birkenhead, Cheshire Q.3 1913 Vol 8a Page 1343*

<sup>11</sup> *Teachers' Registration Council Registers 1914-1948; Society of Genealogists - via [www.findmypast.co.uk](http://www.findmypast.co.uk)*

<sup>12</sup> *1921 England Census Wallasey, Cheshire RG15 Piece 17252 Schedule 223 District Ref RD 452 RS 3 ED 21*

<sup>13</sup> *1921 England Census Cartmel, Lancashire RG15 Piece 20889 Page 2 District Ref RD 481 RS 1 ED 7*

<sup>14</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1269673>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.pinterest.co.uk/pin/461478293058852549/> Accessed 25 Aug 2023

The Teachers' Registration Council records also reveal that Annie Beechey Jones, two years older than Dorothy, had gained a Board of Education Certificate and was registered as a teacher on 1<sup>st</sup> February 1921 (Register Number 64146) shortly after she too was employed at Vaughan Road Council School. Unlike Dorothy, she would have had to train via the pupil teacher system and her recorded experience includes the years 1909 to 1918 at St George's Road Council School in Wallasey. [There is also a Teachers' Registration Council record for Dorothy's fellow student Lilian Abbot Gleave, who taught in Wallasey from 1911 until 1920 when she married and moved to Essex.]<sup>16</sup>

No further references to Dorothy Jones' teaching career have been found, partly due to the difficulty of researching her relatively common name, but Wirral Archives do hold the headteacher's log book and school photographs for Vaughan Road Council School from 1920 to 1940<sup>17</sup> so she and her sister Annie may well appear in those records. The CCTCC 21<sup>st</sup> Anniversary Book in 1929 recorded simply that Dorothy was then still unmarried and still living at her family home at 3 Eaton Street in Wallasey, with no further information about current or past teaching posts.<sup>18</sup>

Dorothy's mother Clara died aged 69 in early 1929<sup>19</sup> and it appears that she remained at home with her widowed father Thomas and her sister Clara, possibly because the family had sufficient private income but possibly also because she did not enjoy good health. The 1939 Register entry for them at 3 Eaton Street, shows that her father had retired and although Clara's occupation

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<sup>16</sup> *Teachers' Registration Council Registers 1914-1948; Society of Genealogists - via [www.findmypast.co.uk](http://www.findmypast.co.uk)*

<sup>17</sup> <https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/N13610017> Accessed 25 Aug 2023

<sup>18</sup> *1908-1929, Souvenir of the 21<sup>st</sup> Anniversary, CCTCC, Unpublished data, under the care of the Family History Society of Cheshire, Crewe*

<sup>19</sup> *England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index Birkenhead, Cheshire Q1 1929 Vol 8a Page 1047*

was just 'unpaid domestic duties', Dorothy is described as an 'El[ementary] School Teacher' but with the annotation 'Incapacitated'<sup>20</sup>. Their sister, Annie Beechey Jones described herself in 1939 as a 'Retired School Teacher' and was living on Thingwall Road, Barnston, Wirral, with her widowed maternal aunt Ethelind Bell who was described as having 'Private Means'<sup>21</sup> of income. Clearly both Dorothy and Annie valued their professional status as qualified teachers, even though they were no longer active in schools.

The only further record of Dorothy Jones is her death at the age of 85 on 28<sup>th</sup> September 1977 in Wallasey<sup>22</sup>. An announcement in the local newspaper recorded her final address as still 3 Eaton Street, although she had died in a Wallasey nursing home. She was described as the 'loved sister of Annie and aunt of Mervyn Pritchard' (the son of her eldest sister Ethel) and her funeral service was held at Egremont Baptist Church, Wallasey, on Tuesday October 4<sup>th</sup> 1977, followed by interment at Rake Lane Cemetery<sup>23</sup>. Unfortunately, no obituary referencing her teaching career has yet been found.

There is, however, evidence from Dorothy's life and family history which casts light on the reasons why she, and her sister, were encouraged and took advantage of the new opportunities at the start of the twentieth century for professional training and careers for women in education. The only son of the family, the fifth child, had died young so there was no question of male favouritism in educational opportunities and the older daughters followed the more traditional routes of marriage, family support and shop work, so Annie and

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<sup>20</sup> 1939 Register Wallasey, Cheshire ED LDAV; Schedule 324/1-3 RG101/39581/025/32

<sup>21</sup> 1939 Register Wirral, Cheshire ED LFZG; Schedule 348/1-2

<sup>22</sup> England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index Wallasey, Cheshire Q.3 1977 Vol 37 Page 0942

<sup>23</sup> Deaths – page 4 'The Liverpool Echo' Friday September 30, 1977 The British Newspaper Archive via [www.findmypast.co.uk](http://www.findmypast.co.uk) accessed 11 Aug 2023

Dorothy's life choices were clearly affected by the timing of external events. That fact that three of the four daughters remained unmarried could suggest the loss of fiancés or boyfriends in the First World War - and maybe also obligations to older family members. However, the return of men to the teaching profession after the war would have impacted opportunities for the advancement of even qualified female elementary school teachers. It is not known whether Dorothy or her sister became members of the National Federation of Women Teachers but, in the first newspaper for members in September 1919, its President, Agnes Dawson, declared "What the Women's Suffrage Movement began is left for women workers generally to continue; it is for us to establish a freedom and equality of opportunity amongst women which has been denied them hitherto" and organised protests demanding equality of salaries and representation<sup>24</sup>.

The Jones family was clearly associated with the Baptist Church over a lengthy period and in the late nineteenth century there was a strong influence from Nonconformist religions on the advancement of general literacy as well as on religious education, not least in opposition to the voluntary schools long established by the Church of England. It is very likely that Dorothy's own early education included frequent lessons at the 'new schools and lecture hall' built (close to her home) between Liscard Road and Serpentine Road for the Egremont Baptist Chapel and opened by a former Lord Mayor of Liverpool in September 1896<sup>25</sup> (when Dorothy was nearly 5).

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<sup>24</sup> 'The Woman Teacher' – Foreword, page 2. Vol 1, No 1. September 26, 1919 Accessed via University College London Special Collections (NUWT) <https://www.jstor.org/stable/community.28298551>

<sup>25</sup> 'The Birkenhead News' Saturday September 12, 1896 The British Newspaper Archive via [www.findmypast.co.uk](http://www.findmypast.co.uk) accessed 12 Aug 2023

However, it was perhaps events in Dorothy's family history which had embedded the importance of education and literacy and thus most influenced her choices of training and the teaching profession. When her parents married at Walton on the Hill in Liverpool on 29 October 1885, her father Thomas Brown Jones named his father as also Thomas Jones, a deceased warehouseman, whereas her mother Clara named her father as George Beechey, a stationer<sup>26</sup>. So Dorothy's maternal family appears to have been the one where literacy and aspiration were well established.

In contrast, Dorothy's father Thomas Brown Jones also appears in the Registers for the Blue Coat School in Liverpool<sup>27</sup> (founded in 1708 "for teaching poor children to read, write and cast accounts"<sup>28</sup>). The register shows that he was selected as a pupil and admitted as a boarder on 5<sup>th</sup> October 1869 at the age of 9, on the grounds that he was already fatherless. Thomas Brown Jones left the school to work as an apprentice on 27<sup>th</sup> February 1875, age 15. (The record is unclear, but he was probably apprenticed to an accountant, given his later profession. His eldest brother William must have received a similar education and became a librarian<sup>29</sup>.) Thomas Brown Jones evidently wanted to pass on the benefits of his fortunate education to his family and, with his wife Clara, no doubt encouraged Dorothy and Annie to do likewise in their teaching careers.

### ***Narrative by Celia Mycock***

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<sup>26</sup> *England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index West Derby, Lancashire Vol 8B Page 742 and Holy Trinity Church, Walton on the Hill Marriage Registers page 197 No 393* – accessed via [www.findmyast.co.uk](http://www.findmyast.co.uk)

<sup>27</sup> *National School Admission Registers and Log-Books 1870-1914* accessed via [www.findmypast.co.uk](http://www.findmypast.co.uk)  
*Liverpool City Council Archive ref 377 BLU\_19\_1\_4 page 49 Blue Coat School, Wavertree*

<sup>28</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liverpool\\_Blue\\_Coat\\_School](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liverpool_Blue_Coat_School) and  
<https://web.archive.org/web/20130707041720/http://www.bluecoatschoolliverpool.org.uk/school/index.asp>

<sup>29</sup> *1891 England Census Poulton cum Seacombe RG12; Piece: 2897; Folio: 70; Page: 13 - and 1901 England Census Liscard, Cheshire RG13; Piece: 3403; Folio: 162; Page: 36 - and William with Thomas and other siblings in 1881 England Census Liverpool, Lancashire RG11; Piece 3623; Folio 71; Page 45*