

This is A Few Forgotten Women Story



This story was written, in March 2023, as one of a series resulting from 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.

Annie Norris's Story

Annie Foley was born in 1852, the daughter of James Foley and Elizabeth Finn. She married Henry Norris on September 20, 1875, in London, England. She died on April 24, 1907, at the age of 55.

On the 20th of June 1862 Annie (aged 8 years old) was admitted to the workhouse with her mother Elizabeth (aged 27 years) and her siblings Daniel (aged 7 years) and Mary (aged 6 weeks). Her mother is listed as having abscesses and is suckling Mary. The family are admitted under the grounds that they are destitute. The father is not listed, he is shown as having deserted them.

Annie's mother Elizabeth did remarry on 27 September 1869 to Simon Gibbons and had 2 more children, Daniel is shown to be living with his mother and step brother and sister in the 1881 census. Daniel died in 1897. Annie's father James is believed to have died 5 June 1869.

On the 20th June 1863 Annie was arrested and charged with simple larceny. She was sentenced to 4 months prison (Anon., 1864).

24th March 1873 Annie was again in front of the court, Annie was sentenced to 6 months imprisonment for simple larceny, she was going under the name Ann Foley.

Once again in 1873 Annie was arrested, this time she was charged in the Old Bailey. Annie was arrested alongside 3 other women and 2 men charged with attempting to conceal a birth. All parties were found not guilty. Annie was in prison at this time but was transported to attend.

27th July 1874 and Annie was back in front of the judge, Annie was working as a laundress when she was acquitted from the charge of larceny from a person receiving. The case stated Annie was accused of stealing a watch and chain and the sum of £3 10shillings from Michael Callaghan. J.T.Ingham was the arresting police constable.

Annie is shown to have married Henry Norris on 20 September 1875 in Stepney, London. Very little can be found of her husband.

From the 16th to the 21st June 1879 Annie admitted herself to the London Workhouse

22nd October 1879 and Annie was once again in front of the Clerkenwell Courts, she was arrested 22 October 1879 before being sent to trial 10 November 1879

Annie was accused of stealing a pair of boots , the property of John Black and a shirt and shawl, property of Edwin Read. Charged with larceny and receiving after previous conviction. Served 10 months in Westminster Prison but remained on licence for 3 years.

The 11th January 1882 and Annie was back in her old haunt of the Magistrates courts. The records show Annie had a habit of changing her name to avoid her past catching up to her.

Annie was admitted to Hoxton Asylum 10 January 1890 but was discharged recovered 21st June 1890.

Annie was once again admitted to Hoxton Asylum on 27 Mar 1894 discharged 28 Oct 1895, marked as recovered.

In 1899 Annie was in the Westminster Union Workhouse, she was transferred to the infirmary on 22 July 1898 before being transferred to Cleveland Street Sick Asylum.

The 1901 census shows Annie living in St. Joseph's Inebriate Reformatory, Ashford, Middlesex

Annie Norris	do	Wid	49	do	do	do	do	Sonsie House
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The census shows Annie as a widow aged 49 years old, she is working as a laundress in the institution. (Census, n.d.)

Annie went under a number of different names over the years. The Calendar of Prisoners shows her as:

Ann Foley 1872, 1873. Annie Foley 1878, Ann Norris 1879 and the Ellen Norris

Annie is shown as passing away 24 April 1907 in the Horton Institute, Middlesex aged just 55 years old.



Horton Asylum (Horton Hospital) was the seventh London Borough Asylum to be built, and the second hospital in the Epsom Cluster. It was founded in 1899

and it opened its doors to patients in 1902. It was designed by G.T. Hine in the compact arrow plan and it was essentially a replica of the Bexley Asylum. It was closed in 1997 and has since been converted to a housing estate with various buildings being preserved.

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Sources

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Class: HO 27; Piece: 138; Page: 215

Year: 1864

England & Wales, Criminal Registers, 1791-1892

National Archives

The National Archives; Kew, London, England; HO 140 Home Office: Calendar of Prisoners; Reference: HO 140/47

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St. Joseph's Inebriate Reformatory, Ashford, Middlesex RG13 1171 folios 12-13
<https://www.thetimechamber.co.uk/beta/sites/asylums/london-county-asylum-horton>

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