

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]

Ruth Jones's Story

Ruth Jones was born 5th November 1890 and her birth is registered in the December quarter 1890, in Wrexham. Her mother's maiden name is Simcock.ⁱ She was baptised in Wrexham parish church on 2nd December 1890. Her parents are recorded as John Jones, grocer, and Edith.ⁱⁱ

It is possible that her parents, John Jones and Edith Simcock married in Whitchurch in 1890 as there is a likely marriage registered in the Jan to Mar quarter 1890.ⁱⁱⁱ Whitchurch was a Shropshire market town not far from the borders of Cheshire and Wales. A search of free BMD did not bring up any other suitable marriages that fitted with their ages in the 1901 census and the date of Ruth's birth.



Ruth Jones, 1910^{iv}

Her maternal grandparents were James and Ann Simcock and they lived in Hanmer. In several census records and his children's baptism records he is recorded as a farmer. Ruth's mother Edith was baptised in Hanmer parish church on 10th August 1862.^v Both James and Ann were born Staffordshire. According to census records Ann came from Leek in Staffordshire and James came from Cheddleton, Staffordshire. There is a likely marriage record for them on 9th June 1836 at Leek Parish Church.^{vi}

At the time of the 1891 census Ruth, aged 5 months, born Wrexham, lived at 19 Penybryn, Wrexham with her parents John Jones, 28, a grocer, born in Malpas, Cheshire and Edith aged 28, born Hanmer, Flintshire.^{vii}

Ruth's brother William Arthur Jones was born 2nd March 1894. His birth certificate records his father as a grocer (master) and their address is Cheshire Stores, Rock Lane, Liscard, Cheshire.^{viii} Liscard is an area of the town of Wallasey, Cheshire. William was baptised 9th April 1894 at New Brighton, Cheshire.^{ix}

At the time of the 1901 census Ruth, 10, born Denbighshire, lived at 21 School Lane, Wallasey with her parents John Jones, 37, Grocer and Provisions dealer, Edith Jones, 38 and brother William A Jones, 7. Her parents were recorded as born in Flintshire. There was also Marion Jarvis, 35, born Shropshire, a governess in a school living with them at this time. She was listed as a visitor.^x Maybe it was Marion who influenced Ruth to become a teacher. They also had a Boarder living with them – Harry Youde, 29, a grocer's assistant who was born in Shropshire. I wonder if he worked with John Jones, Ruth's father.

John Jones died 4th February 1902^{xi}. In his will dated 3rd November 1896 he gives his address as 21 School Lane, Wallasey. He names William Arthur Jones of Fox Holes Farm, Whitchurch, Salop, Farmer, and Thomas Henry Simcock of The Moat House Farm, Calveley, near Beeston, Cheshire as his executors and trustees. He grants them all his property to convert into money to invest the proceeds and pay the income to Edith. He appointed Edith to be the guardian of his infant children. Probate was granted 10th March 1902.^{xii} It is likely that this Thomas Henry Simcock is the brother of Ruth's mother, Edith. This Thomas Henry Simcock mentioned in the will died in June 1936 and there is a long obituary about him in The Chester Chronicle, Saturday 20 June 1936.^{xiii}

Ruth attended Wallasey High School. She passed her preliminary certificate examination in 1909, and she enrolled into the training college on 15th

September 1909. The college prospectus states that no one who has not passed this qualification or equivalent can be admitted. The college year ran from 15th September to 7th July with three weeks holiday for Christmas and three weeks for Easter. There were also short breaks at midterm. When students entered the college, they executed an agreement with the Board of Education that they would on leaving the college work for five years, if female, in Elementary or Secondary schools which were in receipt of Government Grants. The requirement was seven years for men. The prospectus notes that students were unlikely to have any problem getting teaching jobs on leaving the college due to a shortage of Certified Teachers, so this for Ruth would have been a good position to be in.

They studied a range of subjects including Mathematics, English, Biology and nature study, Scripture, geography, history and rural science. All students were also taught Swedish Drill course as well, so they got a broad range of knowledge to put into practice in their teaching. There was a lot of emphasis in the second year on teaching practice in local schools. Ruth left the college in 1911 after taking her final exam with a pass in option music.^{xiv}

At the time of the 1911 census Ruth, 20, student, was a boarder with David and Margaret Thornhill and they lived at 184 Ruskin Road, Crewe. There was another boarder living in the household called Ellen Bailey who was also a student so maybe they were at the same college?^{xv}

There is a newspaper article in The Chronical from 15th July 1911 that records applications for teaching appointments for Nantwich new infant's school. This records that Ruth as CCT was taken on with a salary of £70 per annum.^{xvi}

Ruth's brother, William, enrolled into the Royal Naval reserves on 8th February 1916. His naval record ^{xvii}records his address as 21 School Road, Wallasey. He was invalided out 21st June 1916 from the Royal Naval Hospital, Chatham. His condition looks to be chronic gastritis. This condition couldn't have been very pleasant for him.

Ruth was registered in the Teachers Registration Council on 1st August 1920. Her professional address was St Georges Road Council Infants School, Wallasey. It is noted she had attained a board of education certificate. Her experience is recorded as Assistant Mistress 1911-1912 at Nantwich Council Infants School and 1912- St Georges Road Council Infants School, Wallasey. The fee paid was £1 : 0 : 0^{xviii}

At the time of the 1921 census Ruth was a boarder with her mother Edith, aged 59, a widow, born Hanmer, Flintshire, in the home of Charles and Emily Edwards which was Pandy Masellyn, Llangollen. Ruth Jones, aged 30, is recorded as a Teacher resigned.^{xix}

The 21st anniversary book of CCTC published in 1929 records Ruth as unmarried and living at Bryn Acton, Colleys Lane, Nantwich, Cheshire^{xx}

After this date the trail goes cold. I couldn't find any suitable record for Ruth in the 1939 register so maybe she had got married sometime after 1929, or she had died by then. I was not able to confidently identify a death record for her. I also was not able to trace anymore about her brother William Arthur Jones.

Narrative by Clare Whitfield

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- ⁱ *General Register Office, England and Wales Civil Registration Indexes, registration of birth, Ruth Jones, 1890, Wrexham, Vol 11B, P 243*
- ⁱⁱ *Denbighshire, Wales, Anglican Baptisms, Marriages and Burials, 1556-1994, Ancestry.co.uk, Ruth Jones, 1890, Wrexham Baptisms, Page 73, Original data: Denbighshire Baptisms, Marriages and Burials. Wales: Archives and Records Council Wales, Reference: Pd/101/1/19*
- ⁱⁱⁱ *England and Wales Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1837-1915, Ancestry.co.uk, Simcock, Whitchurch, Vol 6a, P 971. Original data: General Register Office. England and Wales Civil Registration Indexes. London, England: General Register Office*
- ^{iv} *Image of CTCC student Ruth Jones, 1910, CCTCC Archives, Unpublished data, under the care of the Family History Society of Cheshire, Crewe,* ^v*Denbighshire, Wales*
- ^v *Flintshire, Wales, Anglican Baptisms, Marriages and Burials, 1538-1994, Ancestry.co.uk, Hanmer Baptisms 1862, Edith Simcock, Page 128, original source Archives Wales; Wales; Flintshire Baptisms, Marriages and Burials; Reference: P27-1-16*
- ^{vi} *Staffordshire Marriages, Findmypast, Marriage Anne Hill and James Simcock, Leek, Staffordshire 9 June 1836, P349, original source Staffordshire Anglican Parish Registers. Staffordshire records office, Reference D1040/5/13*
- ^{vii} *John Jones, 1891 Census, Ancestry.co.uk, Registration District Wrexham, Class: RG12; Piece: 4618; Folio: 32; P 11; Original data: Census Returns of England and Wales, 1891. The National Archives of the UK (TNA): Public Record Office (PRO), 1891.*
- ^{viii} *General Register Office England and Wales, Civil Registration Indexes, Jun quarter 1894, Birkenhead, Vol 08A, P553, digital copy birth certificate William Arthur Jones,*
- ^{ix} *England and Wales Christening Index 1530-1980, New Brighton, Cheshire, William Arthur Jones 1894, Ancestry.co.uk, Original source: Genealogical Society of Utah. British Isles Vital Records Index, 2nd Edition. Salt Lake City, Utah:*
- ^x *1901 census, Census Returns of England and Wales, Ruth Jones, Registration District, Birkenhead, Sub registration district, Wallasey, Piece 3406, Folio 162, Page 22, Ancestry.co.uk, Original source The National Archives.*
- ^{xi} *England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1858-1995 John Jones, probate 10th March 1902, ancestry.co.uk*
- ^{xii} *Cheshire Wills and Probate, 1902, John Jones Will, Findmypast.*
- ^{xiii} *A well-known Cheshire farmer, death of Mr T H Simcock, The Chester Chronicle, 20 June 1936, P13, Col 5, Findmypast*
- ^{xiv} *Cheshire County Training College, Crewe, Prospectus 1908-1914, Unpublished data, under the care of the Family History Society of Cheshire, Crewe*
- ^{xv} 1911 census
- ^{xvi} *Teachers and Salaries in the Nantwich Union Area, The Chronicle, 15 July 1911, P8, Col 4, Findmypast*
- ^{xvii} TNA naval record William Arthur Jones The National Archives' reference BT 377/7/127347
- ^{xviii} *Teachers Registration Council Registers 1914 – 1948, Wallasey, Cheshire, Findmypast, Ruth Jones, 1920, Original source: Society of Genealogists.*
- ^{xix} *1921 census of England and Wales, Findmypast, Registration District Corwyn, Registration District Number 625, Archive Series RG 15, Piece Number 27769, Schedule Number 39, Edith Jones and Ruth Jones.*
- ^{xx} *1908-1929, Souvenir of the 21st Anniversary, CCTCC, Unpublished data, under the care of the Family History Society of Cheshire, Crewe*