

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.

Margery Sample's Story

Margery Sample was born on March 17, 1889 to Thomas Sample and Jane Sample nee Cooper in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Northumberland.¹ The Sample's address was 21 St. Nicholas The Churchyard. It aptly described the location of their home directly behind St. Nicholas Church which became Newcastle Cathedral in 1882.² Margery was baptized just over a year later in the Cathedral on March 26, 1890.³

¹ Birth Certificate Margery Sample, 1889 Apr-May-June Newcastle-upon-Tyne Vol. 10b Page 93, Digital Image, General Record Office. Her birth certificate noted that while she was born in March her birth was not registered until April 11, 1889.

² www.google.com/maps; newcastlecathedral.org.uk

³ England, Select Births and Christenings, 1538-1975, FHL Film Number 1068903

In the 1891 Census, Margery was found as a patient in the Fleming Children's Hospital in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. She was recorded as a being a year old when in fact she was two years old.⁴ There was no evidence to indicate what her ailment was or how long she stayed in the hospital. At the same time, her family was found in the 1891 Census still living at 21 St. Nicholas The Churchyard. Her father Thomas was thirty-seven and employed as a holder on to riveter. Margery's mother Jane was thirty-one. It was discovered here that Margery had a sibling Alice who was seven years old and in school.⁵

Seven years later, Margery's father Thomas died. He died on May 12, 1898 at age forty-four. His death certificate indicated he died of cardiac disease and dropsy. Thomas' occupation was recorded as holder on in a shipyard. The family was now living at 22 St. Nicholas The Churchyard. Present at his death was his sister Ursula Dean.⁶

While Margery may have attended school prior to her father's death, there were only records showing attendance afterwards. On September 11, 1899 at the age of ten, her widowed mother Jane registered her at Choppington Colliery School in Choppington, Northumberland. Margery was registered using an alternate form of her name that being Madge. She was not there long and was removed on October 20, 1899 due to a move to another community.⁷ On November 20th of that year, she began attending Ashington New Hirst Girls School in Hirst,

⁴ 1891 Census of England RG12; Piece 4219; Folio 75

⁵ 1891 Census of England RG12; Piece 4208; Folio 22

⁶ Death Certificate Thomas Sample, 1898 Apr-May-June Newcastle-upon-Tyne Vol. 10b Page 72, Digital Image, General Record Office

⁷ National School Admission Records and Log-Books 1870-1914, Northumberland Archives Woodhorn, Ref. CES_97_3_1

Northumberland. Her address was recorded as 39 Clyde Street in Hirst. She attended that school until she was removed on December 4, 1900.⁸

In the 1901 Census, Margery (going by Madge) and her widowed mother Jane were in Morpeth, Northumberland. Jane was living in the household of widower Robert Welsh a coal miner along with his seventeen year-old stepson John Donald a coal mine putter. Jane's relationship to Robert as the head of the household was servant with her occupation being described as housekeeper. Margery was recorded as being a servant's daughter with no indication she attended school. Margery's seventeen year old sister Alice also lived in Morpeth but was in another household employed as a servant.⁹

In the 1911 Census, Margery (going by Madge) was found now living back in Hirst, Northumberland with her father's sister Ursula Dean who was the person recorded as being present at Thomas Sample's death. Margery was living in a coal mining family. Ursula's husband and son worked in the coal mines. Margery was now twenty-two years old, single and recorded as being at home. The address was 59 Clyde Street not far from where Margery lived while attending school in Hirst in 1900.¹⁰

Margery's mother Jane was found in the 1911 Census still widowed and living in Hamsterley Colliery, Ebchester, Durham in the household of coal miner and widower William Morpeth with his three sons. Her relationship to William as head of the household was servant and she was recorded as a housekeeper. On

⁸ National School Admission Records and Log-Books 1870-1914, Northumberland Archives, Woodhorn, Ref. CES_21_3_4

⁹ 1901 Census of England RG 13; Piece 4382; Folio 5

¹⁰ 1911 Census of England RG 14; Piece 31046; Schedule 28

first appearances, Jane now had another daughter Jane Sample age nine and born at Felling, Durham. This child Jane was recorded as the housekeeper's daughter.¹¹ However, the birth certificate of the child Jane Sample revealed that she was in fact the daughter of Margery's sister Alice Sample. Alice gave birth to Jane on January 21, 1902. Alice was recorded on the certificate as being a general domestic servant. There was no father named on the birth certificate.¹²

On December 31, 1911, Margery's mother Jane died. Her death certificate revealed that she died of heart disease in the Morpeth Workhouse, Northumberland. Jane was described as the widow of Thomas Sample a ship riveter of 21 St. Nicholas The Churchyard, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.¹³ Present at her death was her daughter Alice Ford whose address was in Hirst, Northumberland. Alice Sample had married Peter Ford in 1906.¹⁴ It was likely upon the death of her mother, or prior to it, that Alice took in her daughter Jane. Jane was found in the 1921 Census as a general servant in a Northumberland household identifying herself as Jane Ford born in Felling, Durham.¹⁵

On September 13, 1912, Margery Sample died. Her death certificate revealed that like her parents she succumbed to heart disease. She was only twenty-three years old. Margery was described on her death certificate as the spinster daughter of Thomas Sample. She was still living in Hirst, Northumberland and

¹¹ 1911 Census of England RG14 ; Piece 4832; Schedule 237

¹² Birth Certificate Jane Sample, 1902 Jan-Feb-Mar Gateshead, Durham 10a Page 959, Digital Image, General Record Office

¹³ Death Certificate Jane Sample, 1911 Jan-Feb-Mar Morpeth, Northumberland Vol. 10b Page 486, Digital Image, General Record Office

¹⁴ England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1837-1915, Volume 10b, Page 744

¹⁵ 1921 Census of England RG15; Piece 25752; Schedule 11

very likely with the Dean family. Present at her death was her cousin Mary Dean.¹⁶

Margery Sample was not forgotten by her sister Alice. In 1914, Alice gave birth to a girl she named Marjory Alice.¹⁷

Allison Howard

¹⁶ Death Certificate Margery Sample, 1912 Jul-Aug-Sep Morpeth, Northumberland Vol. 10b Page 439, Digital Image, General Record Office

¹⁷ England and Wales Births 1837-2006, Vol.10b, Page 994