

This is A Few Forgotten Women Story



This story was written, in November 2023, as one of a series resulting from the 'A Few Forgotten Women Friday' collaborative research project, investigating the lives of women who studied at The Grange School of Housewifery in Street, Somerset.

Annie Dyer's Story

Annie Dyer appears in the 1911 Census age 15 at The School of Housewifery at The Grange in Street, Somerset. The Minute Book at The Grange School tells us that Annie Dyer from Crewkerne was offered a studentship on 18 June 1909 and that her studentship was renewed for a second year in a meeting on 17 June 1910. The census gives her birthplace as Roduish, Somerset. From a search of the England and Wales birth index, there is a birth registered for an Annie Dyer in the third quarter of 1895 in Carhampton, Somerset (in the Dunster area of Somerset). Annie was baptised on 22 September 1895 in the parish of Carhampton cum Rodhuish: their abode is given as Rodhuish, which ties in with the birthplace given in the 1911 census record. She was the daughter of Ernest and Sarah-Jane Dyer. Ernest's occupation is given as a groom at this time.

Ernest Dyer married Sarah-Jane Gould (or just Jane, on some records) on 21 October 1893 in Carhampton. Sarah Jane's parents (Annie's grandparents) were John and Ann Gould who are also listed in the 1901 census as living in Rodhuish, close to the Dyer family. Sarah Jane had at least three brothers and a sister.

From the 1901 census, we find Annie (age 5) living in Rodhuish with her family: Her father, Ernest is a Livery Coachman, her mother Jane (note: not Sarah Jane as listed in Baptism registers), her sister Elsie (age 6) and also a brother Charles (age 4). A further search of the birth indexes also gives another brother, Lewis John Dyer who was born in 1899, but died in 1900.

From the 1911 census, we find Annie's parents living in Old Cleeve with their sons Charles (now working as a grocer's errand boy) and Percy Frank, age 2, whose birthplace is listed as Crewkerne (which links with Annie's studentship record). Her father, Ernest is now listed as a cowman.

There is a record of Percy's baptism in 1909 where their address is given as New Place Mill, Crewkerne and Ernest is listed as being a gamekeeper here.

Elsie Dyer (Annie's sister), also appears to have been a student at The School of Housewifery at The Grange in 1907 & 1908. By 1911 she is age 16 and recorded in the census as a housemaid at The Rectory, Lamyatt, Bath for a Henry Guyon. Elsie marries Louis Weadon and has three children.

Annie's brother Charles was an Acting Bombardier in the Royal Field Artillery during World War I. Sadly he died in 1916 in Malta, where he was buried.

Next we find a record of Annie marrying Charles Henry Luffman in Autumn 1930 in Long Ashton area. There is a report of their wedding in the Western Daily Press on 24 November 1930:

‘The wedding took place in St Andrew’s Church, Backwell. The bride (Annie) was given away by her father and wore a dress of blue georgette and carried a bouquet of white chrysanthemums and fern. The bridesmaid was Annie’s niece, Pauline Weadon wearing a flowered silk dress and carried pink chrysanthemums.’

Annie and Charles Luffman are living at Underwood in Long Ashton in 1939 Register. This gives Annie’s birthdate as 30 August 1895 which tallies with the registration in Carhampton and also the baptism. Charles’ occupation is given as Leather Operator (Shaver, Staker, Buffer) and also mentions that he is an Air Raid Warden. Annie is listed on unpaid domestic duties. There is also a closed record, which relates to their son, born in 1938.

The 1939 register also shows Annie’s sister Elsie to be in Long Ashton with her family too, so the sisters must have remained in close contact throughout their lives. Annie’s youngest brother Percy appears to have moved farther afield than the rest of the family, as in the 1939 register we find him in Ludlow, Shropshire. He is married to Gladys and his occupation is listed as Auctioneer’s Cashier – Accountant.

Annie’s husband, Charles died in 1981 in Weston-super-Mare. The records also show that her sister, Elsie dies in Weston-super-Mare in 1989 at the grand age of 94.

Annie herself lives to the great age of 98. She also dies in Weston-super-Mare in 1994.

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Sources:

From Ancestry.co.uk:

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British Newspaper Archive (accessed through Find my Past):

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