

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]

Elizabeth Ann Aldred's Story

Elizabeth was born on 22 September 1891, one of four children to James and wife Mary, nee Brundett.¹ James worked in the hat industry, for which Stockport was [and still is] famous for, as a silk dyer.² At the time of the 1901 census, 9-year-old Elizabeth and family are living in Wellington Road, Stockport,³ Elizabeth undertook her primary education at the Stockport Sunday School before moving to Stockport Technical School, where she sat the Oxford Senior Local Examination in order to qualify to enrol at the Cheshire Training College [CCTCC], her name appears among the second cohort of students to attend the college,

¹ GRO Marriage Indexes, April Quarter 1880, Prestwich District, Vol 8d, page 520; GRO Birth Indexes, September Quarter, Stockport District, Vol 8a, Page 36; CCTCC Student Registers [1908-1935]: CCTCC Archives, Unpublished data, under the care of the Family History of Cheshire, Crewe

² 1891 England and Wales Census, RG12, Stockport District, Piece 2794; An excellent website explaining all about the Hat industry in Stockport is Mainly Museums, the section on Stockport can be accessed here - <https://mainlymuseums.com/post/424/where-i-lay-my-hat-stockport-s-hat-works/>

³ 1901 England and Wales Census, RG13, Stockport District, Piece 3287

enrolling on 15 September 1909. The family had now moved to Cringle Road in Levenshulme.⁴

Elizabeth is enumerated at 30 Gainsborough Road, Crewe in 1911 along with fellow student Alice Whitehill.⁵ In the early days of CCTCC, while a purpose-built campus was under construction, the students were housed in a series of lodging houses across the town.⁶ Elizabeth completed her studies later that same year, graduating in July of 1911 and passing the College Final Examinations and was now a qualified elementary school teacher.⁷ She returned to the family home, which was now 38 Kennerley Road, Stockport. Her father was now working in



38 Kennerley Road Credit: Google Street View

⁴ December 1906, Cheshire School Records, 1782-1950, accessed via www.findmypast.co.uk; CCTCC Student Registers [1908-1935]: CCTCC Archives, Unpublished data, under the care of the Family History of Cheshire, Crewe

⁵ England and Wales 1911 Census, RG14, Monks Coppenhall District, Piece 2167; Alice Whitehill's story can be found on the Few Forgotten Women website as part of a group of shorter stories where little is known or can be found on the various students - https://www.fewforgottenwomen.com/files/ugd/d63e92_0a5cc0c7db6b4f71893b1dc3f5d36d8d.pdf

⁶ For an explanation of the history of the early days of CCTCC please see Helen Blankley's story on the Few Forgotten Women website - https://www.fewforgottenwomen.com/files/ugd/d63e92_c434f815e61f40fcaefe019234d393d6.pdf

⁷ CCTCC Student Registers [1908-1935]: CCTCC Archives, Unpublished data, under the care of the Family History of Cheshire, Crewe

his own estate agent's business, employing younger daughter May and eventually son Henry.⁸ Elizabeth worked at the Vernon Park Council School, as noted in the 1921 census, the school opened in 1909 and have an interesting history section on the school website.⁹ During the WWI, Elizabeth's sister May served as a VAD nurse at Stepping Hill Military Hospital, but I cannot see that any information for Elizabeth, school teachers often gave time, as did the students who were in college during the war.¹⁰

In March 1928 Elizabeth's father James died at home *'in his 70th year*, followed a few years later by her mother, Mary at the age of 73.¹¹ Elizabeth carried on in her career and was still teaching at the start of WWII when the National Register was compiled. She was living with her sister May, both women were unmarried and residing at 50 Egerton Road in Stockport, Elizabeth noted as a Day School Teacher and May undertaking unpaid household duties. May also took on work as a Cheshire Red Cross volunteer¹²

There are no mentions of Elizabeth in the newspapers that have thus far been digitised and so the next time I came across her in the records is her death in November 1941 at the age of 50. Her death certificate makes for sad reading, she died of Uraemia, a build-up of waste products in the body due to kidney failure and related to that, Essential Hypertension, high blood pressure with no clearly identifiable cause. A cerebral haemorrhage was also noted as an underlying illness. Elizabeth was noted as a spinster and an elementary school

⁸ England and Wales 1911 Census, RG14, Stockport District, Piece 21377

⁹ England and Wales 1921 Census, RG14, Stockport District, Piece 16665; Vernon Park School website - <https://www.vernonpark.stockport.sch.uk/page/history-of-our-school/119853>

¹⁰ VAD Red Cross Records for May Aldred - <https://vad.redcross.org.uk/record?rowKey=1894>; N. Grisenthwaite and E. M. Reader, A College in Green Fields. The Story of Crewe College of Education 1908-1974 (Burslem, 1974); Cheshire County Training College Magazine, Apr. 1919, CCTCC Archives, Unpublished data, under the care of the Family History of Cheshire, Crewe

¹¹ *Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser*, 9 March 1928, 2; *Alderley and Wilmslow Advertiser*, 29 January 1932, 1

¹² 1939 National Register, RG101, Stockport District, Piece 3934E

teacher, with sister May being present at the time of death at home in Egerton Road.¹³ Her estate with just over £900 was left to May.¹⁴ Elizabeth was buried alongside her parents at Stockport Cemetery, an image of the very elaborate memorial can be seen on the website FindAGrave [see - <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/245786021/elizabeth-ann-aldred>].

It is a shame that there is little in the press of Elizabeth's thirty-year career as a teacher, as one of the early students at CCTCC, she would have been among the first fully trained and certified female teachers to work in Cheshire.

Narrative by Margaret Roberts
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¹³ Death Certificate of Elizabeth Ann Aldred, 5 November 1941; Explanation of Uremia/Ureamia - <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Uremia>; Explanation of Essential Hypertension - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Essential_hypertension

¹⁴ National Probate Calendar, Elizabeth Ann Aldred 1941, accessed via www.Ancestry.co.uk