

This is A Few Forgotten Women Story



This story was written, in April 2024, as one of a series resulting from the 'A Few Forgotten Women Friday' collaborative research project, investigating the lives of women staff and female patients associated with the Fleming Memorial Children's Hospital, Jesmond, Northumberland.

Lilian Bells's Story

Lilian Bell was born in 1890 in Newcastle to William Smith Bell and Ursula Barlow.

William and Ursula appear on the 1891 Census¹ but Lilian does not appear on the census with them as she is in Fleming Memorial Children's Hospital. The family is living at 20 Duke Street, Westgate, Newcastle Upon Tyne. William and Ursula had one son living with them called William S Bell who was listed as being 3 years old and a daughter named Eleanor aged 2.

William Smith Bell and Ursula Barlow married in Gateshead in 1887²

Lilian appears back with them on the 1901 Census³ at 16 Pallister Street, South Shields with William S Bell aged 36 and he was a Hairdresser born in Newcastle, and Ursula was born in Northumberland. They had 6 children at

¹ www.ancestry.co.uk William Smith Bell, 1891 Census RG12/4192 Folio 125 Pg 30

² www.ancestry.co.uk William Smith Bell Marriage Record, 1st Q Gateshead Vol 10a Pg 899

³ www.ancestry.co.uk Lilian Bell 1901 Census RG13/4733 Pg 30 Folio 139

this point Lilian and her brothers William, Harry and Lancelot and her sisters Eleanor and Alice.

The family then appear on the 1911 Census in 8 Maxwell Street, South Shields
Lilian's father William Smith Bell had died by then and her mother was listed as a widow. He died in 1903 at the age of only 38.⁴

Lilian was living with her sisters Eleanor and Alice and her brothers Henry and Lancelot and was listed as being a Domestic Servant. It is crossed out but says that William and Ursula were married 25 years and had 9 children, 6 living and 3 that had died.

Lilian married on 18th September 1912 at St Hilda's Church⁵, South Shields to Thomas Arthur Birkett.

She had a daughter Edith L Birkett who was born in 1913⁶ and who sadly died in the same quarter in 1913⁷

Lilian sadly died herself on 13th December 1913⁸ at 6 Broderick Street, South Shields of Cardiac Vascular disease and her husband Thomas Arthur Birkett was the informant.

⁴ www.ancestry.co.uk William Smith Bell, Death Record, 1st Q South Shields Vol 10a Pg 472

⁵ www.ancestry.co.uk Lilian Bell England, Select Marriages, 1538-1973

⁶ www.freebmd.org.uk Edith Birkett Birth Record 2nd Q 1913 South Shields Vol 10a Pg 1734

⁷ www.freebmd.org.uk Edith Birkett Death Record 2nd Q 1913 South Shields Vol 10a Pg 880

⁸ www.gro.gov.uk Lilian Bell 4th Q 1913 South Shields Vol 10a Pg 909