

# *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]*

## **Mary Hassall's Story**

Mary was born on 9 October 1890 at 58 Ford Lane, Crewe.



*58 Ford Lane Crewe as it is today, from Google Streetview*

The extract from the GRO's birth register shows her parents as Charles Hassall, a joiner (journeyman), and Betsy Hassall, formerly Turner.<sup>1</sup>

310	11 <sup>th</sup> W. S. G. Smith October 1890 58 Ford Lane Windsor Coppleshall 11 <sup>th</sup> & a	Mary	Girl	Charles Hassall	Betsy Hassall formerly Turner	Joiner (Journeyman)	C. Hassall Father 58 Ford Lane Windsor Coppleshall	Eleventh J. W. Sewell Registrar 1890
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Charles Hassall and Betsy Turner had married about six months previously.<sup>2</sup> A little extra digging seems to suggest that Betsy was, in fact, the sister of Charles' first wife Emma Turner, who died in 1885.<sup>3</sup>

(The 1911 Census shows that Betsy Turner had had only one child (Mary), although the 1891 Census shows that Charles and Betsy had three daughters living with them. The church register for Charles' first marriage to Emma Turner shows that one of the witnesses was Betsy Turner, with the bride's father shown as Thomas Turner.<sup>4</sup> A quick look back to the 1861 Census finds Thomas, his wife Jane, and children including Emma and Betsy living in Haslington near Crewe.<sup>5</sup>)

The 1891 Census shows that the Hassall family were still living at 58 Ford Lane,<sup>6</sup> while in 1901 they had moved around the corner to 3 Fletcher Street.<sup>7</sup>



*3, Fletcher Street, Crewe as it is today, from Google Streetview (left-hand property).*

On 7 September 1903 Mary started at Crewe Secondary School.<sup>8</sup> In 1908 she received her preliminary certificate with a distinction for science.<sup>9</sup> For the next two years Mary was one of about 60 students who completed her teacher training at the newly-opened Cheshire County Training College. In 1972 she shared her recollections of those times for the Old Students' magazine, *The Torch*:<sup>10</sup>

“In 1908 a group of about 60 students attended the Opening Ceremony of the Cheshire County Training College, Crewe, for Teachers. None of us that day could have visualised how the College would expand to its present proportions. There was no gymnasium for the women with drill, marching and country dancing being all we had. Discipline was strict, a curfew at 10pm. We had badges, blazers, hats and ties in our colours of blue and gold and were expected to wear them. The following hair of today would not be allowed back then, on arrival at college we had to style our hair in the very

formidable adult ‘upswept’ style. Few of us original students remain to keep in touch.”

Mary is known to have played hockey for the College and appears in this team photo.<sup>11</sup> (She is believed to be one of the players on the back row, although which one is uncertain.)



The 1911 Census shows that the Hassall family had moved across the road and were now living at 2 Fletcher Street.<sup>12</sup>





*2 Fletcher Street, Crewe as it is today, from Google Streetview*

This shows Charles (aged 59, a joiner working on his own account), his wife Betsy (aged 54) and Mary (aged 20, an elementary school teacher employed by the Town Council). No information has been found to shed any light on Mary's teaching career. It is likely, however, that she would have given up work when she married.

In 1917 Mary married Fred Stubbs.<sup>13</sup> Together they had two daughters: Kathleen, born in 1918,<sup>14</sup> and Freda, born in 1920.<sup>15</sup> When the 1921 Census was taken Mary's family were living in her former family home at 2 Fletcher Street.<sup>16</sup> The household comprised Fred (aged 32, working as an accounts clerk for the London & North West Railway Company), Mary (aged 30, domestic duties) and children Kathleen (aged 2) and Freda (aged 10 months). Mary's parents, Charles and Betsy Hassall, were also living at the same address (registered as a separate household).

In 1929 the Cheshire County Training College celebrated its 21<sup>st</sup> anniversary, and Mary was made a life member of the Old Students' Association.<sup>17</sup> The same publication notes her address as being 60 Nelson Street, Crewe.



*60 Nelson Street Crewe as it is today, from Google Streetview*

Mary and her husband Fred were still living at 60 Nelson Street in 1939.<sup>18</sup> Mary was shown as doing unpaid domestic duties while her husband Fred was a railway clerk. Also living with them was their younger daughter, Freda (working as a shorthand typist) and Mary's mother Betsy (a widow, recorded as being incapacitated).

Mary's husband died in 1949.<sup>19</sup> The local newspaper reported that the funeral took place in the churchyard of Haslington Parish Church.<sup>20</sup> In addition to family members there were representatives from LNWR's Locomotive Accountants Office, and also from the General Offices Ex-Servicemen's Association.

In 1958 the Training College celebrated its golden anniversary and Mary was among those attending a special reunion event held on 4 October.<sup>21</sup> In 1962 it was reported in 'The Torch' that Mary had moved to London.<sup>22</sup>

In 1968 the college celebrated its Diamond Jubilee.<sup>23</sup> The usual Reunion weekend was held at the beginning of October, with ex-students visiting the college. There were games of netball, badminton, and tennis, with old girls playing against current students; a dance; whist drive; an afternoon tea, and films and drama productions performed by current students.

On the Friday night a buffet supper was held preceded with a discussion on the education of women, between Mrs Shirley Williams MP (then a Labour Education Minister) and Dr Kathleen Ollerenshaw (a member of staff). All the great and the good of Cheshire Education Committee were in attendance, and the evening was much enjoyed by all. On Saturday at the afternoon tea a huge cake in the shape of a diamond, decorated in the college colours of blue and gold, was cut by Mary (as the oldest ex-student present) Miss B Pym (the youngest student at the college).

Mary passed away on 13 November 1980, aged 90.<sup>24</sup> She was buried in St Michael's Churchyard, Haslington, with her husband Fred.<sup>25</sup>

### ***Narrative by Jane Hough***

### **References**

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<sup>1</sup> 1890 Q4, Nantwich RD, volume 8a, page 308; General Register Office

<sup>2</sup> 1890 Q2, Nantwich RD, volume 8a, page 588; general Register Office

<sup>3</sup> Death of Emma Hassall 1885 Q4, Nantwich RD, volume 8a, page 231; General register Office

<sup>4</sup> Cheshire Diocese of Chester Parish Marriages 1538-1910, item 9 page 63 (accessed via Findmypast.co.uk)

<sup>5</sup> 1861 England Census, RG9, Piece 2617, Folio 22, Page 17

<sup>6</sup> 1891 England Census, RG12, Piece 2853, Folio 30, Page 14

<sup>7</sup> 1901 England Census, RG13, Piece 3358, Folio 36, Page 18

<sup>8</sup> England, Cheshire School Records, 1782-1950. Accessed via Findmypast.co.uk, record reference 650723367

<sup>9</sup> CCTCC Student Registers [1908-1935]: CCTCC Archives, Unpublished data, under the care of the Family History Society of Cheshire, Crewe

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- <sup>10</sup> 'The Torch': CCTCC Old Students Magazine, 1972 Edition, Unpublished data, under the care of the Family History Society of Cheshire, Crewe
- <sup>11</sup> CCTCC Archives, *ibid*
- <sup>12</sup> 1911 England Census, RG14, Piece 21785, RD 449, SD 1, ED 33, Schedule 91
- <sup>13</sup> 1917 Q2, Nantwich RD, volume 8a, page 623; General Register Office
- <sup>14</sup> 1918 Q3, Nantwich RD, vol 8a page 432; General Register Office
- <sup>15</sup> 1920 Q3, Nantwich RD, vol 8a page 627; General Register Office
- <sup>16</sup> 1921 England Census, RG15, Piece 17002, Schedule 112, Reference RD 449 RS 2 ED19
- <sup>17</sup> *'Old Students Association. Coming of Age Magazine, May 18th 1929'*, part of the CCTCC Collection at the Family History Society of Cheshire, Crewe
- <sup>18</sup> 1939 Register, RG101/4007H/016/21/LEPM, accessed via Findmypast.co.uk
- <sup>19</sup> 1949 Q2, Crewe RD, volume 10a, page 242; General Register Office
- <sup>20</sup> Crewe Chronicle, 16 July 1949, page 2 (British Newspaper Archive, accessed via Findmypast.co.uk)
- <sup>21</sup> CCTCC Archives, *ibid*
- <sup>22</sup> 'The Torch': CCTCC Old Students Magazine, 1972 Edition, Unpublished data, under the care of the Family History Society of Cheshire, Crewe
- <sup>23</sup> 'The Torch', CCTCC Old Student Magazine, 1969 Edition, unpublished data, under the care of the Family History Society of Cheshire, Crewe
- <sup>24</sup> England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1858-1995 – record for Mary Stubbs
- <sup>25</sup> [Mary Hassall Stubbs \(1890-1980\) - Find a Grave Memorial](#)