

This is A Few Forgotten Women Story



These stories were written, in March 2023, following 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. We were able to create biographies for most of the women; in some instances there was little information or were only possible sightings of the women in other records. We committed to recording every woman and this document gives the details we have for those for whom we were unable to create a fuller story. The women were all researched by different volunteers and we have retained the different styles of reporting below. Some of the reports have been added to as new details have come to light. Please do get in touch if you have additional information. The stories are accurate to the best of our ability; we will willingly correct any errors that may be identified. This document includes all those women for whom very little could be found, so there was not enough for a separate story but we remember them here.

Mary S Bennett researched by Ruth Wilson

In 1901, Mary S Bennett was an inmate at St Joseph's Inebriate Reformatory in Ashford, Middlesex. She was married, and had been born around 1867 in Borough, London. Her occupation was given as 'Laundress' and she could presumably have continued as this in the Reformatory as inmates were put to work in the laundry. However, with such a common name and no other identifying information to go on, nothing else could be discovered at this time about Mary.

References:

1901 census RG13/1171 f. 13, p. 17

Lost Hospitals of London, Ecclesfield (including St Joseph's Reformatory), <https://ezitis.myzen.co.uk/ecclesfield.html>

Ellen Carroll researched by Shelly Matthews

Ellen Carroll was listed in the 1901 England censusⁱ as a laundress, Roman Catholic, married and from County Cork, age 41.

There was an Ellen Carroll in the 1891 censusⁱⁱ in a workhouse, listed as a general domestic servant, age 34 and born in Ireland but I am not sure if they are the same person.

I searched for marriages in Cork for men with the surname Carroll marrying a female named Ellenⁱⁱⁱ. After finding 5 couples, I cross referenced them on the

Irish census of 1901^{iv} and found 4 still living in Ireland, so they could be eliminated.

The couple which I can only think might be accurate is Ellen Linehan and Timothy Carroll who married in 1888 - Ellen is already listed as being in England at that time.

The only Timothy Carroll (a park keeper) who I could find was the father of a George Carroll age 27, who married Florence Adeline James in 1920^v. A birth for a child in 1892^{vi} may possibly be George but I am unable to sufficiently prove this.

Another marriage that I discovered was in 1910^{vii} where Ellen Bridget Carroll married Henry Shields and has her father also listed as Timothy Carroll. Her age puts her as that of a similar period with George so could be a sibling, but I was unable to find them on any census or even find birth registrations for either person. The addresses that were given on the marriage certificate were illegible.

One birth in 1890^{viii} looked promising as a girl named Julia was born illegitimately to an Ellen Carroll in St Pancras, but again, I was unable to tie this together to our Ellen with any kind of certainty. Perhaps further research in the future will provide the necessary evidence.

Sources

- i 1901 census Middlesex at www.ancestry.co.uk
- ii 1891 census Liverpool at www.ancestry.co.uk

- iii Irish Genealogy at irishgenealogy.ie
- iv National Archives of Ireland
- v Births, deaths and marriages London 1910 at www.ancestry.co.uk
- vi Register of births Poplar workhouse 1892 at www.ancestry.co.uk
- vii Births, deaths and marriages London 1910 at www.ancestry.co.uk
- viii Births, deaths and marriages, St. Pancras Parish workhouse 1890

Margaret Griffin researched by Isobel Hoy

In 1901 Margaret was a forty four year old widow, who was an inmate of St. Joseph's Inebriate Reformatory for Women. Her birthplace was recorded as Dublin, Ireland, she was Roman Catholic and she worked as a dressmaker.

Hendon and Finchley Times, 16 August 1884 (accessed from Find My Past) reported Margaret Griffin (age not legible) a widow of Godington Street, St Pancras, was charged with being drunk and disorderly. No occupation was recorded and it's 6 years before the next report, so it may not be our Margaret Griffin.

There are a number of reports in The Islington Gazette (accessed from Find My Past) that could be about Margaret. If they are, they indicate why she became an inmate of St Joseph's.

On 25 September 1889 it reported that 29 year old Margaret Griffin, a widow of Provost Street, was charged with being drunk and behaving in a disorderly manner. She didn't appear.

On 31 October 1889 it said Margaret Griffin aged 30 and a dressmaker of Old-street, St Luke's was charged with being drunk and spitting at a police constable at Warner Street, Clerkenwell. She was fined 20 shillings.

Islington Gazette, 10 October 1890, contained a report 'Assaulting The Police'. It said Margaret Griffin, aged 29, a dressmaker of no home was charged with being drunk and assaulting a police constable after being found surrounded by a large crowd in Clerkenwell-road.

On 10 August 1897 the paper reported that Margaret Griffin, aged 36 and a dressmaker of Lunster Square, Marylebone, was given a caution after being found drunk and disorderly.

On 25 January 1898, Margaret Griffin, 39 and a tailoress of Redhill-street, Regent's Park was discharged after being reported drunk and disorderly.

On 19 September 1899 the paper reported that Margaret Griffin, 40, a seamstress of Baldwin Street, St Luke's was sent to gaol for 10 days after a charge of being drunk and disorderly.

To date, nothing further has been found out about Margaret. Perhaps her spell at St Joseph's helped her to overcome her problem.

Sources:

Islington Gazette articles accessed from Find My Past:

25 September 1889, page 3, towards the bottom of the 2nd column.

31 October 1889, page 2, 5th column, headed Assaulting the Police.

10 October 1890, page 3, bottom of 3rd column, headed Assaulting the Police.

10 August 1897, page 3, 4th column headed Clerkenwell Police, miscellaneous charges.

25 January 1898, page 2, column 5, headed Clerkenwell Police, miscellaneous charges

19 September 1899, page 2, towards the bottom of the 6th column.

Lilian King aka Lilian Jordan aka Lilian Manglely researched by Evelyn Gardiner

In 1901, Lilian King, aged 26, a married woman and a Roman Catholic, born in Cork, Ireland in 1874 is recorded on the census as being an inmate of St Joseph's Inebriate Reformatory, Ashford, Middlesex.

How to find Lilian's birth records without a surname? A search for Lilians born in the eight registration areas of Co Cork between 1872 and 1879 produced nearly twenty. Of those twenty all have been accounted for with the exception of a soldier's daughter, Lilian Florence Ransome. This Lilian was born on 28 November 1876 in Cork Barracks. Her father was Walter, a Sergeant Major, and her mother was Maryanne Galvan. (www.irishgenealogy.ie, last accessed 31/03/2023) Is this the Lilian King in St Joseph's in 1901? Possibly.

The South London Mail dated 30 May 1903 reports that a Lilian Jordan was brought before the court and convicted of drunkenness. Lilian was one of three women arraigned that day at Southwark Petty Sessions who were on the 'black list'. Lilian was sentenced to one month's hard labour, and a man who had gone

surety for her good behaviour was to be summons with a view to forfeiting his £10. (www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk , last accessed 04/04/2023)

This is Lilian King's story, who is Lilian Jordan? Entry no 87a in the Register of Habitual Criminals and Police Gazettes, 1834-1934 provides the answer. On 11 January 1905 Lilian has been committed to a certified inebriate's reformatory. Her name is recorded as Lillian Jordan with the aliases, King and Mangle. Her address is given as Little Surrey Street, Blackfriars. She has been employed as a factory hand in Staple Street, Bermondsey. Her physical description is given and there is a photograph of her. She has been convicted at Southwark and is known to frequent the area of St. George's Circus, Blackfriars. (www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/61812/ , last accessed 28 March 2023)

Sadly, her stay in the inebriate's reformatory doesn't help her overcome her addiction. The Southwark and Bermondsey Recorder dated Saturday, 18 January 1908 reports that Lilian, who has just been released from the reformatory the Friday before, has offended again and is being remanded again. (www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk , last accessed 04/04/2023)

After this Lilian's trail runs cold.

Janette Lambert researched by Isobel Hoy

Janette or Janetta Lambert was born about 1856. Janette was a forty five year old married woman, who was an inmate of St. Joseph's Inebriate Reformatory for Women in 1901. On the 1901 census her birthplace was recorded as Baume lay Dame in France. This is a phonetic spelling of Baume-les-Dames, a commune in the Bourgogne-Franche-Comté region of eastern France, close to the border

with Switzerland. Janette had no recorded occupation and, to date, nothing further has been found about her.

Julia Lyons researched by Helen Brookes

In 1901 Julia was an inmate of St Joseph's Inebriate Reformatory, Ashford. According to the census she was born about 1873 in New York, America and was married at the time the census was taken.

The only information that can be found about Julia is a newspaper article from 17th February 1900 in which she is described as a young woman and was charged with being an incorrigible drunk. Sergeant Baker, the goaler, proved a number of convictions, and said from his knowledge of the defendant she was unable to look after herself and affairs on account of being an intemperate person. She was ordered to be detained in a Roman Catholic inebriates Home for three years.

There are no other newspaper articles about her, nor does she appear in any criminal database records.

Sources

St Joseph's Inebriated Reformatory, Ashford, Middlesex, RG13 1171 Folios 12 – 13

East London Observer, 17th Feb 1900

Mary J McLaughlin researched by Alexandra Barr

In 1901, Mary J was a forty-four-year-old married woman, whose birthplace was County Donegal, Ireland. She was an inmate of St. Joseph's Inebriate Reformatory for Women in 1901. Her occupation in the Census was given as Dressmaker. To date, nothing further has been found about her.

Caroline Oliver researched by Alexandra Barr

In 1901, Caroline was a thirty-nine-year-old married woman, who was born at sea on the Firth of the Forth, Scotland. She was an inmate of Farmfield Inebriate Home, Charwood in 1901. Prior to entry she worked as a Charwoman.

Caroline married Henry Oliver sometime before 1894, as she was described as married when on 23rd of November 1894 she was admitted to Newington Workhouse, Southwark, London. The admission records described her as a 'lunatic'. She was admitted to Newington Workhouse again on the 7th May 1895 and on the 19th May 1895 and discharged on the 20th May 1895.

It would appear that at some date subsequent to this she moved to East London, as after her stay at Farmfield she was admitted to Tower Hamlets Workhouse, Stepney, London on 20th May 1902. The record stated that she was found in the street [by the police?] and she was described as a 'mental' admission. She was discharged on 6th June 1902. Her husband's address was given as c/o Mr. Noakes, Spa Road, Bermondsey.

Caroline was again admitted to Tower Hamlets Workhouse on 14th September 1904 from 27 Brick Lane, London. The reason for admission was Rheumatism and she was discharged on 19th September 1904. Her husband was described as a Metallic Cask maker and this would tie in well with the Spa Road address in the previous admission, as Spa Road was an area well known for cask making.

On 23rd December 1904 Caroline was discharged from Sheffield Street Receiving Workhouse to the London Sick Asylum. No admission record discovered.

On 30th December 1904, Caroline was again admitted to Tower Hamlets Workhouse and the reason for admission was Bronchitis. She was discharged on 12th January 1905. It was noted on the records that her husband was absent.

Caroline was admitted to Tower Hamlets Workhouse on 25th March 1905 with Rheumatism and discharged on the 5th April 1905. Her husband contact details were c/o of Mr. Lucas, Spa Road, Bermondsey.

On the 2nd May 1905, Caroline was admitted to Tower Hamlets Workhouse suffering from Synovialis (Inflamed joint lining) and discharged on the 27th May 1905. Her husband is again recorded as absent.

Caroline was transferred from Bethnal Green Police Station to Tower Hamlets Workhouse on the 3rd July 1905. The reason for admission was described as Cerebral and she was discharged on the 10th July 1905. The record described Caroline as homeless.

There is an admission and discharge record for Caroline dated the 25th September 1906 from St. George's Workhouse, Southwark. No reasons for either were provided.

No further records were found.

Source: All records for Caroline Oliver were found on Ancestry.co.uk. London, England, Workhouse Admission and Discharge Records, 1764-1921. London Metropolitan Archives; London, England; Reference Number STBG/WH/123/039

Juliet Regan researched by Janet Few

In 1901, Juliet was a twenty five year old unmarried woman, whose birthplace was unknown. She was an inmate of St. Joseph's Reformatory for inebriate women in the 1901 census. Nothing further can be found about her.

Mary A Ritchie researched by Julie Jakeway

Mary A Ritchie was recorded in the 1901 census, aged 32, occupation 'Rope Factory', born in Whitechapel.

She is probably the Mary Ritchie living with her widowed mother, Hannah, and siblings, in a house of multiple occupancy, at 15 Albert Square, Shadwell in 1881. Her brother was a ropemaker, Mary herself was a general servant. There is a Catholic baptism at St Mary and St Michael's, Stepney on 25 August 1876

of Maria Anna (Mary Ann) Ritchie born November 1867 to John and Ann née Arnold.

I was unable to find Mary Ritchie on Ancestry in their marriage and death records, in the 1911 census, the UK Lunacy Patients records, the Old Bailey Court Proceedings, or in FreeBmd marriages and deaths.

I did discover a Mary Ann Ritchie on Ancestry's record for Tower Hamlets, Stepney, Workhouses & Institutions 1898-99: Mary Ann Ritchie aged 30 admitted Tuesday 1 November 1898 from workhouse, cause of admission bronchitis, discharged 14.11.1898. It is not proven that this is the Mary A Ritchie recorded in the 1901 census.

Amelia Roberts researched by Leona J Thomas

In 1901, Amelia was a nineteen year old single woman whose birthplace was Birmingham. She was of the Roman Catholic faith. Amelia was recorded as an inmate of St. Joseph's Inebriate Reformatory for Women in the 1901 England Census. To date, nothing further has been found which could be definitely stated to be her. Despite researching the census, birth, marriage and death records, emigration/immigration records, online family trees and newspaper reports, I have been unable to find any credible record for Amelia. Might she have given a false name? Or might it have been incorrectly recorded? In any case, she seems to have left no trail for us to follow.

Ellen Roberts researched by Isobel Hoy

Ellen was born on 1 June 1865 and baptised on 2 July that year at St Chad's Cathedral, Birmingham. When she was baptised her name was recorded as Elena Elizabetha. She was the only child of James Roberts and his wife Ellen, nee Moseley.

James and Ellen Moseley were married 21 December 1861, in St Stephen's Church, Birmingham when he was about 35 and she was about 28. When they married James' occupation was recorded as 'church decorator'.

In 1871 Ellen was 6 years old and a scholar, living with her parents at 7 Miller Street, Birmingham. James was a decorative painter.

By 1881, Ellen was working as a printer while her father was still a painter. The family had moved to the Ladywood area of Birmingham and were living in Back 183 Ledsam Street.

As yet, no record has been found relating to Ellen's reason for moving away from Warwickshire, but she did and by 1891, she was an inmate of the Refuge of the Good Shepherd in Finchley, Middlesex. From the census return, she was one of 200 women living there that night. Her occupation was recorded as 'clock maker'.

British History Online says: In 1864 the Sisters of the Good Shepherd bought East End House on the north side of East End Road, where until 1948 they maintained a refuge for distressed Roman Catholic women, including former prisoners. In 1900 they aided 180 'poor penitents' and 130 younger girls. New

buildings on the site included a church in 1875 and a wing for the novitiate in 1886, when East End House became the provincial house for the order. After a fire in 1972 land was sold for housing and most of the buildings were demolished, although the original house remained.

In 1901 Ellen was an inmate of St. Joseph's Inebriate Reformatory, Ashford, Middlesex. She was working as a matchmaker.

This is the last reference found for her to date.

Sources:

Civil Registration Birth Index: 1865, Quarter 2, Vol 6d, Page 89.

Birth date and Baptism: England Roman Catholic Parish Baptisms (viewed on Find My Past). Birmingham Archdiocesan Archives, Archive Reference P1/1/8. Date Range, 1860-1869.

Parents' marriage: Birmingham, England, Church of England Marriages and Banns, 1754-1937 (viewed on Ancestry).

1871 census: RG10, Piece No, 3124, Folio 143, Page 20, Schedule 118. Ellen's name transcribed as Ellen Eb (Ellen Eli).

1881 census: RG11, Piece No, 2967, Folio 131, Page 44, Schedule 1190.

1891 census: RG12, Piece No, 1058, Folio 142, Page 16, Schedule 11.

Finchley: Roman Catholicism | British History Online

Annie Sheehan researched by Helen Barber

Annie was 39 years old when she was admitted to Farmfield on 22 September 1900. She had been born in Clerkenwell, Middlesex. She was described as just

5 ft tall, 135lbs with a fresh complexion and brown hair and eyes. She was miserable, dejected and quiet upon arrival but otherwise healthy. Her sentence was for 3 years and her intemperance was caused by the death of her husband when she was 26, and bad companions. She did not start to drink until he died. The couple had 3 children, one of whom, Private T A Sheehan, served in the Royal Scots Fusiliers. She had worked in the past as a general servant and was now a laundress. After her 3 years at Farmfield she was reported as doing well.

Prior to her time there however she was regularly found to be drunk for long periods of time, often becoming violent. She was imprisoned 12 times for this behaviour but no reports have been found for these incidents. No records have been found for Annie in the census either, apart from the 1901, nor in any death or marriage records.

Despite having her son's name and details, he has not been found. However, records have been found for a Private James Alfred Sheehan, of the Royal Scottish Fusiliers, who had a mother called Hannah and 2 siblings. He was also born in Camberwell, like Annie. Hannah's husband, James, is still alive in 1891 when she is 27, which doesn't quite fit with Annie's drinking starting on his death when she is 26. There are some similarities between Annie and Hannah but not enough evidence at this stage to prove they are the same person.

Sources

Farmfield Reformatory for Inebriate Women, Horley, Surrey RG13 629 folios 151-152.

Rose Smith researched by Alexandra Barr

Rose was a twenty-six-year-old widow, who was born c.1874 in Cork, Ireland. She was an inmate of St. Joseph's Inebriate Reformatory for Women in 1901. She worked as a Laundress. To date, nothing further has been found about her.

Elizabeth Steele researched by Joanne Ashworth

Elizabeth Steele was a 38 year old widow who was born in Whitechapel, London. She was an inmate of St. Joseph's Inebriate Reformatory in 1901. She was a cook. Nothing further can be found about her.

Mary Taylor

Mary was born about 1863. In 1901, Mary was an inmate of St. Joseph's Inebriate Reformatory for Women. She was a thirty seven year old married woman, whose birthplace was Kildare, Ireland. She was of the Roman Catholic faith. To date, nothing further has been found which could be definitely stated to be her.

Elizabeth Williams researched by Isobel Hoy

Elizabeth Williams was born about 1851. On the 1901 census, Elizabeth was recorded as being a 50 year old unmarried woman, of Roman Catholic faith, from Battersea, London. She was an inmate of St. Joseph's Inebriate Reformatory for Women and she worked as a domestic servant.

Battersea was in the Wandsworth registration district. There were 4 births registered for girls called Elizabeth Williams between 1852 and 1855, none in 1849 to 1851. This means the area or year could be inaccurate and makes it difficult to prove what she was doing before she entered the Reformatory.

For example, in the 1881 census a servant called Elizabeth Williams, aged 31, born in Battersea and who worked as a nurse in Mary A Bolton's household at 84 High St, Putney. Was this the same woman? We just don't know.

There are also entries for a young Elizabeth Williams, a servant of no abode, to different workhouses in London when she was about 16 years old.

Unfortunately there is no way of telling if any of these entries relate to our Elizabeth Williams.

Sources

1881 census of England and Wales, RG11, Piece number 661, Folio 15, Page 24, Schedule 104.

London, England, Workhouse Admission and Discharge Records, 1764-1921.