

# The First Women Admitted to the Inns of Court between 1919 and 1929: Diversity, Networks and Untold Stories

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For the award of Doctor of Philosophy Institute of Business, Law & Society  
St Mary's University, London

August 2024

Word count: 99,987

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### **Declaration of Originality**

This thesis and the work to which it refers are the results of my own efforts. Any ideas, data or text resulting from the work of others (whether published or unpublished) are fully identified as such within the work and attributed to the originator in the text, bibliography or footnotes.

This thesis has not been submitted in whole or in part for any other academic degree or professional qualification at this or any other institution.

## **Abstract**

This thesis examines the stories and achievements of the 236 women admitted to the Inns of Court between 1919 and 1929. It draws on two methodologies: digital research and collective biography. Through statistical analysis, it compares the number of men and women admitted and called to the Bar to identify trends in admissions and calls, and to understand diversity in terms of sex. It then focuses on the attributes of the first women at the Inns of Court to explore the diversity between them. Through this analysis, we can better understand the composition of the Inns of Court between 1919 and 1929 and identify that there was not much diversity in terms of educational and family background: most were university-educated and from middle-class backgrounds; however, there was some diversity in terms of age compared to men.

Through collective biography, this research tells the untold stories of the uncalled (but not necessarily unfulfilled) and international women at the Inns of Court between 1919 and 1929, thus significantly extending the historical record of the first women barristers. It identifies the potential reasons these women were not called to the Bar, finding that there was variation in terms of professional motivations and ideas. In addition to this, it identifies the international women at the Inns of Court and finds that, at the point of admission, the Inns of Court appear to have been ethnically diverse when compared with more recent diversity data, but that this diversity significantly declined at the practising Bar. Finally, this research identifies the number of women who may have practised at the Bar, and the interactions and connections they had with each other. It finds that sex and ethnic diversity significantly diminished at the practising Bar and women remained a minority. Nevertheless, although marginalised, there was some kind of solidarity among the few women barristers through their professional and social connections and networks. Identifying these connections and networks presents a more holistic and perhaps positive picture of the first women barristers.

## **Dedication**

I dedicate this thesis to my children: Loui, Chantelle, Lincoln and Lucie, and stepchildren: Louisa and Lavigne: never limit your own potential because of what other people think. You will be amazed at what you can achieve if you set your mind to it, so always try.

## **Acknowledgement**

My heartfelt thanks to my supervisory team: Professor Judith Bourne, Mark Donnelly and Charles Little. You gave me confidence in my research and encouragement to continue and persevere. Special thanks to Professor Judith Bourne who encouraged me to pursue this research in the first place and gave me confidence in myself and my research.

I would like to thank the archivists at Middle Temple, Inner Temple, Lincoln's Inn and Gray's Inn. They were incredibly helpful and provided me with much needed evidence and information. Thanks also to the University Archivists who were equally helpful, prompt and enlightening. The job of an archivist should not be underestimated and is essential in historical research.

My deepest gratitude goes to my parents and my brother for all their years of unwavering support, love and encouragement; each in their own way. My parents allowed me the freedom to pursue my own passions and find myself. Special thanks to my Mum for all the babysitting and playing with my children - no easy feat!

Mention must go to my best friend and partner, Dr Adrian Ho Yin Leung, who acted not only as a support network, giving me encouragement (Jiayou) but also as an unofficial supervisor, giving me guidance and listening to my many questions and conundrums. Thanks for your patience, dedication and love. I'm glad I took this journey with you; you have helped me emotionally, academically and practically. I'm forever grateful and look forward to more, precious family time.

Finally, thanks to my four children (and two stepchildren) for keeping me motivated, and for making everything worthwhile. Remember to work hard, achieve your dreams and be happy.

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# Introduction

*'Historians have become increasingly interested in the kaleidoscopic nature of the materials of history, a multitude of fragments, forming patterns that shift with the moment of the viewer. A shake of the kaleidoscope and different aspects of the historical pattern may move to the fore, altering our view of the relationship between the parts.'*<sup>1</sup>

Scholarly, professional and public understanding about the first women barristers has come a long way since its popularisation in 2019; a flurry of material was published to mark and celebrate the centenary of the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act 1919. However, this great story is far from complete. Several of the first women barristers' stories are known but there were 236 women admitted to the Inns of Court during this period and 174 of them were called to the Bar. A significant number of women are absent, at worst neglected, from the historical record. Some of these women were pioneers, blazing a trail for future women barristers; others had no intention of practising. However, all of them deserve to be remembered within the legal historical community and beyond because it is on their efforts that women practise law today. This thesis attempts to fill many of the gaps in the historical record by identifying the 236 women admitted to the Inns of Court between 1919 and 1929 and to extend our understanding of the Bar during this period. By exploring the beginnings of diversity in terms of sex at the Inns of Court in the context of these first women, it also reveals and furthers our understanding of, ethnic diversity at the Bar during this time.

This research has two aims centred around the theme of diversity. Firstly, through statistical analysis, it seeks to identify and explore diversity at the Inns of Court during this 10-year period by comparing the admission, call rates and Bar exams of men and women to understand the similarities and differences between them. The spotlight then centres on the 236 women at the Inns of Court, comparing their attributes to better understand diversity in respect of age,

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<sup>1</sup> Holton, Sandra Stanley. *Suffrage Days: Stories from the Women's Suffrage Movement*. (New York: Routledge. 1996).

education, social and marital status. Secondly, through collective biography, this research uncovers the stories of some of the unknown and lesser-known women at the Inns of Court. It gives focus to the 'international' and 'uncalled' women, revealing ethnic diversity and variety in terms of ambitions, and the impact of the social expectations of the time. This research concludes with a consideration of diversity in terms of sex and ethnicity at the practising Bar and identifies the professional and social connections of the first women barristers. This analysis will help us understand if the practising Bar was diverse and to what extent, if any, the first women barristers were connected. This research draws on both qualitative and quantitative data and employs a digital research and collective biography methodology.

## Historical Context

Legal historical research has chronicled women's relentless battles to gain entry to the legal profession.<sup>2</sup> As early as 1870, women are documented as having lobbied the government and the legal profession to gain access to legal education.<sup>3</sup> Later in the early 1900s, a string of petitions were filed for the right to be admitted to the Bar. In 1903, Bertha Cave<sup>4</sup> and Agnes Metcalfe<sup>5</sup> applied to Gray's Inn; both applications were declined. A few months later, in January 1904,

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<sup>2</sup> Bourne, Judith, *Helena Normanton and the Opening of the Bar to Women* (United Kingdom: Waterside Press, 2016); Bourne, Judith and Morris, Caroline, 'Introducing Challenging Women', *Women's History Review* 29, no. 4 (6 June 2020): 549–54; Coleman, Charlotte, 'Thwarted Ambitions: The Biography of Auvergne Doherty, an Aspiring Female Barrister', *Women's History Review* 29, no. 4 (6 June 2020): 650–70.

<sup>3</sup> In 1873, Maria Grey, educationist and writer who had wide feminist interests, organised a petition, signed by ninety-two women, to attend lectures arranged by the Council of Legal Education (The CLE, was entrusted with the power and duty of supervising the education and examination of students who had been admitted to the Inns). See: Levine, Philippa. 'Grey, Mrs. Maria Georgina, Whose Maiden Name Was Shirreff (1816–1906)'. In the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. 23 September 2004. Accessed: 12 November 2024. <https://doi.org/10.1093/odnb/9780192683120.013.33571>.

<sup>4</sup> Bourne, Judith. 2020. "The Vanishing Act of Miss Bertha Cave." Gray, 2020; Bourne, Judith. 2023. "Great Expectations and Hard Times:- The Advent of the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act 1919 and Women's Entry to the Legal Profession." *Women's History Review* 32 (6): 793–808; Bourne, Judith. 2018. "Cave [Married Name Altof], Bertha." *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 8 November 2018. <https://doi.org/10.1093/odnb/9780198614128.013.111931>.

<sup>5</sup> Agnes Edith Metcalfe (1870–1923) obtained an external London Bachelor of Science degree in 1892 from Cheltenham Ladies' College; she took up a career as a schoolteacher. She wrote on women's suffrage issues including *Women's Effort: A Chronicle of British Women's Fifty Years' Struggle for Citizenship (1865–1914)*, published in 1917, *Women, A Citizen* published in 1918 and *At Last: Conclusion of Women's Effort* in 1919. See Mussell, Andrew, 'Agnes Metcalfe', Gray's Inn, August 2017, <https://www.graysinn.org.uk/the-inn/history/women-of-the-inn/agnes-metcalfe/>.

Christabel Pankhurst<sup>6</sup> applied to Lincoln's Inn but again, her application was rejected.<sup>7</sup> Around the same time, the Committee for the Admission of Women to the Legal Profession was founded. It lobbied for women's access to the professions.<sup>8</sup> Membership of this group included prominent feminists such as Ray Strachey,<sup>9</sup> Gwyneth Bebb,<sup>10</sup> Crystal Macmillan,<sup>11</sup> Helena Normanton<sup>12</sup> and Nancy Nettlefold.<sup>13</sup> In 1918, just before women could legally enter the profession, Helena Normanton applied to join Middle Temple and was rejected.<sup>14</sup> Eventually, the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act was passed on 23 December 1919 enabling women to enter professions, including the legal profession. For the first time, a woman could formally be admitted to one of the four Inns of Court and could become a barrister.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Purvis, June. "Pankhurst, Dame Christabel Harriette (1880–1958), suffragette." *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. 23 Sep. 2004; Accessed 21 Aug. 2024. <https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-35375>.

<sup>7</sup> Gosling, Daniel F., 'Women: The Beginnings', Gray's Inn, 23 June 2017, <https://www.graysinn.org.uk/the-inn/history/women-of-the-inn/women-the-beginnings/>.

<sup>8</sup> Bourne, *Helena Normanton and the Opening of the Bar to Women.*, p.44. Bourne notes that it is possible that this was an extension of the Promotion of Legal Education for Women, which was set up in 1878, which also made some efforts for women to gain access to the profession.

<sup>9</sup> Ray Strachey was an author, journalist, political campaigner and suffragist. After the vote was won, Ray spent the 1920s and 1930s campaigning for an extension of women's professional employment and for equal pay. She fought particularly for women's admission to the legal profession and to the civil service. Caine, Barbara, 'Strachey [née Costelloe], Rachel Pearsall Conn', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 19 May 2011, Accessed: 12 November 2024, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/38017>.

<sup>10</sup> Gwyneth Bebb was one of the first women to be awarded a degree in law at Oxford, the first to achieve first-class honours, and a pioneer for women entering the legal profession. Auchmuty, Rosemary, 'Bebb [married Name Thomson], Gwyneth Marjory', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 19 May 2011, Accessed: 12 November 2024, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/101944>.

<sup>11</sup> Chrystal Macmillan was a suffragist, peace activist, barrister, feminist. Oldfield, Sybil, 'Macmillan, (Jessie) Chrystal', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 23 September 2004, Accessed: 12 November 2024, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/38526>.

<sup>12</sup> Helena Normanton, feminist campaigner and barrister. Workman, Joanne, 'Normanton, Helena Florence', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 22 September 2011, Accessed: 12 November 2024, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/39091>.

<sup>13</sup> Nancy Nettlefold dedicated her life to social justice and made key contributions to the cause of equal pay and the anti-apartheid movement; she began to qualify as a lawyer but eventually abandoned this. Auchmuty, 'Bebb [married Name Thomson], Gwyneth Marjory'.

<sup>14</sup> For example, in 1903 Bertha Cave and Agnes Metcalfe applied to Gray's Inn but these were declined. A few months later, in January 1904, Christabel Pankhurst applied to Lincoln's Inn, but this was again rejected. In 1918 she filed a petition to join Middle Temple, but this was refused. Bourne, *Helena Normanton and the Opening of the Bar to Women*.

<sup>15</sup> Takayanagi, Mari Catherine, 'Parliament and Women, c. 1900-1945' (Unpublished PhD thesis, King's College London, 2012).

Some historians have found that the Act was ineffective or did not go far enough for women; it still included the marriage bar, meaning women had to cease work upon marriage, and so did not give full emancipation.<sup>16</sup> Women who worked in the Civil Service, the teaching profession and female employees (including doctors) of local authorities had to give up their job upon marriage no matter how competent they were.<sup>17</sup> In this way, the marriage bar was a thorn in the side of women's professional progress.<sup>18</sup> In professions such as law, engineering and architecture, there was no marriage bar and women could not therefore be forced to cease working; however, perceptions in society, that women should prioritise the family, still remained. Martin Pugh sees the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act as a 'broken reed', meaning that it was ineffectual due to the presence of the marriage bar.<sup>19</sup> Mari Takayanagi, who has also researched the Act, understands it differently; she argues that it was a significant achievement for its time given that it was introduced when the country was undergoing extraordinary political, social and economic change as a result of the First World War (1914 - 1918).<sup>20</sup> Judith Bourne also sees the consequence of the Act as a positive for women in the sense that they were given formal equality in the legal profession (but not substantive equality). She draws attention to the notion of 'competition' as being 'the only explanation' for resisting women in the legal profession due to a fear of too many women applicants.<sup>21</sup> Despite Lord Buckmaster, MP and later Lord Chancellor,<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> For example, Meta Zimmeck, social historian, has researched the employment of women in the British civil service found that the Act was a 'dead letter': Zimmeck, Meta, 'Strategies and Stratagems for the Employment of Women in the British Civil Service, 1919–1939', *The Historical Journal*, 1984, <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/historical-journal/article/strategies-and-stratagems-for-the-employment-of-women-in-the-british-civil-service-19191939/C675FE02BDC54443443B697B5BC9AC45>.; Martin Pugh who has extensively surveyed the rhetoric and activity of the Women's Movement in Britain since 1914 found it to be a 'broken reed': Pugh, Martin, *Women and Women's Movement in Britain, 1914-1959* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1992), p.72.

<sup>17</sup> Jane Robinson clarifies that only salary earners (those paid annually) were affected by the marriage bar; wage earners (those paid hourly) could still continue such as resident medical officers in hospitals and ministers of churches: Robinson, Jane. *Ladies Can't Climb Ladders: The Pioneering Adventures of the First Professional Women*. (United Kingdom: Random House, 2020.), p. 212/218.

<sup>18</sup> This is to borrow Aliso Oram's phrase 'a thorn in the side of women's organisations. Oram, Alison, *Women Teachers and Feminist Politics 1900-29*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996).

<sup>19</sup> Pugh, Martin. *Women and the Women's Movement in Britain, 1914-1959*.

<sup>20</sup> Takayanagi, 'Parliament and Women, c.1900-1945'.

<sup>21</sup> Bourne analysed newspaper reports at the time of the passing of the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act 1919 see: Bourne, Judith, 'Great Expectations and Hard Times:- the Advent of the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act 1919 and Women's Entry to the Legal Profession', *Women's History Review* 32, no. 6 (19 September 2023): 793–808.p.6.

<sup>22</sup> Lord Buckmaster introduced two bills to parliament that would open up the legal profession to women (both of these were replaced by the Sex (Disqualification) Removal Act. Goodhart, William, 'Buckmaster,

assuring the Lords that admitting women would give them an opportunity to earn a living and would not 'flood' the legal profession with women, it appears that many newspapers alluded to a general fear that men would be 'pushed out of their jobs by women'.<sup>23</sup>

It is clear from the above that the social circumstances surrounding the Act as well as the Act itself were contentious. On the one hand, the Act enabled professional progress for women, giving them access to higher-level professions, such as law, that had previously been dominated by, or exclusively available to, men. Despite previous resistance to women's entry to the Inns of Court (such as the refused by women such as Pankhurst and Bebb) and fear of further competition at the already crowded, relatively geographically small, Inns of Court,<sup>24</sup> women could now become barristers. This legal change was progress for some, and did indeed represent the start of diversity in terms of sex at the Bar. However, in the broader picture the Act did not go far enough to assist all professional women such as those in the Civil Service and in teaching.

Ren Pepitone draws out an important theoretical consideration. She suggests that the Act was ineffective because women: instead, they had to become like honorary men and 'deliberately de-emphasized their femininity to accord with the Inns of Court's masculine culture'.<sup>25</sup> In addition to this, she found that the Inns used the customary use of dining halls, offices and lavatories as both excuses and devices for marginalising women. These facilities were not made to suit, or did not cater to, women's needs or requirements.<sup>26</sup> Indeed, one newspaper reported that 'anyone who is intimately acquainted with the dining arrangements at the four Inns of Court will recognise the difficulties attending the unconditional admission of women'.<sup>27</sup> There are two important

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Stanley Owen, First Viscount Buckmaster', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 23 September 2004, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/32159>. Accessed: 10 December 2024.

<sup>23</sup> Bourne, 'Great Expectations and Hard Times:- the Advent of the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act 1919 and Women's Entry to the Legal Profession'.; 'Lady Lawyers', *Belfast News-Letter*, 12 March 1919, p.5.

<sup>24</sup> Duman notes that many men who entered the Inns of Court would not practice as barristers as there was not the capacity for more barristers and the field was already overcrowded. Duman, Daniel, *The English and Colonial Bars in the Nineteenth Century*, (Beckenham: Croom Helm Ltd, 1983).

<sup>25</sup> Ren Pepitone, 'Gender, Space, and Ritual: Women Barristers, the Inns of Court, and the Interwar Press', *Journal of Women's History* 28, no. 1 (2016): 60–83.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> The Penrith Observer. 'Women Lawyers and the Inns'. 1 April 1919., p. 6.

factors to consider here: the first is gender and women entering the male spaces of the Inns of Court. The second is the history, composition and autonomy of the Inns to essentially control its members and their experiences. These will be reviewed in turn.

Gender debates within the legal profession have tended to centre on the notion that the first women barristers entered a profession created by men, for men - it was not legally or practically neutral, it was masculine.<sup>28</sup> Women barristers could not, therefore, frame their entry to the Bar as an extension of the feminine sphere, as had been done by early women doctors.<sup>29</sup> Mossman has argued that many early women lawyers embraced this idea of the profession treating everyone.<sup>30</sup> This suggests that some women did not perceive that they were entering a male-constructed space where the odds were already stacked against them. While this may be accurate for some women, Noakes has argued that 'publicly women barristers may have insisted on law's neutrality, private sentiments may have differed'.<sup>31</sup> Noakes cites the example of Elsie Bowerman, admitted to Middle Temple in 1921 and called in 1924, who understood the distinction between 'men barristers' and 'women' illustrating that she saw that this gendered component existed. In this sense, Bowerman challenged the male exclusiveness of the profession by her presence and, as an activist, was able to use her legal knowledge to expose the legal inequalities of ordinary women.<sup>32</sup> The idea that women publicly conformed with the status quo while privately understood their legal, social and practical position at the Inns of Court, Bar and wider society can be seen in other instances.

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<sup>28</sup> Mossman, Mary Jane, 'Gender and Professionalism in Law: The Challenge of (Women's) Biography', Windsor Yearbook of Access to Justice, 27.1 (2009); Sommerlad Hilary and Sanderson, Peter. *Gender, Choice and Commitment*. (Aldershot: Ashgate/Dartmouth, 1998); It has been argued that this attitude remained prevalent long after the first women barristers retired: Corcos, Christine Alice, 'Portia Goes to Parliament: Women and Their Admission to Membership in the English Legal Profession', Denver University Law Review, 75.2 (1998), 307-417; See Margaret Thornton, *Dissonance and Distrust: Women in the Legal Profession*. (Melbourne: Oxford University Press. 1996) for further discussion around the idea of law equalling neutrality.

<sup>29</sup> Blake, Catriona, *The Charge of the Parasols: Women's Entry to the Medical Profession*, (London, The Women's Press, 1990).

<sup>30</sup> Mossman, 'Gender and Professionalism in Law: The Challenge of (Women's) Biography'.

<sup>31</sup> Noakes, Laura. *Chrystal MacMillan and Elsie Bowerman: First Women Barristers' Negotiation of Professional and Political Identities*. (Unpublished PhD Thesis, The Open University, 2021). <https://doi.org/10.21954/ou.ro.00012e19>, p.236.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

Helena Normanton, admitted to Middle Temple in 1919 and called in 1922, continued her activist work to benefit women in society and welcomed women to her chambers.<sup>33</sup> So while, professionally, she conformed with the status quo, she privately pursued her own feminist interests. Enid Rosser, admitted to Lincoln's Inn in 1922 and called in 1927, noted that 'those women who have succeeded in the profession have quietly got there by their competence and their fitting in with the traditions of the profession and not by publicity or demanding recognition.'<sup>34</sup> Here, Enid Rosser is making clear her understanding that women had to conform with the status quo of the legal profession. Privately though, she did not appear to conform as she deliberately delayed her marriage to retain her independence.<sup>35</sup> This can be seen as a reflection of her awareness of women's role in the profession and society. Another example is Venetia Stephenson, admitted to Gray's Inn in 1922 and called 1924. In Robina Stevenson's obituary, Venetia Stephenson wrote that:

*'Robina's gratitude at being admitted to the various activities of the Inn instead of demanding them as of right paved the way for the happy relationship between the sexes at Gray's which has always been maintained since those early days of our admittance to the Society'.<sup>36</sup>*

This evidence suggests that Venetia Stephenson and other women knew they had to conform with the status quo to get ahead. However, privately, they understood that the Inns of Court were 'male institutions'. Venetia Stephenson states:

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<sup>33</sup> Noakes, 'Chrystal MacMillan and Elsie Bowerman: First Women Barristers' Negotiation of Professional and Political Identities'; Bourne, Judith, *Helena Normanton and the Opening of the Bar to Women*.

<sup>34</sup> 'Papers of Enid Rosser Locket (1899-1980)'. (London), LOCKET, London School of Economics, Women's Library, p. 264.

<sup>35</sup> See Chapter 2; Locket, Enid, *Ramblings: The Story of Enid Rosser* (unpublished typescript in Women's Library collection, LSW Library, LOCKET).

<sup>36</sup> Robina Stevens was admitted to Gray's Inn in 1920 and called in 1924, but she died in a riding accident. Stephenson, Venita Mary Josephine. 1951. "In Memoriam: Mary Robina Bowles (Robina Stevens).", *Graya*, p.14-15.



*'When Robina joined, she was one of three women members, and by the time she was called there were still barely a dozen of us. She came straight from Cheltenham – a mere schoolgirl breaking tradition by joining this purely male institution....'*<sup>37</sup>

Venetia Stephenson not only explicitly stated her awareness but also emphasised the difference between men and women (like Elsie Bowerman) through the pronouns of 'us' and 'our' when referring to women (implying that men are the 'other'). Yet she understood that women could not challenge this male space when she stated that Robina Stevens did not demand inclusion 'as a right' but showed 'gratitude' at being included, which led to a 'happy relationship between the sexes'.<sup>38</sup> Conformity, not challenge, was therefore the *modus operandi* for most women barristers in a professional sense, while privately this was not the case. As will be discussed further in Chapter 5, while working as a barrister, Venetia Stephenson was part of the 'Feminist Brains Trust's panel at the Women's Freedom League conference'.<sup>39</sup> This illustrates that she was privately involved in feminist activities. Indeed, that many of the first women barristers were interested in and engaged with feminist issues while practising as barristers, and took part in events such as the International Suffrage Congress in 1923 and the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations of women being called to the Bar.<sup>40</sup> In this sense, women did not go into the Inns of Court blind, unaware of the structural disadvantage they would face as outsiders; on the contrary, they knew their position. This did not stop them taking small steps to set the foundations for future women lawyers.

A brief history of the Inns of Court will now be considered. The Honourable Societies of Inner Temple, Middle Temple, Lincoln's Inn and Gray's Inn were based in central London; the two Temples were near the Thames while Lincoln's Inn was located near Chancery Lane, and Gray's Inn was near Holborn. Originally, they were a place to reside (like an inn) for students and

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<sup>37</sup> Stephenson, Venita Mary Josephine. 1951. "In Memoriam: Mary Robina Bowles (Robina Stevens).", *Graya*, p.14.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> This is explored further in Chapter 5. Venetia Stephenson was at this event with Constance Colwill, another woman barrister: International Women's News, 'At Home and Abroad: Women's Freedom League', 3 July 1942, 187–88.

<sup>40</sup> Discussed further in Chapter 5. For example, the 25th Anniversary of Women being allowed to be called to the Bar (organised by Helena Normanton): The Daily Mirror, 'A Champagne Night at the Old Bailey.' 19 December 1947., page number unknown but see Appendix C.

apprentices. Now they have the primary function of regulating the admission, call and behaviour of law students and barristers.<sup>41</sup> From their 14<sup>th</sup> century origins to around the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Inns of Court were for the sons of the aristocracy; they either became barristers or, more typically, saw the Inns of Court as a sort of finishing school where they could gain some knowledge of the law which they could use to further their career in another area such as politics. By the 17<sup>th</sup> century, sons of the gentry had given way to the middle classes who became wealthier due to commercial and industrial booms. Some saw the Inns of Court as a way of becoming a professional, rather than a tradesman, perhaps benefiting from the career opportunities and networks at the Bar.<sup>42</sup> The Inns of Court were, and still are, independent bodies regulated by custom and standing order.<sup>43</sup> This meant they could set their admission requirements and legal training customs. Pepitone and Abel understand that Inns of Court wanted to control who they admitted and took steps such as introducing fees and prohibiting members to trade (earn money) during their legal training.<sup>44</sup> These steps would mean that the Bar was only open to men, and later women, who were wealthy enough to afford it.

One of the requirements for admission to the Inns of Court was completing the Admission Form upon which the father's profession was listed. This appeared to be unique to the Bar as the father's occupation was not required for those wishing to become solicitors.<sup>45</sup> Able understands this requirement essentially shaped the demographic of the Bar. Indeed, the Inns of Court expressed the fear that the standing of the Bar might be diminished by the entrance of lower classes who could surmount the minimal hurdles.<sup>46</sup> At the time, stating the father's profession would have indicated the social class of the applicant. Social mobility, the process by which

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<sup>41</sup> Pepitone, Ren, 'Gender, Space, and Ritual: Women Barristers, the Inns of Court, and the Interwar Press', *Journal of Women's History*. 2016; Duman, Daniel, *The English and Colonial Bars in the Nineteenth Century*, Abel, Richard, *The Legal Profession in England and Wales* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988).

<sup>42</sup> Duman, Daniel, *The English and Colonial Bars in the Nineteenth Century*, p.16.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Pepitone, 'Gender, Space, and Ritual: Women Barristers, the Inns of Court, and the Interwar Press'; Abel, *The Legal Profession in England and Wales*.

<sup>45</sup> Polden, Patrick, 'Solicitors', *The Oxford History of the Laws of England: Volume XI: 1820–1914 English Legal System*, The Oxford History of the Laws of England (Oxford, 2010; online edn, Oxford Academic, 1 May 2010), <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199258819.003.0033>, accessed 29 Nov. 2024.

<sup>46</sup> Abel, *The Legal Profession in England and Wales*., p.37.

individuals transfer between economic and social groups,<sup>47</sup> increased steadily in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries in England with more people leaving their working-class origins behind and taking up middle-class jobs. This saw the middle classes becoming more stable but, to an extent, led to a polarisation of the working classes, which reinforced class divisions.<sup>48</sup> While there was some social mobility within society, in the context of the Bar and legal profession, this was still well out of reach for the working classes.

A women's social status was typically derived from the male head of her family (father) or from her husband. Women's social mobility in a professional sense is more difficult to trace given their subordination in the labour market.<sup>49</sup> Nevertheless, previous research has identified that the early women barristers in England and Wales tended to be university-educated and middle-class. It has been argued that these similarities, along with dominant characteristics of their class, had sometimes reinforced the male culture at the Bar through women's acceptance and submission to traditional rules and practises at the Bar.<sup>50</sup> Thus there is a 'biographical pattern' that many first women barristers followed.<sup>51</sup> As will be explored further in this thesis, particularly Chapter 2, the social status of most of the women was similar; but there were a few women in the group who were potentially of a working-class background. Although at the time, stating the father's profession was a mechanism to control entry, including this information has allowed insight and analysis into some of the previously unknown women at the Inns of Court.

From the above, we can understand that the Inns of Court were unique, antiquated institutions based on historical customs. They were made by men, for men, and typically served the upper to middle-classes. With the advent of the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act 1919, women also became part of the mix. This changed the demographic of the Bar in terms of sex or gender, but not from a social class perspective. As women entered the Inns of Court, they had to contend not

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<sup>47</sup> They do this by entering and moving between occupations, and when they marry. See Andrews, Miles, Social Mobility in 19th-century England, *ReFresh*, Issue 23: Autumn 1996, Online: <https://ehs.org.uk/society/resources/refresh/>. Accessed: 1 December 2024.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Thornton, Dissonance and Distrust: Women in the Legal Profession.

<sup>51</sup> Mossman, 'Gender and Professionalism in Law: The Challenge of (Women's) Biography'.

only with gender stereotypes and male customs and practices, but also with class prejudice and hierarchy. Nevertheless, they took this in their stride and adopted a professional persona while still maintaining their personal or private identity, whether this was as an activist, feminist, wife, mother or other.<sup>52</sup>

The Benchers, senior members of the Bar who controlled the membership to the Bar,<sup>53</sup> 'acquiesced' the terms and 'loyally assisted' the reforms; they did not necessarily agree with the change, but put up with it.<sup>54</sup> Thus, at the starting point, diversity in terms of sex was not at a very good starting point at the Inns of Court or Bar. Ultimately there was no call for diversity and inclusion, like there is today, it happened because of a legal change. Nevertheless, the admission of women to the Inns of Court was the first step towards gender diversity at the Bar and indeed during this 10-year period 236 women were instrumental in this subtle change.

Research into the women at the Inns of Court and Bar has enlightened our understanding both in terms of numbers of women at the Inns and biographies of individual women barristers. Polden has provided some insight regarding the numbers of women admitted and called to the Bar between 1919 and 1939. He found that 428 women were admitted between this 20-year period.<sup>55</sup> The proportion of women entrants remained between 2.9% and 4.8% until the Second World War (1939 - 1945) with actual numbers never exceeding 27 (in 1924) and in 1933 falling as low as 16.<sup>56</sup> Therefore, there was not an opening of the floodgates but a mere trickle of women coming through.<sup>57</sup> He also surveyed the collective identity of these women in respect of their age, marital status, education, social class and reviewed the number of overseas students. He also highlighted some 'successes' and 'unfulfilled' women at the Bar.<sup>58</sup> Polden found that the

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<sup>52</sup> Noakes, 'Chrystal MacMillan and Elsie Bowerman: First Women Barristers' Negotiation of Professional and Political Identities'

<sup>53</sup> 'The Inns Of Court & Inns Of Chancery & Their Records', Inner Temple, 16 March 2017, <https://www.innertemple.org.uk/who-we-are/history/historical-articles/the-inns-of-court-and-inns-of-chancery-and-their-records/>; Abel, *The Legal Profession in England and Wales*.

<sup>54</sup> The Penrith Observer. 'The Woman Lawyers Bill'. 1 April 1919., p.6.

<sup>55</sup> Polden, *Portia's Progress: Women at the Bar in England, 1919–1939*.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Bourne, 'Great Expectations and Hard Times:- the Advent of the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act 1919 and Women's Entry to the Legal Profession'.

<sup>58</sup> Polden, *Portia's Progress: Women at the Bar in England, 1919–1939*.

mean age was 21.2 years, and that quite a fair number (around 20%) were in their teens; more than a quarter were in their 30s. Around 32 women (8%) were married upon entry to the Inns of Court. Around 199 (60%) are known to have been university educated. Most women admitted came from a middle to upper class background and had fathers in the legal or medical professions. In addition, Polden has provided some analysis of the overseas women students, identifying that 91 women were admitted from overseas, making them 20 % of the total; the biggest contingent came from British India.<sup>59</sup> Polden's research has no doubt helped current understanding of the demographics at the Bar. However, there is certainly more scope for further research to extend and deepen our understanding of this pioneer generation of these first women. For instance, he was only able to identify the ages of 60 % of the women; there were five women missing from his research;<sup>60</sup> he did not account for reasons why 62 women did not proceed to call; he did not include the women who married during their admission or consider the profession or status of the mother. However, he notes that this would have added to his analysis. This thesis therefore aims to build on and extend Polden's research by surveying the 236 women admitted to the Inns of Court between 1919 and 1929.

However, this history requires more than simple statistics, it also needs biography to give sense and texture to those bland numbers. From a biographical perspective, several publications and projects have now significantly raised the profile of the first women barristers. For example, the biographies of Rose Heilbron<sup>61</sup> and Helena Normanton have been published<sup>62</sup> along with a

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Polden does not provide a figure for admissions during this period; however, based on the information in his Index, a manual count records that 231 women were admitted. Five women have therefore been omitted from Polden's data these are: Loveday Shackell Farquharson who was admitted and called to Gray's Inn; Sydney Alice Malone admitted and called to Gray's Inn; Chaturlaxmi Balkrishna Joshi admitted to Middle Temple; Layla Smit, admitted to Middle Temple; Ben Sim Wong, admitted to Lincoln's Inn. See: Patrick Polden, 'Index to Women: Portia's Progress Women at the Bar in England 1919 - 1939', 2005; Middle Temple, 'Registers of Admissions', 1910 - 1944, Online, Middle Temple, <https://www.middletemple.org.uk/archive/archive-information-access/sources-resources/digitised-records/registers-admissions>; Lincoln's Inn, 'Registers of Admission', 1910 - 1944, Online, Lincoln's Inn, <https://www.middletemple.org.uk/archive/archive-information-access/sources-resources/digitised-records/registers-admissions>; Andrew Mussell, 'Women Admitted to Gray's Inn', 1919 - 1929 (May 2018), London, Gray's Inn.

<sup>61</sup> Heilbron, Hilary, *Rose Heilbron: The Story of England's First Woman Queen's Counsel and Judge* (United Kingdom: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2012).

<sup>62</sup> Bourne, *Helena Normanton and the Opening of the Bar to Women*.

number of shorter biographies focusing on the first women barristers.<sup>63</sup> Several projects and exhibitions have been held to mark the centenary of the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act 1919 and other events.<sup>64</sup> These publications and projects go some way towards filling the gaps in the historical record, presenting and revealing a more coherent picture about what life was like for individuals once they were admitted and called to the Bar, highlighting the challenges and opportunities they faced. However, a biographical approach has limitations. Auchmuty has pointed out that most women who had biographies written about them achieved something worthy of note.<sup>65</sup> Yet 'worth' is dependent on cultural and social subjectiveness; 'success' is seen as the alternative to failure and failure can have worth; for example, Bertha Cave's failure to join Gray's Inn was a successful challenge that paved the way of future success. The idea of 'worth' is exemplified by biographies that focus on the 'shining stars'.<sup>66</sup> From a legal feminist biographical approach, Noakes has aimed to rectify this position with her research into Crystal Macmillan and Elsie Bowerman, presenting a more realistic picture of what life was like at the Bar for these women.<sup>67</sup> From a collective biography perspective, Bourne and Morris have avoided the notion of 'great' women and instead have acknowledged that the first women barristers were connected individuals, united by their desire to join the legal profession.<sup>68</sup> Some women

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<sup>63</sup> For example: Coleman, 'Thwarted Ambitions: The Biography of Auvergne Doherty, an Aspiring Female Barrister'; Noakes, 'Chrystal MacMillan and Elsie Bowerman: First Women Barristers' Negotiation of Professional and Political Identities'; Bourne, 'The Vanishing Act of Miss Bertha Cave'.

<sup>64</sup> For example, Bourne and Morris, 'Introducing Challenging Women'; Acland, Lucinda and Broomfield, *Katie First: 100 Years of Women in Law* (United Kingdom: Scala Arts & Heritage Publishers, 2019).; 'The First Woman Admitted as Members of Lincoln's Inn', Lincoln's Inn, 13 February 2020, <https://www.lincolnsinn.org.uk/news/the-first-women-admitted-as-members-of-lincolns-inn/>.; 'Women in Law', The Middle Temple, 2022, <https://www.middletemple.org.uk/women-law>.

<sup>65</sup> Auchmuty, Rosemary, 'By Their Friends We Shall Know Them: The Lives and Networks of Some Women in North Lambeth 1880-1940', in *Not a Passing Phase: Reclaiming Lesbians in History 1840-1985*, ed. Lesbian History Group (London: The Women's Press Limited, 1989), 77-98., p.79.

<sup>66</sup> For example: Rose Heilbron and Helena Normanton, who have had biographies about them published, had some significant achievements at the Bar. Polden also focuses on those who forged some kind of career at the Bar and Mary Jane Mossman focuses, in the UK, on Eliza Orme who had a distinguished career. See: Heilbron, *Rose Heilbron: The Story of England's First Woman Queen's Counsel and Judge*; Bourne, *Helena Normanton and the Opening of the Bar to Women*, 2016; Polden, *Portia's Progress: Women at the Bar in England, 1919-1939*; Mossman, Mary Jane, *The First Women : A Comparative Study of Gender, Law and the Legal Profession* (Oxford: Hart Publishing, 2006).

<sup>67</sup> Noakes, 'Chrystal MacMillan and Elsie Bowerman: First Women Barristers' Negotiation of Professional and Political Identities'.

<sup>68</sup> Bourne and Morris, 'Introducing Challenging Women'.

succeeded and some did not. Some reached the heights of the legal profession while others struggled and persevered.<sup>69</sup>

Research in the legal history community cannot yet account for all the 236 women admitted to the Inns of Court. It cannot account for reasons why 62 of these women did not proceed to call. It does not have a thorough understanding of commonalities or differences between these women. In fact, previous legal historical research has not really explored the Inns of Court as potential avenues to explore in terms of diversity. This research aims to identify many of the unknown women and understand the varied reasons why some of them did not become barristers. While it is appreciated that statistically the Inns of Court were perhaps more ethnically and culturally diverse than might have been expected for this time in history, the Bar itself as an institution was not diverse and followed the notion of 'white, male and privately educated' as the norm from a barrister.<sup>70</sup>

## **Methodology**

This thesis draws on two methodologies: digital research and collective biography. Digital research is a fairly new approach, while collective biography is more traditionally employed in women's history. These two methodologies complement each other and when employed collectively they allow for rich and insightful analysis. Qualitative data and statistical analysis enrich the historical context, while qualitative analysis allows a great focus on this research: the 236 women admitted to the Inns of Court between 1919 and 1929.

### *Digital Research*

Digital research is now commonly undertaken by historians due to the 'digital turn'.<sup>71</sup> Mass digitisation has increased access to, and awareness of, historical sources; historians now spend

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<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Abel, *The Legal Profession in England and Wales*. suggests this was the common demographic of the Bar in the 1920s.

<sup>71</sup> Nicholson, Bob, 'THE DIGITAL TURN', *Media History* 19, no. 1 (February 2013): 59–73.

more time exploring the past with their laptop than in the archives or library.<sup>72</sup> King argues that the internet as an archive is the 'greatest change to the methodology of archival research.'<sup>73</sup> This is true not only from a resource point of view but also practically, as undertaking digital research has implications for the historian. These implications will be reviewed below, alongside the documentation of the steps of this research. It is noted that three main considerations are important when conducting digital research: possessing the necessary technical skills; understanding inaccuracies, gaps and silences in the archive; and a consideration of how the audience can impact research.

First, it is necessary to possess the technical skills to effectively store, manage and analyse datasets. It requires a time investment to get the most benefit out of the necessary software, and data collection can be time-consuming in terms of its construction and management.<sup>74</sup> As this research deals with a large dataset (236 women), as detailed in Appendix A, it was necessary to collect and store this data effectively. In the first instance, all the women who were admitted to the Inns of Court between 1919 and 1929 had to be identified; this period was chosen because admittance during this period made them part of the first generation of women at the Inns of Court and, later, women barristers. Manual collection of data from the Inns of Court Admissions Registers presented two main challenges. The first was access to this data via the Inns of Court records. Middle Temple's Admissions Registers are stored electronically, and include all the information needed including admission date; name; place of residence; father's name and residence; called date (if applicable).<sup>75</sup> Inner Temple had an Admissions Stamp book, which could be cross-checked with their online Admissions Register.<sup>76</sup> Collecting data from these two Inns

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<sup>72</sup> Nicholson, Bob, 'Chapter 10. Digital Research', in *Research Methods for History* (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition), edited by Gunn Simon and Faire, Lucy, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016), 170–90.

<sup>73</sup> King, Michelle T., 'Chapter 2: Working With/In the Archives', in *Research Methods for History* (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition), edited by Gunn, Simon and Faire, Lucy, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016), p.15–30., p.25.

<sup>74</sup> Bourne and Morris, 'Introducing Challenging Women'.

<sup>75</sup> "Middle Temple Admissions Register, 1910-1944 [Online]." The Honourable Society of the Middle Temple. Accessed: 5 December 2024: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mBwag9X-LkfPciZMa70ZNmbywwNOg1Yt/view>.

<sup>76</sup> All the information needed was listed in their digital archive. Inner Temple. "Admissions Records." Vol 3: 1894 to 1956, Online. Inner Temple; Inner Temple, "Black Books", Vol. 6: 1914 to 1965, Accessed: 5 December 2024: <https://archives.innertemple.org.uk/records/ADM>.



was therefore straightforward and mainly required organisation in terms of data management. Lincoln's Inn's electronic copy of their Admissions Register but it did not contain the call dates; these were retrieved via the 'Black Books', which contained information about calls and also minutes of Council.<sup>77</sup> Having to refer and cross-check added a significant amount of time to the collection of data, and it was necessary to confirm with the archivist that the information was accurate. The archivist at Gray's Inn supplied all the information regarding the women admitted to the Inns of Court during this period.<sup>78</sup> Once input into the spreadsheet, all data was cross-checked with Polden's Appendix;<sup>79</sup> digital sources such as those available on *Ancestry.co.uk/com*, archives and digital newspapers. The British Newspapers search tool was helpful because it allows users to create folders specific to their research, save an article, and write related notes.

During cross-checking, a few minor discrepancies became apparent between the admission and call dates stated on the admissions records at Gray's, and on Polden's Index; five additional women were also identified.<sup>80</sup> It was necessary to check the call dates very carefully because in some cases, online sources incorrectly claimed that some women were called. Mary Martin, admitted to Inner Temple in 1924, was noted as being called in her Obituary - but according to the Admissions Register, she was not.<sup>81</sup> Conversely, the Admissions Register did not always state if someone was called. Dorothy Johnstone, admitted to Middle Temple in 1927, was called in 1955 but her call date did not appear on the Admissions Register because the Volume was

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<sup>77</sup> Lincoln's Inn, "Registers of Admission." 1910 - 1944. Online. Lincoln's Inn. <https://www.lincolnsinn.org.uk/library-archives/researching-past-members/>

<sup>78</sup> The archivist noted that their physical records were not as ordered as might be expected so he sent a digital record of the women admitted. When this was cross-checked, several minor errors were noted such as incorrect call and admission dates; these have now been updated. Mussell, Andrew. 2018. "Women Admitted to Gray's Inn." 1919 - 1929. London. Gray's Inn; Email exchange between Andrew Mussell and Charlotte Coleman regarding inconsistencies identified on the Admissions list, 16 May 2018.

<sup>79</sup> Polden also created an inventory of the women admitted to the Inns of Court, but this was over a twenty-year period. Polden, Patrick. 2005. "Index to Women: Portia's Progress Women at the Bar in England 1919 - 1939."

<sup>80</sup> See footnote 60.

<sup>81</sup> This is discussed in Chapter 3 where Mary Martin appears in the list of Uncalled women. "Martin, Mary." Inner Temple Collections. Accessed January 16, 2024. <https://archives.innertemple.org.uk/names/bf094fcb-0f48-4b07-a918-0ebe171295b9>.

published in 1949, before Dorothy Johnson was called. Nevertheless, the archivist confirmed she was called by tracing her Call Declaration form.<sup>82</sup>

Reflecting on the above, archival documents may not always be factually accurate and therefore need to be cross-checked. While this concept is not new to historians, working with digital sources makes it even more important to check. The digitisation process may have left gaps, both in terms of the composition of the archive and because of the scanning process; some items may not have been digitised - and there may be errors present in the microfilm or OCR scanning.<sup>83</sup> It is also necessary to have a deep, critical understanding of archives, as well as digital sources, because they can contain silences. First, in their construction and composition, archives contain silences in the sense that privileging some events over others means the inclusion of some sources and the exclusion of others.<sup>84</sup> This concept of inherent silences in the archives is not just applicable to the sources. Indeed, it was found that Gladys Steyn, admitted to Middle Temple in 1922 and called in 1925, changed her archival documents to effectively omit her period with her lesbian lover. Christi van der Westhuizen understands that this distortion and silencing within the historical record confirms the 'iterative production of subjectivity' and a 'form of epistemic violence'.<sup>85</sup> Therefore, historians cannot take what they see at face value, and records of all types it must be critically reviewed and corroborated.

The second challenge was data organisation and storage. Polden previously compiled an Index that listed the first women barristers admitted between 1919 and 1939; however, this was only available as a hard copy and did not include source references to corroborate the data. Some women were also missing.<sup>86</sup> Consequently, it was necessary to create a new dataset using a spreadsheet so information could be easily sorted, filtered and analysed. Initially, the data

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<sup>82</sup> Liu, James Kin Pong, Assistant Archivist at Middle Temple: Email to Charlotte Coleman regarding Dorothy Johnson, 27 July 2024.

<sup>83</sup> Nicholson, 'THE DIGITAL TURN'.

<sup>84</sup> Trouillot, Michel-Rolph. *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*. (United States: Beacon Press, 2015).

<sup>85</sup> van der Westhuizen, Christi. "Lesbian dis/appearances: epistemic violence against internal dissidents in the formation of Afrikaner Identity." In *Violence: South African Perspectives*, edited by Chris Jones, 89–108. (South Africa: African Sun Media, 2021).

<sup>86</sup> Polden, "Index to Women: Portia's Progress Women at the Bar in England 1919 - 1939."

collected included the basic information about these women: Inn, admission date, call date, residence, and father's profession; while basic, it transpired that this data was incredibly valuable and revealed much more than was first anticipated. As a result, the data collection widened to include other attributes such as date of birth and death, marital status, dependencies, connections and networks.<sup>87</sup> Fundamental to this process was ensuring that data was stored logically and succinctly so that future researchers could access this when needed.

The third challenge was public access and engagement with the past through family history sites such as *Ancestry.co.uk*. Despite paywall limitations, a significant number of users are willing to pay for access to, and engagement with, the past (not just historians). *Ancestry.com* has 60 million records online and 25 million people in their DNA network.<sup>88</sup> While the cost of accessing sources is a consideration (and potential barrier) for historians,<sup>89</sup> access to databases such as these has implications in terms of understanding the historian's audience. Digital research via *Ancestry.co.uk* for example, led to contact with the descendants of the first women at the Inns.<sup>90</sup> It was possible to contact 16 family members of the first women at the Inns of Court as part of this research.<sup>91</sup> Most families were aware of their relative's admission and/or call to the Bar and were proud of their achievement, but some had no idea that their relative had even been admitted to the Inns of Court. For example, Leila Mabel Thomas's granddaughter had no idea that her grandmother had been admitted to Inner Temple; Leila Thomas had suffered from paranoid schizophrenia in her later years, and did not get a proper chance to communicate about

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<sup>87</sup> Date of birth and death were typically identified from *Ancestry.co.uk*; it is possible that there are minor inaccuracies as the original birth/death certificates were not examined.

<sup>88</sup> 'Company Facts', *Ancestry Corporate*, accessed 9 July 2024, <https://www.ancestry.com/corporate/about-ancestry/company-facts>.

<sup>89</sup> The British Newspaper Archive, for example, charges users to read historical articles. Other digital newspaper archives do not such as *Newspapers SG*, the online archive of Singapore newspapers and *The National Library of Australia* see: 'NewspaperSG', National Library Board Singapore, accessed 7 July 2024, <https://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/newspapers/>; National Library of Australia, 'Newspapers and Gazettes', Trove, accessed 7 July 2024, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/>.

<sup>90</sup> The site enables users to create a Family Tree, and it is also possible to create a profile of a deceased relative. Through these profiles, it is possible to contact the owner of the relevant Family Tree. Some owners are very distantly connected to the profiled person, and it is an algorithm that makes the connection to them. Others are direct descendants of the person such as son, grandson or granddaughter.

<sup>91</sup> See Appendix B.

her past life.<sup>92</sup> This more personal aspect of the research project gave rise to two important reflection points. First, is the reminder that history is also ‘produced outside of academia’<sup>93</sup> meaning that individual’s narratives of understanding or remembrance (with respect to their relative) can become sources themselves, adding to the historical narrative and increasing our understanding of the past. Second is the value of collective stories and histories. Without a collective focus on *all* the first women at the Inns of Court (including those who were not called, did not practise or did not achieve a ‘successful’ career), some stories, sources and histories would have remained untold and perhaps undervalued. This is where collective biography has lent itself extremely well to this research.

### *Collective biography*

Before defining collective biography, it is necessary to distinguish it from biography or life history. Biography typically focuses on a single individual and has traditionally included stories about great men and, more recently, outstanding women.<sup>94</sup> Legal biographies have tended to focus on legal greats or ‘shining stars’, showcasing those who had a ‘successful’ career at the Bar.<sup>95</sup> Auchmuty argues that this focus on success glosses over the struggles.<sup>96</sup> Biography can therefore be inherently biased, presenting a distorted picture of the past.<sup>97</sup> While historians are now more aware of these issues and aim to combat them, perhaps by taking a standpoint approach<sup>98</sup> or a references a multitude representations,<sup>99</sup> including and understanding personal stories can help to reveal a more complete picture of the past. This is where collective biography can complement

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<sup>92</sup> Thomas, Judy, Message to Charlotte Coleman via Ancestry and WhatsApp regarding Leila Mabel Thomas, 9 July 2024.

<sup>93</sup> Trouillot, Michel-Rolph. ‘Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History’.

<sup>94</sup> Nolan, Melanie. *Biography: An Historiography*. (United Kingdom: Taylor & Francis, 2023).

<sup>95</sup> Parry, R Gwynedd, ‘Is Legal Biography Really Legal Scholarship?’, *Legal Studies*, 30 (2010), 208–29; Polden, ‘Portia’s progress: Women at the Bar in England, 1919-1939’, p.304.

<sup>96</sup> Auchmuty, Rosemary, ‘Whatever Happened to Miss Bebb? Bebb v The Law Society and Women’s Legal History’, *Legal Studies*, 31.2 (2011), 199–230.

<sup>97</sup> Nola, *Biography: An Historiography*.

<sup>98</sup> Sandra Harding coined the term ‘standpoint theory’ and challenged the idea that knowledge is objective and neutral. Harding, Sandra, *The Feminist Standpoint Theory Reader: Intellectual and Political Controversies*. (United Kingdom: Routledge, 2004).

<sup>99</sup> Kali Israel suggests historians should avoid trying to uncover true pictures but look towards different representations that are influenced by their own interpretations see: Israel, Kali A. K., ‘Writing Inside the Kaleidoscope: Re-Representing Victorian Women Public Figures’, *Gender and History*, 2 (1990), 40–48.

biography as it allows a focus on a variety of subjects as well as a greater variety of sources. Together, these adds colour and perspective to the historical record. However, when applying the collective biography methodology, it is necessary to consider when the life of a collective biography starts, and which events should be included or excluded.<sup>100</sup> This links to an idea of the historian's role in silencing sources.

Collective biography offered an opportunity to explore several unknown women at the Inns of Court and numerous sources were utilised to gather information about these women. Sources themselves are rich and multitudinous; however, they may be limited by the questions the historians asked and the research aims of the time.<sup>101</sup> For example, several sources included reference to Ventia Stephenson, admitted to Gray's Inn in 1922 and called in 1924: she was friends with Robina Stevens;<sup>102</sup> belonged to professional organisations such as The Grotius Society and Central Criminal Court; she undertook legal cases; and was part of the Feminist Brains Trust at the Women's Freedom League Conference.<sup>103</sup> While it was possible to include some of this information and to add more details about this woman who, although not a 'shining star', achieved something noteworthy, a collective biography does not do justice to her by simply recounting the nuances and complete experiences of her life. This would be particularly relevant as Polden included Venetia Stephenson in the 'ambitions unfulfilled' section and noted that she 'became a sad but indomitable figure in the criminal courts and died in poverty in 1967'.<sup>104</sup> However, what collective biography does do in the context of this research is to add her piece to the jigsaw – as one of the first women barristers – and potentially open the door for future research. This notion of historian's silencing sources is one justification for a more comprehensive

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<sup>100</sup> Trouillot, 'Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History'.

<sup>101</sup> Tosh, John, *The Pursuit of History*, Fifth edition (United Kingdom: Pearson Education Limited, 2010).; Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*.

<sup>102</sup> Stephenson, Venita Mary Josephine. 1951. "In Memoriam: Mary Robina Bowles (Robina Stevens).", *Graya*, p.14-15. As well as this, there were letters from Venetia Stephenson offering her condolences to the Robina's family, indicating that they were friends: Cooper, Anne to Charlotte Coleman, 29 December 2019. "Letter from Miss Venetia Stephenson to Jack Regarding Robina Stevens' Tankard dated 2 August 1951."

<sup>103</sup> See Chapter 5 where Venetia Stephenson's professional connections are mentioned and her social interactions.

<sup>104</sup> Polden, 'Portia's progress: women at the Bar in England, 1919–1939', p.309.

methodology that makes readers of this thesis not only aware of the scope, and limitations of the research, but also of the avenues available for future exploration.

There are many different forms and definitions of collective biography. The first collective biographies date back to classical times; they focus on civic, military or religious leaders and were originally constructed by men.<sup>105</sup> Susanne Gannon and Marina Gonnick, who have explored questions of girlhood, sexuality and schooling through a collective biography, link this methodology to memory work.<sup>106</sup> Krista Cowman, modern and feminist historian, is keen to distinguish collective biography from memory work and collective oral history<sup>107</sup> because the latter approaches include the thoughts, feelings and experiences of the researchers.<sup>108</sup> She also explains that collective biography is not 'prosopography', which some historians have claimed.<sup>109</sup> Prosopography focuses on how the group, as a whole, impacted on certain things; collective biography is more subjective concerning how engagement affected individuals.<sup>110</sup>

For the purposes of this research, it is understood that collective biography is a distinct methodology which 'retains a focus on the individual... and aims to use individual lives to explore collective experiences', focusing on 'the interactions and shared experiences of its members'.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> Cowman, Krista, 'Collective Biography', in *Research Methods for History* (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition), edited by Gunn, Simon and Lucy Faire, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016), p.83–100.

<sup>106</sup> Gannon, Susanne and Gonnick, Marina, 'Collective Biography as a Feminist Methodology', *Strategies for Resisting Sexism in the Academy*, 2019, [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-04852-5\\_12](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-04852-5_12).

<sup>107</sup> Oral historians must interpret 'unreliable', subjective memory so it is necessary to have insights to their own memories and remembering, and about their past experience and its meaning and their significance in the present. See Passerini, Luisa, *Autobiography of a Generation: Italy, 1968* (United Kingdom: Wesleyan University Press, 1996). and Alistair Thomson, 'Memory and Remembering in Oral History', *The Oxford Handbook of Oral History*, 2011, 77–95.

<sup>108</sup> Cowman, 'Collective Biography'.

<sup>109</sup> For example, historian John Tosh, cites the example of Sir Lewis Namier's research into 18th century politics as 'prosopography'. Namier accumulated the biographical details of every single MP and member of the House of Lords in 1760. Tosh, John, *The Pursuit of History*, p.115-116. Arthur Marwick, historian, has defined prosopography as 'multiple biography, the building up for an interpretation of the past by detailed biographical studies of individuals.' Marwick, Arthur, *The New Nature of History: Knowledge, Evidence, Language* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), p.293.

<sup>110</sup> This is in line with Lawrence Stone's conceptualisation of prosopography where the focus on the group and its impact was paramount. Cowman, 'Collective Biography'; Stone, Lawrence Stone, 'Prosopography', *Daedalus* 100, no. 1 (1971): 46–79.

<sup>111</sup> Cowman, 'Collective Biography', p.87.; Caine, Barbara, *Biography and History* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), p.48.

Consequently, collective biography is concerned with a group or collection of individuals that are linked in some way, and aims to understand their collective experiences. For historians, collective biography is a way of investigating connections between individuals, considering some of the personal motivations which might underpin collective actions. In the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, collective biography developed a focus where the biographical subjects considered were linked or connected in some way through family, metier (their profession) or politics; this approach has been very popular with women's historians.<sup>112</sup>

In respect of this research, collective biography has two main benefits. First, it views the research subjects as a collective whole, acknowledging their connections and identifying common themes or experiences across the group while still recognising the importance of individual factors. Approaching biography from the perspective of common themes or experiences enables the historian to depart from the traditional chronological approach. For example, Carolyn Steedman's biography of Margaret Macmillan uses its subject's life to explore themes of childhood, culture, and class.<sup>113</sup> This methodology departs from the accepted form of 'standard male biography' and takes a more innovative approach than the traditional form of biography.<sup>114</sup> Sandra Holton's *Suffrage Days*, which looks at the lives of seven individuals, enabled her to: 'escape from existing framework and conceptualisation presently organising suffrage history'.<sup>115</sup> Yet collective biography also allows for intersectionality by analysis of how individual factors such as class, race and ethnicity may have affected the collective picture.<sup>116</sup> Joy Parr, for example, argues that there is a need to take account of issues such as class, race and ethnicity to understand how social identities are forged in particular spatial and temporal settings.

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<sup>112</sup> Cowman, 'Collective Biography'.

<sup>113</sup> Steedman, Carolyn, *Childhood, Culture, and Class in Britain: Margaret Macmillan, 1860-1931* (London: Virago Press, 1990).

<sup>114</sup> It has been argued that traditional biography is a masculine craft because the public traditionally belongs to men, and this was a genre used by men. See: Cowman, 'Collective Biography'; Auchmuty, Rosemary, 'By Their Friends We Shall Know Them: The Lives and Networks of Some Women in North Lambeth, 1880-1940'.

<sup>115</sup> Holton, Sandra, 'Response to Review No. 35', *Reviews in History*, 10 August 2009, <https://reviews.history.ac.uk/review/35/response>.

<sup>116</sup> Parr Joy, *The Gender of Breadwinners: Women, Men, and Change in Two Industrial Towns, 1880-1950* (Canada: University of Toronto Press, 1990), p.9.

Secondly, collective biography overcomes, to a large extent, the common problem for women's historians: a paucity of sources. Steedman, for example, overcame the challenges that there were no traceable personal sources of Macmillan by presenting the public life of a public woman; this was a radical departure from previous biographies of female subjects, which concentrated on personal lives in a way which arguably upheld gendered stereotypes about the separation of public and private life.<sup>117</sup> Holton did not follow Steedman's approach in attempting to move away from the interior lives of her subjects; rather, she emphasised the ways in which political and private lives can be entwined.<sup>118</sup> In respect of this research, it has been possible to look at the family connections of these women to try and build a more comprehensive picture of who they were.

Legal historian Patrick Polden has provided a more connected picture of the first women barristers, compared to individual biographies.<sup>119</sup> His research aimed to examine the collective identity and experiences of the women who had been admitted as bar students between 1919 and 1939. The themes of success and progress were explored as well as their attributes including marital status, age, social class. Polden found that women's progress at the Bar was very slow and that barely a score achieved what might be judged even modest success.<sup>120</sup> Although not a collective biography, by looking collectively at the first women barristers, Polden has revealed similarities and differences among these women. More recently, Bourne and Morris presented a collective biography of five of the first women barristers; this considered how their experiences could (re)define ideas about feminist role models and helped to assess their impact on, and relevance to, contemporary legal culture and practice(s). They noted that whilst shining a spotlight on individual women, collective biography also highlights their networks and connections, thus highlighting the various themes and commonalities which emerge from the stories of these women's lives.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>117</sup> Cowman, 'Collective Biography'.

<sup>118</sup> Steedman, *Childhood, Culture, and Class in Britain: Margaret MacMillan, 1860-1931*.

<sup>119</sup> Polden, *Portia's Progress: Women at the Bar in England, 1919-1939*.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> Bourne and Morris, 'Introducing Challenging Women'.



Bourne and Morris, and to an extent Polden, have illustrated that collective biography has a place in legal history and it can reveal unity, commonalities and differences among the first women barristers. Bourne and Morris take a positive step away from spotlighting the 'successful', as does Noakes, and tell the stories of some of the more ordinary women. This is important because if these women are to serve as role models and inspirations to future generations, it is important to have a diverse picture of these women: some were trailblazers, having successful careers; others may have practised, but did not achieve many noteworthy things; some were not able to fulfil their ambitions.

Drawing on the above, this thesis is a scholarly piece of work with an academic audience in mind, but the interests of the families, friends and descendants of these first women at the Inns cannot be ignored. As discussed, there are several implications, drawbacks and reflections for the historian when undertaking digital research but with a clear approach, these can largely be overcome. Importantly, digital research alongside collective biography allows historians to draw on a variety of sources, archives and collective stories more broadly and, in this context, has made it possible to put some of these lesser-known women on the historical map. This is not just important to widen understanding of women in the field of legal history; it is important to the family members too. Kalela notes that 'It is empathy that describes the historian's relation to the people studied, while sympathy, or rather concern and even solidarity, refers to one's relation to the people addressed.'<sup>122</sup> This statement accurately sums up why this research is important and who it is for.

## **Key Themes**

### *Diversity*

The key theme that extends throughout this thesis is diversity. On the face of it, diversity is not a difficult concept to understand and indeed is a very relevant topic in today's multi-ethnic and

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<sup>122</sup> Kalela, Jorma, 'Making History', in *The Public History Reader*, ed. Hilda Kean And Martin (United Kingdom: Routledge, 2013), 104–28., p.119.

multicultural society. However, there are many different types of diversity, so it is important to consider what is meant by diversity in the context of this thesis. From around the 14<sup>th</sup> century, 'diversity' was defined as 'difference between two or more things' and 'variety'.<sup>123</sup> Today, the Cambridge Dictionary defines diversity as: 'the fact of many different types of things or people being included in something' or 'a range of different things or people'. It cites examples of 'cultural diversity', 'ethnic diversity' and 'diversity of opinion'.<sup>124</sup> Social sciences follow a similar understanding, defining diversity as 'the range of human differences, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, social class...'.<sup>125</sup> This thesis therefore considers diversity to be differences or variations among human beings.

Four main types of diversity are examined in this thesis. In Chapter 1, diversity in terms of sex is reviewed, comparing men and women at the Inns of Court. This thesis acknowledges that gender is an important concept when understanding women's entry to the legal profession; however, it has chosen to depart from the language of 'gender' and has instead adopted the term 'sex' when comparing diversity between men and women at the Inns of Court in the 1920s. There are three reasons for this. Firstly, the term 'sex' was commonly used in the 1900s to distinguish men and women. For instance, equality of the sexes or 'sex equality' was referred to in *The Women's Movement in Great Britain* and *'The Cause'* by Ray Strachey;<sup>126</sup> the 1919 Act that enabled women to join the exclusively male profession was termed the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act 1919 noting that 'A person shall not be disqualified by sex...';<sup>127</sup> and Helena Normanton, one of the first women barristers, also recognised the inequality or discrimination women faced inside and

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<sup>123</sup> Ye Olde Swag Shoppe, 'Diversity', accessed 7 July 2024, <https://www.etymonline.com/word/diversity>.

<sup>124</sup> 'Diversity', Cambridge Dictionary, accessed 7 July 2024, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/diversity>.

<sup>125</sup> 'Diversity and Inclusion Definitions', Ferris State University, accessed 13 June 2024, <https://www.ferris.edu/administration/president/DiversityOffice/Definitions.htm>.

<sup>126</sup> Strachey, Ray, *The Women's Movement in Great Britain. A Short Summary of This Rise, Methods and Victories*. (The National Council of Women of Great Britain, 1928); Strachey, Ray. "The Cause" a Short History of the Women's Movement in Great Britain. (United Kingdom: G. Bell and Sons, 1928).

<sup>127</sup> Government Legal Department. "The Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act 1919." Gov.uk. December 24, 2019. Accessed: 12 November 2024: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/the-sex-disqualification-removal-act-1919>.

outside the legal profession as related to their 'sex'.<sup>128</sup> Using this term places this research in its historical context from a linguistic point of view.

Secondly, although this thesis makes an explicit distinction between 'sex' and 'gender', when the original definition of the word 'sex' is reviewed, it can be understood that the connotations attached to this word were gendered and, therefore, to an extent, encompasses the antagonism some women may have felt. For example, in the original edition of *The Oxford English Dictionary*, 'sex' was defined as an adjective of (1) 'either of the two divisions of organic beings distinguished as male or female' and (2) the 'quality in respect of being male or female'.<sup>129</sup> It was noted that females were of the 'fair' 'gentle', 'soft', 'weak' and 'second sex'; men were the 'better' and 'sterner sex'.<sup>130</sup> This conception and connotation of 'sex' links to biological arguments that justified the subjugation of women because they were 'weaker' than men due to their sex.<sup>131</sup> This view was challenged by John Stuart Mill, who acknowledged biological differences, but argued that sexual inequality can also be a social factor and does not benefit society and individuals.<sup>132</sup> Mill's suggestion that society affects how women are judged and treated by men links to the modern notion of gender, 'socially-imposed division of the sexes';<sup>133</sup> nevertheless, he still presents his arguments as an 'equality of the sexes' issue rather than an issue of gender.

Thirdly, it is argued that women had just gained the right to be admitted to the legal profession as a point of law. There was no conscious move within the legal profession to be more gender

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<sup>128</sup> Bourne, Judith. Helena Normanton and the Opening of the Bar to Women.

<sup>129</sup> Bradley, Henry, "S-SH", vol 8 pt 2 of James AH Murray (editor), *A new English dictionary*, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1914)., p.577. Online: <https://archive.org/details/newenglishdictio82murrayoft/page/576/mode/2up> .

<sup>130</sup> Ibid and "Sex, n. Meanings, Etymology and More.", *Oxford English Dictionary* [ONLINE]. Accessed November 14, 2024.

[https://www.oed.com/dictionary/sex\\_n1?tl=true&tab=meaning\\_and\\_use#23486173](https://www.oed.com/dictionary/sex_n1?tl=true&tab=meaning_and_use#23486173)

<sup>131</sup> For example, August Comte, a French philosopher known as the founder of sociology and positivism, argues that the subjugation of women is just because of the biological argument that women are fundamentally weaker than men see Guillin, Vincent Philippe Emanuel. "Auguste Comte and John Stuart Mill on Sexual Equality: Historical, Methodological and Philosophical Issues.", (Unpublished PhD Thesis, London School of Economics and Political Science, 2005).

<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

<sup>133</sup> Rubin, Gayle S. 'The Traffic in Women: Notes on the "Political Economy" of Sex', 1975, <https://philpapers.org/archive/RUBTTI>.; Allyson, Jule, "Gender Theory." In *Encyclopaedia of Quality of Life and Well-Being Research*, 2464–66. (Netherlands: Springer Netherlands, 2014).

diverse and no understanding of how women may experience things differently to men (the idea of gender).<sup>134</sup> Even the first women barristers appear to have accepted the male-dominant culture at the Bar by conforming with the status quo (although privately they had a different opinion).<sup>135</sup> Thus the experiences of women from the point of gender diversity did not reflect the level of understanding that there is today. As a result, a clear distinction between the sexes (men and women) is needed. In the 1900s, 'gender' was defined as a (1) 'kind, sort or class' or something such as a disease of this gender or being of patriotic gender; a (2) grammatical kind distinguishing male, female or neuter gender; and (3) 'Sex. Now only *jocular*'.<sup>136</sup> 'Jocular' would indicate that it was not said in seriousness so while the term 'gender' was used as an adjective to refer to the type of sex and indeed women understood how their role in society was affected by their sex or gender,<sup>137</sup> the term was not commonly used to illustrate inequality of the sexes. The first women barristers did not have to ungender or change their gender identity upon entry to the Inns of Court. Women had just gained the right to be admitted to the legal profession and they would take up this right. While some of them did have to behave more like men, if they practised, the distinction of biological difference between the sexes still stands. Therefore, the

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<sup>134</sup> Erika Rackley takes the opposite linguistic approach in her research, opting to use the term *gender* instead of *sex*. She focuses on the impact of gender on judicial decision making, that is the difference *the experience* of being a woman, or a man, makes to how women or men judge. This therefore looks at how social factors influence decision-making and experiences. See: Rackley, Erika, *Women, Judging and the Judiciary from Difference to Diversity*. (Oxon: Routledge, 2013) p. 3.

<sup>135</sup> See debates in footnote 28: Mossman, 'Gender and Professionalism in Law: The Challenge of (Women's) Biography'; Sommerlad and Sanderson. *Gender, Choice and Commitment*.; Corcos, 'Portia Goes to Parliament: Women and Their Admission to Membership in the English Legal Profession'; Thornton, *Dissonance and Distrust: Women in the Legal Profession*.

<sup>136</sup> Bradley, Henry, "F and G.", Vol 4 pt 2 of James AH Murray (editor), *A new English dictionary*, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1900)., p.100. Online: <https://archive.org/details/oed04arch/page/100/mode/2up> .

<sup>137</sup> For example, in 19th-century publications, some women adopted male genders or were un-gendered to get their articles published. This was, to an extent, manipulating gender or playing with gender identities to fulfil aims or ambitions and navigate a male-dominated world see DeWitt, Anne. "Gender and Genre in Reviews of the Theological Novel." In *Women, Periodicals and Print Culture in Britain, 1830s-1900s: The Victorian Period*, edited by Alexis Easley, Clare Gill, and Beth Rodgers, 442–55. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019) and Birch, Katy. "Gender, Anonymity, and Humour in Women's Writing for Punch." In *Women, Periodicals and Print Culture in Britain, 1830s-1900s: The Victorian Period*, edited by Alexis Easley, Clare Gill, and Beth Rodgers, 351-64. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019). Some women went further and lived as a male, for example Colonel Victor Barker see: The National Archives. "The National Archives - LGBTQ+ History: The Red Rose of Colonel Barker - National Archives Blog," February 2019. <https://blog.nationalarchives.gov.uk/lgbtq-history-the-red-rose-of-colonel-barker/>. and Derry, Caroline. "Chapter 28: DPP v Jonathan Cape and Leopold Hill (1928)." In *Women's Legal Landmarks*, edited by Erika Rackley and Auchmuty, Rosemary, p205–11. (Oxford: Hart Publishing, 2019).

notion of sexual equality and the binary distinction between men and women meant that 'sex' (male or female) was a common adjective used to describe a person's organic being. Linguistically 'sex' was a gendered term with negative connotations for women; it still encompasses their struggles.

The diversity of attributes is considered in Chapter 2. Attributes include biological qualities such as age, as well as social factors including education and family status, and Chapter 2 seeks to determine how these attributes may have been represented within the demographic at the Bar. The social status of women is one of the attributes that has been analysed in this thesis. It has been noted above that the Inns of Court typically served the upper to middle-class proportion of society in respect of men; the requirement to state the father's profession on the application form exemplified this fact. It is understood that legal training is unlikely to have been an option for the working classes due to the costs involved. For women, social status is typically derived from the head of the house (father) or the woman's husband. The father's profession along with the professions of husbands, have been considered to understand what the social demographic of the Bar was like in respect of women.

While this thesis focuses on marriage, 'the condition of being husband and wife',<sup>138</sup> it is acknowledged that not all the first women barristers were heterosexual, or that they desired to or were able to marry. At least one woman had a different sexual identity; another cohabited with a man; another woman deliberately delayed marriage to retain her independence; and a further woman lost her fiancée during the First World War and did not marry later. Thus the conventional route of marriage was not always an option; however, by analysing the marital status of these women, we can better understand the extent to which the first women at the Inns of Court were aligned with broader societal trends. It can be considered whether they gained any social status from their husbands or if they faced any barriers to call or practice; and finally, the different pathways these women followed in their personal lives can be understood.

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<sup>138</sup> Bradley, Henry, "M-N", Volume VI, Part 2 of James AH Murray (editor), *A new English dictionary*, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1908)., p.180. Online: <https://archive.org/details/oed6barch/page/180/mode/2up>.

The concept of diverse sexual identities is briefly considered. While the Offences Against the Person Act 1861 prohibited homosexual relationships (between men),<sup>139</sup> lesbian relationships were not illegal, despite an attempt to add the offence of 'gross indecency between women' to the Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill in 1921.<sup>140</sup> To the contrary, it was an issue kept off the agenda and out of the public's mind. Derry calls this a 'legal silence', the rationale being that legislating on the issue would only advertise these kinds of relationships to women, and they should be kept secret from respectable ladies.<sup>141</sup> Homosexuality or 'sexual invertedness' was starting to receive some attention in society through publications. For example, *Sexual Inversion* was published in 1900 by Havelock Ellis and John Addington Symonds (a homosexual poet) aiming to promote a more tolerant climate towards 'sexual inverts' or homosexuality; the book was banned in Britain.<sup>142</sup> In 1928, *The Well of Loneliness*, a lesbian novel about sexual inversion asks for acknowledgement of lesbians (rather than the legal and social silence); this received criticism and was withdrawn due to obscenity and potential corruption of those into whose hands it should fall.<sup>143</sup> Therefore, while women at this time would have had differing sexual identities and would have had lesbian relationships, these were not yet socially or morally acceptable so any relationship of this nature would have had to be discreet. While same-sex relationships are legally

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<sup>139</sup> In the Offences against the Person Act 1861, the death penalty for buggery was replaced with life imprisonment or for any term not less than 10 years. The Act was subsequently adapted, modified and incorporated into the codes of various British colonies throughout Africa, the Caribbean and South Pacific over the next half-century. See: Legislation.gov, "The Offences Against the Person Act 1861", Online: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Vict/24-25/100/contents>. Accessed: 10 December 2024; Human Dignity Trust, A History of LGBT Criminalisation, 2024. Online: <https://www.humandignitytrust.org/lgbt-the-law/a-history-of-criminalisation>, Accessed 22 November 2024.

<sup>140</sup> Derry, Caroline. Lesbianism and Feminist Legislation in 1921: the Age of Consent and 'Gross Indecency between Women'. *History Workshop Journal*, 2018, 86 (Autumn) pp. 245-267; Derry, Caroline, "Chapter 28: DPP v Jonathan Cape and Leopold Hill (1928)." In *Women's Legal Landmarks*.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid.

<sup>143</sup> Ellis, Havelock and Symonds, John. *Sexual Inversion*. London: Wilson & MacMillan, 1900. Weeks, J. "Ellis, (Henry) Havelock (1859–1939), writer and sexologist." *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. 23 Sep. 2004; Accessed 20 Nov. 2024. <https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-33009>.

<sup>143</sup> Derry, Caroline, "Chapter 28: DPP v Jonathan Cape and Leopold Hill (1928)." In *Women's Legal Landmarks*.

and socially acceptable today, as will be explored barristers still face discrimination on the grounds of their different sexual identities.

According to Fearon, attributes can form part of 'identity' if the person takes special pride in them.<sup>144</sup> For instance, someone might be proud they are an Oxford University graduate or perhaps drawn to young women because they are conscious that they are also young. This research does not aim to examine the identity of the first women barristers on an individual basis instead, it looks at collective identity to understand similarities and differences within the group.

Chapter 3 addresses the diversity of personal circumstances, motivations or ideas that surround the fact that some of the women were not called to the Bar. Some women wanted to become barristers and their primary aim was to practise, while others undertook legal training to help their own career. Some had no intention of practising as a barrister but perhaps wanted their name to be there among the first women at the Inns of Court. Others perhaps thought they may practise as a barrister, but married shortly after their call to the Bar and did not continue with this career. Understanding the diversity of the Bar in respect of individual and collective motivations helps us understand the social expectations at the time.

Chapter 4 looks at the international women at the Inns of Court and explores ethnic diversity. An Ethnic Group is made up of people who share a common cultural background or descent. Usually, it refers to a group identity based on culture, religion, traditions, and customs.<sup>145</sup> Between 1919 and 1929, just under 30% of women admitted to the Inns of Court were born in countries outside of the United Kingdom (UK) and just under 13% were an ethnic minority. Therefore, at the stage of legal training, the Inns of Court were ethnically and culturally diverse to an extent. This was largely because of the special and important role of the Inns of Court in the settlements of the

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<sup>144</sup> Fearon, James, D. 'What Is Identity (as We Now Use the Word)?', 1999, <http://www.web.stanford.edu/group/fearon-research/cgi-bin/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/What-is-Identity-as-we-now-use-the-word-.pdf>.

<sup>145</sup> Fenton, Steve, *Ethnicity* (Polity, 2010).

British Empire.<sup>146</sup> This saw the sons of colonial administrators and members of the judiciary sent back to London to pursue a legal education at the Inns of Court. However, although international students were welcome at the training stage, there was the expectation that they would return home to practise.<sup>147</sup> Chapter 5 focuses on diversity of sex and ethnicity at the Bar.

### *Connections*

Chapter 5 revisits diversity in terms of sex and ethnicity at the practising Bar. It also introduces the idea of interactions, connections and potential networks between the first women barristers (those practising at the Bar). There is a focus on professional connections such as membership to chambers, circuits and professional societies and some exploration of social connections and interactions at events. In simple terms, an interaction is understood to mean ‘an occasion when two or more people communicate with or react to each other’.<sup>148</sup> An interaction may be minimal in the sense that they saw or spoke to each other, or they have had a conversation with each other. A connection is a relationship between two individuals<sup>149</sup> that persists in everyday life; these connections can be between people, groups, organisations and nations.<sup>150</sup> Relationships can take three different forms: a non-directional relationship is where A and B are in the same place geographically but they do not know each other; a directional relationship is where A knows B, and perhaps A likes B but B does not like A; in reciprocal relationships, A and B like each other.<sup>151</sup> Directional and reciprocal relationships are the beginning of a simple network.<sup>152</sup> This thesis deals mainly with non-directional or directional relationships because there is limited

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<sup>146</sup> Bedwell, C.E.A. ‘Conditions of Admission to the Legal Profession throughout the British Empire’, *Journal of the Society of Comparative Legislation* 12, no. 2 (1912): 209–32.

<sup>147</sup> ‘Woman Barristers: Outlandish Names’, *Chronicle (Adelaide, SA : 1895 - 1954)*, 3 April 1930, p.66.

<sup>148</sup> Cambridge Dictionary. ‘Interaction’. Accessed 27 August 2024.  
<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/interaction>.

<sup>149</sup> Lizardo, Omar and Jilbert, Isaac “3.1 Social Network Analysis: From Relationships to Graphs,” September 18, 2019, [https://bookdown.org/omarlizardo/\\_main/3-1-social-network-analysis-from-relationships-to-graphs.html](https://bookdown.org/omarlizardo/_main/3-1-social-network-analysis-from-relationships-to-graphs.html).

<sup>150</sup> Kadushin, Charles *Understanding Social Networks: Theories, Concepts, and Findings* (Oxford University Press, 2012); Caldarelli, Guido and Catanzaro, Michele, *Networks: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

<sup>151</sup> Kadushin, *Understanding Social Networks: Theories, Concepts, and Findings*; Borgatti, Everett, and Johnson, *Analyzing Social Networks*.

<sup>152</sup> Kadushin, *Understanding Social Networks: Theories, Concepts, and Findings*; Borgatti, Everett, and Johnson, *Analyzing Social Networks*.



evidence to understand how well the first women barristers knew each other; reciprocal relationships have been difficult to identify.

In general terms, networks and connections are important because, among other things, they can help us understand the underlying structures of society<sup>153</sup> and illustrate how and why people are connected.<sup>154</sup> Connections in the law were, and still are, vital for aspiring barristers, not just with other barristers but also with solicitors and clerks.<sup>155</sup> Margaret Prothero, for example, practised as a barrister for a while but eventually worked as a solicitor with her brother because male solicitors were not keen on giving women briefs.<sup>156</sup> This is also reflected in a statement by a solicitor in 1930 who noted that 'the average woman barrister was inferior to her male colleague'.<sup>157</sup> A male barrister recounted that his first brief was given to him by a fellow barrister who was an old Etonian.<sup>158</sup> It can be seen that it was not just legal connections that counted for something but also social and educational networks. In the context of women barristers, their social networks reveal that although publicly they may have conformed with male practises and conventions that existed at the Bar, in their private and personal sphere they very much retained their own interests, which were typically related to women's rights or feminism.

## Sources

It is the historian's job to read, hear and understand the stories of the past and make sense of what they meant then and mean now. When understanding and making sense of sources, the historian must be critical in their interpretation and awareness of how the source was made or

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<sup>153</sup> Caldarelli and Catanzaro, *Networks: A Very Short Introduction*.

<sup>154</sup> Kadushin, *Understanding Social Networks: Theories, Concepts, and Findings*; Wasserman, Stanley and Faust, Katherine, "Social Network Analysis: Methods and Applications," *Methods and Applications*, 1994, <https://doi.org/10.1525/ae.1997.24.1.219>.

<sup>155</sup> Duman, *The English and Colonial Bars in the Nineteenth Century*; Abel, *The Legal Profession in England and Wales*; Polden, *Portia's Progress: Women at the Bar in England, 1919–1939*.

<sup>156</sup> Sabin, Saga, "Email to Charlotte Coleman from Saga Sabin, Margaret Prothero's daughter", 16 December 2019.

<sup>157</sup> *The Midland Daily Telegraph*, 'Women Barristers: Seven to Be Called To-Night: Are They Inferior to Male Colleague?', 2 July 1930, p.5. This comment was from a 'prominent solicitor' who was interviewed for this article.

<sup>158</sup> Williams, Montagu Stephen, *Leaves of a Life, Being the Reminiscences of Montagu Williams, Q.C* (Boston: Houghton, 1890), p. 71.

produced, and indeed how it ended up in an archive.<sup>159</sup> In the methodology section above, the limitations of digital research were discussed. In brief, these included the demands of technical skills of the historian; the need for critical appreciation of digital archives and inherent gaps or silences due to errors and incomplete digitisation of physical archives;<sup>160</sup> and implications of the audience.<sup>161</sup> In terms of these four limitations, this research met with two main challenges with respect to source access and analysis.

The first was due to gaps and access to the digital archive, especially when researching international women. *Ancestry* proved an invaluable source when researching the women born in the UK; however, in respect of the international women, membership had to be extended from UK records only (£10.00 per month) to international records (£19.99 per month).<sup>162</sup> Access to the digital archives of other countries was mixed. Some countries such as Singapore had a well organised, accessible digital archive. India and South Africa did not, and it was therefore not possible to access many (if any) primary sources.

Secondly, having a dialogue with the audience (some of the relatives of the first women at the Inns) meant that it was possible to get an insight into personal sources of the first women and the perspectives of their families - what they thought about their mothers', grandmothers' or relatives' admission to the Inns. One rather significant source was the unpublished memoir of Nora Gipson, the second South African woman called to the Bar. Her memoir was written around forty-years after her call, in the 1980s, and includes some information about her experiences at the Inns of Court. In his chapter about using life stories, Thomson notes that memoirs 'which are narrated with hindsight are regarded with the most suspicion' because of the subjectivity and

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<sup>159</sup> Thomson, Alistair, 'Chapter 7: Life Stories and Historical Analysis', in *Research Methods for History*, (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition), edited by Gunn, Simon and Faire, Lucy, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016), p.104–21; Tosh, *The Pursuit of History*.

<sup>160</sup> Nicholson, 'Chapter 10. Digital Research'.

<sup>161</sup> Kalela, 'Making History'.

<sup>162</sup> Ancestry.co.uk has three tiers of membership ranging from £10.00 per month for UK records only or £19.99 per month for UK, Ireland and International records: 'Join Ancestry®', Ancestry, accessed 9 July 2024, [https://www.ancestry.co.uk/offers/subscribe?o\\_xid=129016&o\\_lid=129016&o\\_sch=Paid+Search+Brand&acid=jzoxdr3bzc&gad\\_source=1&gclid=Cj0KCQjwv7O0BhDwARIsAC0sjWMGEvXuMUM2Z4v9Gn96YBjCPVblX6YzFB98saJ1UUpCLRsZopp3oUsaAvEoEALw\\_wcB&gclsrc=aw.ds](https://www.ancestry.co.uk/offers/subscribe?o_xid=129016&o_lid=129016&o_sch=Paid+Search+Brand&acid=jzoxdr3bzc&gad_source=1&gclid=Cj0KCQjwv7O0BhDwARIsAC0sjWMGEvXuMUM2Z4v9Gn96YBjCPVblX6YzFB98saJ1UUpCLRsZopp3oUsaAvEoEALw_wcB&gclsrc=aw.ds).

changeability of memory as well as the notion that the author is presenting the information and picture they want the reader to see.<sup>163</sup> However, due to the 'narrative turn' it is generally recognised that every source has its limitations in terms of how it was constructed and selected and indeed, no source presents an unmediated view of the past.<sup>164</sup> With this in mind, Nora Gipson's memoirs are understood to be subjective; they are *her* interpretations and experiences of the past. It has not been possible to fact check every detail about the Inns of Court but, where possible, sources have been corroborated. Nevertheless, what she has written reveals something about *her* experiences at the Inns and these kinds of personal recollections are invaluable because they are few and far between.

In addition to personal or family recollections, this research has gathered data from online and physical archives such as the Inns of Court Admissions Registers, British Newspaper Archive and *The Times* Archives, university archives, biographies and memoirs. Statistical details, including admission and call dates, have been obtained via the Inns of Court Admissions Registers. In some instances, data has been taken from Richard Abel's published tables.<sup>165</sup> Biographical details have been obtained from census records. Family history sites have been referred to when obtaining biographical details; these include family history websites such as *Ancestry* and *The Peerage*, and websites created by family members. In some cases, it has been possible to obtain information from private collections through family members. For example, one communication via *Ancestry* led to the discovery of the unpublished memoir of Nora Gipson, a South African woman, admitted to Middle Temple in 1928 and called in 1931. Professional connections have been identified through a variety of sources including newspaper archives, legal directories such as the Law List 1932, members list, and Law Directories of practising barristers in 1930, 1932, 1934 and 1940.<sup>166</sup>

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<sup>163</sup> Thomson, 'Chapter 7: Life Stories and Historical Analysis'; Tosh, *The Pursuit of History*.

<sup>164</sup> Thomson, 'Chapter 7: Life Stories and Historical Analysis'.

<sup>165</sup> Abel, *The Legal Profession in England and Wales*.

<sup>166</sup> *The Law List 1932* (Stevens & Sons Ltd., 1932); London Metropolitan Archives, England London, and London City Directories, 'London, England, City Directories, 1736-1943', Ancestry.co.uk, 1940, [https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/18453252:61265?tid=&pid=&queryId=c088ace1-7ec5-44d9-a18c-36fa82172fee&\\_phsrc=iCe731&\\_phstart=successSource](https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/18453252:61265?tid=&pid=&queryId=c088ace1-7ec5-44d9-a18c-36fa82172fee&_phsrc=iCe731&_phstart=successSource); London Metropolitan Archives, England London, and London City Directories, 'London, England, City Directories, 1736-1943', Ancestry.co.uk, 1934, [https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/18453252:61265?tid=&pid=&queryId=c088ace1-7ec5-44d9-a18c-36fa82172fee&\\_phsrc=iCe731&\\_phstart=successSource](https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/18453252:61265?tid=&pid=&queryId=c088ace1-7ec5-44d9-a18c-36fa82172fee&_phsrc=iCe731&_phstart=successSource); Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc. ,

Secondary sources including journal articles such as Polden, Bourne and Morris, as well as published biographies and legal history studies, have also been consulted.

## **Thesis Structure**

Chapter One firstly explains the necessary steps to become a barrister and briefly considers the role of the Inns of Court in this process. It then statistically compares the number of men and women admitted and called to the Bar and considers Bar Final pass rates.<sup>167</sup> The purpose of this comparison is to identify trends in admission and call, and to understand diversity in terms of sex. This was the first time women had been admitted to the Inns of Court and therefore diversity of sex would certainly have increased to an extent. This research will find out how diverse the Inns of Court were over this 10-year period. It can also be understood if women entering the Inns of Court were as academically 'competent' as men, whether women were more likely to drop out than men, and how well they fared in the Bar Exams.

Chapter Two identifies and focuses on the attributes of the first women admitted to the Inns of Court between 1919 and 1929 to explore diversity between them. Were they a similar age? Were the majority university educated? Was there a common social demographic or family background? The first part examines the age and education of the first woman admitted to the Inns of Court. The second part reviews the family status of the first women barristers, including marital status. Through analysis we better understand the similarities and differences between these women, including their family background, and the influences they may have had when deciding to become a barrister.

Chapter Three focuses on the 62 women who were admitted to the Inns of Court between 1919 and 1929 as part of the first female cohort, but who were not subsequently called to the Bar.

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2018., 'London, England, City Directories, 1736-1943 [database on-Line]', Ancestry.co.uk; London Metropolitan Archives; London, England; London City Directories, 1930, [https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/16816483:61265?tid=&pid=&queryId=89a0fcb5-cecf-4b4a-882f-0baf05529e46&\\_phsrc=iCe791&\\_phstart=successSource](https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/16816483:61265?tid=&pid=&queryId=89a0fcb5-cecf-4b4a-882f-0baf05529e46&_phsrc=iCe791&_phstart=successSource).

<sup>167</sup> Averages cited and/or compared refer to the mean average.

Through collective biographies, we uncover the Bar journey of these women and examine whether they had any intention of practising as a barrister. their participation (or not) in the Bar exams and common themes among ages are also considered. This reveals diversity in terms of professional motivations and ideas and brings to light the much-neglected stories of the Uncalled Women.

Chapter Four examines the country of birth of the 236 women admitted to the Inns of Court between 1919 and 1929 to understand cultural and ethnic diversity at the Inns. It compares admissions, call rates, age and provides a brief biographical overview of the first international women admitted to the Inns of Court, identifying the lesser-known women who were born overseas. It considers the reasons why international women students may have come to England seeking admission to the Bar of England and Wales and analyses the ethnicity of the international women admitted to the Inns of Court. Ethnicity is compared with more recent statistical data on diversity in the legal profession.

Chapter Five examines diversity in terms of sex and ethnicity at the practising Bar. It identifies the women who potentially practised and aims to understand if these women were ethnically diverse. It considers the membership of women to Circuits and Chambers to understand what steps these women took towards. This chapter aims to understand diversity at Bar in terms of sex and ethnicity and understand some of the steps these women took in their practise, such as joining chambers and circuits. Through this analysis it can be understood that the Bar was a masculine-culture, but these women persevered, nevertheless.

The Conclusion of this thesis summarises the findings of this research and reflects on an important question: why does this research matter? It considers how this research progressed from an academic thesis to a meaningful piece of research that tells the stories of those ordinary women who did nothing spectacular in the context of the Bar but did something quite remarkable in the eyes of their families. Finally, it considers areas for further research.

## Conclusion

Scholarly, professional and public understanding with respect to this under-explored area of legal history has come a long way. This is a significantly positive step given that the first women barristers were largely unheard of before their popularisation in 2019. However, from this thesis this historical record is not complete. To an extent, incompleteness is the nature of history; however, this research does add several missing pieces to this unfinished jigsaw of the first women barristers. Not only have certain women been neglected, usually because they did not do or achieve anything particularly noteworthy (an area that legal historians are now addressing), but there has also been a neglect of more digital and data driven methodologies.<sup>168</sup> Despite wider access to digital sources, historical methodologies have 'tended to focus on the text, the discourse and the narrative';<sup>169</sup> methodologies in women's legal history have predominantly taken a biographical focus. Perhaps this is because of the barriers to using digital research and datasets: the need for increased technological skills; critical understanding of digital archives; paywall barriers; and implications of the audience. Perhaps data from digital sources does not offer the richness of qualitative sources and the 'intimacy' that a physical archive does.<sup>170</sup> While not without their limitations, digital research can solve many practical and logistical challenges for the researcher, and analysis of the data enables exploration of wider themes at the Bar such as diversity, revealing different shifts and patterns in the historical record. This kaleidoscopic view not only enhances our understanding of the past but also makes us think differently about the present.

This thesis provides a more comprehensive picture and understanding in respect of the first women at the Inns of Court. It sets their story in a wider historical context by using data to explore the idea of diversity at the Inns of Court in terms of biological sex and ethnicity between 1919 and 1929. It identifies whether women were as academically competent as men upon entry to

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<sup>168</sup> See the discussion in the methodology section about biography. For example, Nolan, in *Biography: An Historiography*, understands that biography as a methodology can be inherently biased and consequently present a distorted picture of the past.

<sup>169</sup> Morris, 'Chapter 9: Document to Database and Spreadsheet'.

<sup>170</sup> Ludmilla, Jordanova, *History in Practice* (United Kingdom: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2019).

the Inns, as determined by call rates and the Bar Final Exam, and if there was a certain type of woman entering the Inns. Importantly, it brings to light the untold stories of the 'Uncalled' and international women through understanding diversity in terms of professional motivations and ideas. It finally considers the connections of those women who practised as barristers to understand if the Bar itself was diverse and how these women interacted. It finds that despite there being potential for the Bar to be diverse, it nevertheless retained its white, upper-middle-class homogeneous identity and made minimal or no effort to be inclusive towards women. Nevertheless, there was some solidarity among the women barristers in terms of their interactions and connections.

# Chapter 1 : Diversity and Performance: The First Women Bar Students at the Inns of Court between 1919 and 1929

*'There were three major societies - the two Temples and Lincoln's Inn and one minor house - Gray's Inn.'*<sup>171</sup>

This chapter explains the steps that were necessary to become a barrister to understand the process that was involved. It also briefly considers the role of the Inns of Court, distinguishing them from the Bar. This chapter then compares the number of men and women admitted and called to the Bar and considers Bar Final pass rates. The purpose of this comparison is to identify trends in admission and call, to understand diversity in terms of sex, and to explore how the level of diversity changed over this 10-year period. We can also understand if women entering the Inns of Court were academically as 'competent' as men in terms of their Bar Final pass rate and consider if they were more or less likely to be called. This chapter provides important insight into diversity and performance over this 10-year period.

## Becoming a Barrister

The first step to becoming a barrister in England and Wales was to join one of the four Inn of Court in London. The Inns of Court have a long and rich history, dating back to the 14<sup>th</sup> century when lawyers had begun to congregate in the Temple.<sup>172</sup> Applicants had to declare their age, parentage, intention to practise, and that he or she did not have any legal convictions or engaged in trade.<sup>173</sup> They also had to have passed an examination of a standard not lower than the Oxford and Cambridge Senior Local (this would be equivalent to A-Levels today).<sup>174</sup> The application had

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<sup>171</sup> Duman, *The English and Colonial Bars in the Nineteenth Century.*, p.26.

<sup>172</sup> 'The Inns of Court & Inns of Chancery & Their Records'.

<sup>173</sup> Bedwell, 'Conditions of Admission to the Legal Profession throughout the British Empire'.

<sup>174</sup> Worsfold, Adrian, 'History of School Examinations', accessed 26 January 2024, <http://www.pluralist.co.uk/learning/howteach/exams.html>.



to be accompanied by certificates as to their character.<sup>175</sup> Before being called to the Bar, applicants had to keep 12 terms by dining in the hall of his or her Inn on six days of each term; members of a university were only required to dine on three instead of six days in each term.<sup>176</sup> The applicant also had to be 21 years of age, and to have passed an examination to the satisfaction of the Council of Legal Education.<sup>177</sup>

### *Inns of Court*

At the outset, it is necessary to distinguish the difference between the Inns of Court and the Bar. In the context of the 1920s, the Inns of Court essentially controlled membership of the Bar through the Benchers; they oversaw legal education, dinners and other social events. They were, and still are, responsible for calling student members to the Bar so that they can practise as a barrister. The Bar is understood to be the 'collective term for barristers who have been called to the Bar'.<sup>178</sup>

The four Inns of Court were, and still are, located in London: Middle Temple, Inner Temple, Gray's Inn and Lincoln's Inn. The creation of the Inns of Court dates back to the Middle Ages, when they served as temporary accommodation for lawyers and legal apprentices (hence the name *Inn* of Court). In addition to accommodation, they held social events and offered legal training.<sup>179</sup> The hierarchy of the Inns includes: the Treasurer, who governs in association with the Council, and Benchers who are elected to the bench on attaining high judicial office or on the basis of a distinguished professional career.<sup>180</sup> Student members (once known as inner barristers) are those

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<sup>175</sup> References of character will vary depending on whether the applicant resides in the United Kingdom or overseas applicant.

<sup>176</sup> Bedwell, 'Conditions of Admission to the Legal Profession throughout the British Empire'.

<sup>177</sup> The examinations generally included eight examinations including Roman Law, Constitutional Law and Legal History, Criminal Law and Procedure, Real Property and Conveyancing (or Hindu and Mahomedan Law or Roman-Dutch Law), Common Law, Equity, Evidence and Civil Procedure and a General Paper. Some members were exempt from sitting some exams, for example, if they could show they had passed an exam in that subject during their university studies.

<sup>178</sup> 'Definition of Bar', Legal Choices, accessed 10 July 2024, <https://www.legalchoices.org.uk/dictionary/bar>.

<sup>179</sup> Palfreyman, David, *London's Inns of Court: History, Law, Customs, and Modern Purpose* (United Kingdom: Oracle Publishing, 2011); Abel, *The Legal Profession in England and Wales*.

<sup>180</sup> 'The Inns of Court & Inns of Chancery & Their Records'.

who have been admitted to the Inns of Court. Barristers (once known as 'utter' or outer barristers) are those who have been called to the Bar and can legally practise as barristers.

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Inns of Court reformed some of their practices by reviving the Council of Legal Education and introducing a formal syllabus and mandatory Bar examinations in the 1870s.<sup>181</sup> The 1920s heralded a major change in the composition of the Bar when women were legally permitted to enter following the enactment of the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act 1919. However, this led only to a trickle of women being admitted to the Inns of Court. Polden, surveying the women admitted and called between 1919 and 1939, found that 428 women were admitted between this 20-year period.<sup>182</sup> The proportion of women entrants remained between 2.9% and 4.8% until the Second World War, with actual annual figures never exceeding 27.<sup>183</sup> The information above has gone some way towards increasing our understanding of diversity in terms of sex at the Inns of Court and enriching the historical context. From this, it is possible to understand that women were extremely under-represented at the Inns of Court, despite the formal equality granted by the 1919 legislation. There was no opening of the floodgates, no inclusivity, and minimal diversity of sex. However, re-examining the numbers, and comparing them with men, can provide a powerful way of understanding and further quantifying diversity at the Inns. They reveal trends, or the absence of them, and outliers. This chapter will provide a breakdown of that much needed numerical data to enhance our understanding of diversity in terms of sex. It will examine the number of women admitted and called, as well as their results in the Bar examinations.

### **Admissions to the Inns of Court: Women and Men**

Overall, 236 women were admitted to the four Inns of Court in England and Wales between 1919 and 1929; this figure sees an increase of five women compared to other statistical research of

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<sup>181</sup> Palfreyman, *London's Inns of Court: History, Law, Customs, and Modern Purpose*; Cocks, Raymond *Foundations of the Modern Bar* (United Kingdom: Sweet & Maxwell, 1983); Duman, *The English and Colonial Bars in the Nineteenth Century*.

<sup>182</sup> Polden, *Portia's Progress: Women at the Bar in England, 1919–1939*.

<sup>183</sup> *Ibid.*

the period.<sup>184</sup> See Appendix A for a full list of the women admitted. During the same decade, 5968 men were admitted. Proportionally, women made up 4% of admissions. *Table 1.1* below gives a breakdown of men and women admitted, comparing the proportion of women.

	Men and Women Admitted to the Inns of Court				
	Men		Women		
Inn	No. admitted	% admitted at the Inn	No. admitted	% admitted at the Inn	Proportion of women admitted at the Inn (%)
Middle Temple	1868	31.3	90	38.1	4.8
Inner Temple	1808	30.3	60	25.4	3.3
Gray's Inn	1287	21.6	47	19.9	3.7
Lincoln's Inn	1005	16.8	39	16.5	3.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>5968</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>4.0</b>

Table 1.1: Total of Women and Men Admitted to the Bar between 1919 and 1929 and Proportion of Women Admitted (percentage)

From the above we can see that Middle Temple admitted the most men and women overall thus had the highest percentage of admission. It also admitted the highest proportion of women. *Table 1.1* above indicates that Middle Temple accounted for 38.1% of all admissions of women and 31.3% of admissions of men during this 10-year period. While the percentage of total admissions in respect of men is not especially high (Inner Temple accounted for 30.3%), it is nevertheless the case that Middle Temple drew in more students compared to the other Inns of Court. Inner Temple saw the next highest admissions for both men and women, followed by Gray's Inn and Lincoln's Inn. However, although Gray's Inn and Lincoln's Inn saw the fewest women admitted compared to the other two Inns, they nevertheless saw a higher proportion of

<sup>184</sup> Polden does not provide a figure for admissions during this period; however, based on the information in his Index, a manual count records that 231 women were admitted. Five women have therefore been omitted from Polden's data; these are: Loveday Shackell Farquharson, who was admitted and called to Gray's Inn; Sydney Alice Malone, admitted and called to Gray's Inn; Chaturlaxmi Balkrishna Joshi, admitted to Middle Temple; Layla Smit, admitted to Middle Temple; Ben Sim Wong, admitted to Lincoln's Inn. See: Polden, 'Index to Women: Portia's Progress Women at the Bar in England 1919 - 1939'; Temple, 'Registers of Admissions'; Inn, 'Registers of Admission'; Mussell, 'Women Admitted to Gray's Inn'.

women admitted than Inner Temple. This is because Inner Temple had the second highest number of male admissions across this 10-year period (1808) and very few women. From the above, an interesting finding can be identified: the high percentage of admissions to Middle Temple. Why did Middle Temple see higher admissions across this decade?

Duman, who has researched the English Bar in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, found that there were 'three major societies - the two Temples and Lincoln's Inn and one minor house - Gray's Inn.'<sup>185</sup> Between 1780 to 1885, admissions at the Inns were subject to 'considerable fluctuations'.<sup>186</sup> Lincoln's Inn saw a decline in popularity; Middle Temple saw notable expansion; Inner Temple remained fairly stable and Gray's Inn saw a temporary revival followed by a severe contraction; it may have suffered as a result of its less than ideal location.<sup>187</sup> Drawing on figures from Abel's research into the legal profession in England and Wales,<sup>188</sup> a similar story emerges for the preceding years. Between 1890 and 1919, Inner Temple, by and large, saw the most admissions. Middle Temple also saw high admissions, although there was a slight decline between 1894 and 1899.<sup>189</sup> There were fewer admissions at Lincoln's Inn, but they remained consistent; there was a significant increase in admissions between 1908 and 1910.<sup>190</sup> Gray's Inn saw significantly fewer admissions than the two Temples.<sup>191</sup>

Therefore, it appears that admissions of men and women between 1919 and 1929 followed a historical trend that saw the two Temples as the most popular Inns. However, this does not explain why Middle Temple, and then Inner Temple, were so popular. While this may to an extent have depended on individual preferences, there were some physical changes that may have attracted students. For example, there was a new, gothic library built on the riverfront in Middle Temple to cater for the influx of students; this was opened in 1861 by Albert Edward, Prince of

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<sup>185</sup> Duman, *The English and Colonial Bars in the Nineteenth Century.*, p.26.

<sup>186</sup> Ibid., p.25-27.

<sup>187</sup> Ibid., p.26.

<sup>188</sup> Abel, *The Legal Profession in England and Wales.*

<sup>189</sup> Ibid., p.330, Table 1.12.

<sup>190</sup> Ibid., p.330, Table 1.12.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid., p.330, Table 1.12.

Wales, who was made the Inn's first Royal Benchers.<sup>192</sup> The Inner Temple library was also later extended eastwards in 1872 and opened by Queen Victoria.<sup>193</sup> These physical changes and royal links may have been attractive for prospective students. Lincoln's Inn was known as the home of the Equity Bar and so it may have targeted a specific audience.<sup>194</sup> Gray's Inn's location and size may have deterred some applicants.

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, there was an influx of overseas students, which may have contributed to higher admissions. Duman finds that in 1835, overseas Bar students were less than 2% but by 1885 overseas students were 12% of admissions predominantly from the East Indies and Australia.<sup>195</sup> Abel found a similar pattern: by the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, overseas students made up around 30-40 % of admission and calls at Middle Temple.<sup>196</sup> At Middle Temple, over 1,000 members admitted in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century had overseas links, predominantly from India, Burma, the Caribbean.<sup>197</sup> Polden also found that Middle Temple was most popular with overseas applicants, who made up between 44 and 69% of annual calls between 1932 and 1939.<sup>198</sup> The other Inns also had links with colonial countries; Clare Rider, former archivist at Inner Temple, notes that Lincoln's Inn had a special association with India and Hong Kong.<sup>199</sup> However, it does appear that Middle Temple seemed to draw in the overseas students and that it saw higher admissions from this category.<sup>200</sup>

In respect of women, it is possible that media coverage of Helena Normanton's admission could have influenced the women's choice of Inn. Middle Temple was the first Inn to admit a woman,

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<sup>192</sup> 'The Nineteenth Century - Revolution and Revitalisation', The Honourable Society of the Middle Temple, 2023, <https://www.middletemple.org.uk/archive/history/nineteenth-century-revolution-and-revitalisation>.

<sup>193</sup> 'Buildings', The Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn, 28 September 2018, <https://www.lincolnsinn.org.uk/about-us/the-history-of-the-inn/buildings/>.

<sup>194</sup> 'The Library', The Inner Temple Library (Inner Temple Library, 17 December 2015), <https://www.innertemplelibrary.org.uk/inner-temple/history/the-library/>.

<sup>195</sup> Duman, *The English and Colonial Bars in the Nineteenth Century*, p.10.

<sup>196</sup> Abel, *The Legal Profession in England and Wales*, p.76.

<sup>197</sup> 'The Nineteenth Century - Revolution and Revitalisation'.

<sup>198</sup> Polden, *Portia's Progress: Women at the Bar in England, 1919-1939*.

<sup>199</sup> Rider, Clare, 'The Admission of Overseas Students to the Inner Temple in the 19th Century', Inner Temple, 16 March 2017, <https://www.innertemple.org.uk/who-we-are/history/historical-articles/the-admission-of-overseas-students-to-the-inner-temple-in-the-19th-century/>.

<sup>200</sup> Based on Abel's data: Abel, *The Legal Profession in England and Wales*.

and Helena Normanton had been a prominent women's right campaigner especially with respect to opening the Bar to women. Judith Bourne, biographer of Helena Normanton, notes that her admission was widely reported in the press. The *Manchester Guardian* insisted that more than half of applicants in 1920 had been influenced by the 'pioneer'.<sup>201</sup> Although Bourne questions the evidence of this claim, a significant amount of news articles were published between December 1919 and December 1920.<sup>202</sup> This suggests she would have been well-known in the public eye among women, and perhaps men. An interesting point to note is that admissions of men to Middle Temple did not decrease despite the women's campaign to open the legal profession and the admission of Helena Normanton. This suggests that men were not detracted from entering the Inns of Court because of women's entry. However, it may suggest that men merely continued to follow their own predetermined path. It is understood that barriers to women's entry came instead from the Benchers, those who had been at the Inns for a significant amount of time.<sup>203</sup> Perhaps men of the younger generation were more supportive of women's entry to the Bar.

To gain a better understanding of admissions across this period, we can survey total admissions each year at the individual Inns as detailed in *Table 1.2* below.

	Total No. Admitted to the Inns				
	Men		Women		
Year	No. Admitted	% admitted per year	No. Admitted	% admitted per year	Proportion of women admitted (%)
1919	592	9.9	1	0.4	0.2
1920	753	12.6	47	19.9	6.2
1921	515	8.6	14	5.9	2.7

<sup>201</sup> Bourne, Judith. 2014. "Helena Normanton and the Opening of the Bar to Women" (unpublished PhD Thesis, Kings College, London), p.92.

<sup>202</sup> A search of the British Newspaper Archive during the period 01/12/1919 to 31/01/1920 revealed 44 published articles including the words 'first women barristers'. Of this selection, the words 'Middle Temple' featured 36 out of 42 times (86 per cent). The date selection was to examine how often specific Inns of Court were mentioned to understand their press coverage in respect of women admittance.

<sup>203</sup> Ibid.

1922	566	9.5	20	8.5	3.5
1923	494	8.3	21	8.9	4.3
1924	483	8.1	28	11.9	5.8
1925	488	8.2	17	7.2	3.5
1926	514	8.6	19	8.1	3.7
1927	492	8.2	21	8.9	4.3
1928	530	8.9	20	8.5	3.8
1929	541	9.1	28	11.9	5.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>5968</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>4.0</b>

Table 1.2: Number of Women and Men Admitted to the Inns of Court between 1919 and 1929

As can be seen, the 1920s saw the highest number of admissions for both men and women. 1920 accounted 12.5% of male admissions and just under 20% of women admissions; this year also saw the highest proportion of women admitted. This raises the question: why was there a high level of admissions for both men and women in 1920? Duman traces the admission patterns at the Inns of Court between 1785-1885 and finds that fluctuations in admission were due to the prevailing economic conditions of boom and depression.<sup>204</sup> A similar situation can be seen to an extent in 1920. There was an economic upturn in 1918, which could have seen increased prosperity and led to a higher level of applications at the Inns of Court between 1918 and 1920. Indeed, in May 1920, less than 1% of the insured labour force was registered as unemployed, illustrating that employment opportunities were plentiful, and the economy was strong. However, unemployment rose to 23% by May 1921.<sup>205</sup> This crash was due to a severe reduction in global trade. Ruined nations, focused on regeneration and protectionism to boost productivity. In Britain's temporary absence from traditional trading hotspots, others had stepped in to take control.<sup>206</sup> Perhaps this is why there was such a significant decrease of applications in 1921.

<sup>204</sup> Duman, *The English and Colonial Bars in the Nineteenth Century.*, p.2-3.

<sup>205</sup> Hyde, Dan. 2010. "Why Was the 1921 Recession so Bad?." This Is Money. January 16, 2010. [https://www.thisismoney.co.uk/money/news/article-1687281/Why-was-the-1921-recession-so-bad.html](https://www.thisismoney.co.uk/money/news/article-1687281/Why-was-the-1921-recession-so-bad.html;).; Godden, Christopher, 'Post-War Economies (great Britain and Ireland) / 1.0 / Handbook - 1914-1918-Online (WW1) Encyclopedia', 1914-1918-Online (WW1) Encyclopedia, 2 July 2024, <https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/post-war-economies-great-britain-and-ireland/>.

<sup>206</sup> Flanagan, Richard, *Parish-Fed Bastards. A History of the Politics of the Unemployed in Britain* (London: Praeger, 1991); Christopher Godden, 'Post-War Economies (great Britain and Ireland) / 1.0 /

Subsequently, Britain was characterised by unemployment throughout the 1920s and this could explain why admissions did not reach the levels seen in 1920. Of course, other factors may also have influenced applications this year.

In respect of women, the likely explanation is that the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act 1919 was passed on 23 December 1919, making 1920 the first full year that women could be admitted to the Bar. The campaign to open the legal profession (and other professions) to women had been widely publicised and celebrated and many women had been waiting for this opportunity.<sup>207</sup> For example, *The Vote* encouraged women to 'do their part' in supporting the Women's Freedom League's strenuous campaign to open up the legal profession to women. It notes that 'men have done their part in bringing these Bills... Women must now do their part... by focusing and demonstrating their demand for them.'<sup>208</sup> This links to Bourne's notion that the opening up of the legal profession was a 'result of a successful feminist campaign vociferously fought for by women and sympathetic men.'<sup>209</sup> As such, 1920 had a backlog of female barristers that no other year had. In the wider context, Nancy Astor also became the first woman to enter Parliament and, although she had few feminist credentials to begin with, she became a vocal advocate of women's employment rights in the 1920s.<sup>210</sup> The social conditions for women would have been very favourable, thus encouraging women to pursue a career at the Bar.

In respect of men, the position is more complex. Given the rise of unemployment in the 1920s, being admitted to the Inns of Court may have been a logical course as they could undertake their legal training and hope that the economic circumstances had improved by the time of their call (whether they intended to become a barrister or not). Indeed, Duman notes that a young man

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Handbook - 1914-1918-Online (WW1) Encyclopedia', 1914-1918-Online (WW1) Encyclopedia, 2 July 2024, <https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/post-war-economies-great-britain-and-ireland/>.

<sup>207</sup> Bourne, 'Helena Normanton and the Opening of the Bar to Women', 2016; Martin Pugh, *Women and the Women's Movement in Britain, 1914-1959*; Cheryl Law, *Suffrage and Power: The Women's Movement, 1918-1928* (London: Bloomsbury Square, 2000).

<sup>208</sup> 'Everybody's Business! The Moment Has Come for: Women Barristers, Women Solicitors, Women Magistrates', *The Vote*, 13 June 1919, 223.

<sup>209</sup> Bourne, 'Great Expectations and Hard Times:- the Advent of the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act 1919 and Women's Entry to the Legal Profession', p.1.

<sup>210</sup> McCarthy, Helen, *Women of the World: The Rise of the Female Diplomat* (United Kingdom: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2014).



did not necessarily intend to practise law upon his call to the Bar as there were not enough places in the profession; however, other occupations such as the civil service, politics and business attracted members of the Bar.<sup>211</sup> This suggests that the Bar provided good grounding in other professions and not everyone who was admitted intended on practising as a barrister. However, there was a significant cost involved in qualifying as a barrister so this would only be an option for those who were financially secure.

Returning from the First World War (1914 - 1918) may also have been a reason for higher admissions in men. Although the war officially ended in November 1918, the millions of men who were serving there were not able to return home immediately; some had to wait for months due to a demobilisation scheme that ensured the gradual release of men from military service.<sup>212</sup> Admission in this sense may have been fulfilling an ambition, to become a barrister, or merely an option of something to do as employment opportunities were challenging in the 1920s. In any case, Polden found that after the First World War, men took the Bar more seriously as a career and were less likely to use it as a finishing school.<sup>213</sup> This suggests that those who were admitted wanted to work either as a barrister or in another profession that required or benefited from legal training.

More broadly, admissions in the 1920s may have increased due to recovery from the Spanish Flu pandemic; this took place between 1918 and 1920 and saw approximately 50 million deaths.<sup>214</sup> As a result of this influenza pandemic, many normal proceedings were halted or temporarily slowed down.<sup>215</sup> Finally, after the First World War, British universities received an influx of

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<sup>211</sup> Duman, *The English and Colonial Bars in the Nineteenth Century.*, p.4.

<sup>212</sup> 'Voices of the First World War: Homecoming', Imperial War Museums, 2023, <https://www.iwm.org.uk/history/voices-of-the-first-world-war-homecoming>.

<sup>213</sup> Polden, *Portia's Progress: Women at the Bar in England, 1919–1939*.

<sup>214</sup> Niall P. A. S. Johnson and Juergen Mueller, 'Updating the Accounts: Global Mortality of the 1918-1920 "Spanish" Influenza Pandemic', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 76, no. 1 (Spring 2002): 105–15.

<sup>215</sup> Nelsson, Richard. 'How the 1918 Flu Pandemic Rolled on for Years: A Snapshot from 1920'. The Guardian, 11 March 2020. <https://www.theguardian.com/science/from-the-archive-blog/2020/mar/11/archive-influenza-pandemic-snapshot-1920>.

students who had undertaken wartime service in different forms.<sup>216</sup> In 1919 the government set up a scheme, enabled by the 1918 Education Act, to provide university grants for ex-servicemen, covering tuition fees and living costs.<sup>217</sup> This expansion coupled with the industrialisation, and the growth of the middle-classes and the professions, led to an increase in universities, university numbers, and foreign students alike.<sup>218</sup> Therefore, some of these men may have had the opportunity to pursue an education and/or profession and the Bar may have been an option for them.

Aside from the influx of admission in the 1920s, the number of women entering the Inns remained consistent across this 10-year period. There are a couple of outliers: 1924 and 1929 both saw 28 women admitted, making up over 5% of total admissions. This finding superseded previous research that claimed that, excluding 1920, the actual number of admissions never exceeded 27.<sup>219</sup> Increased admission in 1929 is significant because the New York stock market crashed in 1929 thus seeing an economic depression in the 1930s.<sup>220</sup> There was not a slump in admissions following the impending economic depression; however, a decrease in this regard may be seen later in the 1930s. While there were some peaks and troughs in women's admissions, overall they remained fairly consistent over this 10-year period.

Taking the above into account, it was clear that there was no influx (as feared by many opposers to women's admission) of women over this 10-year period. Numerically and proportionally, women's admissions remained low, with men making up 96% of all admissions and women making up just 4% of admissions. Moreover, diversity of sex largely decreased over the period, not seeing a rise until 1929. While 1920 looked promising, with women making up 6.2% of total admissions, this proportion dropped significantly between 1921 and 1928 (except for 1924).

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<sup>216</sup> Laqua, Daniel, and, Brewis, Georgina, 'Students in England and the Legacy of the First World War'. University College London, 2018.  
<https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/10138116/1/Students%20in%20England%20and%20the%20Legacy%20of%20the%20First%20World%20War.pdf>.

<sup>217</sup> Ibid.

<sup>218</sup> Ibid.

<sup>219</sup> Polden, *Portia's Progress: Women at the Bar in England, 1919–1939*.

<sup>220</sup> Smiley, Gene, 'The U.s. Economy in the 1920s', Economic History Association, 2019,  
<https://eh.net/encyclopedia/the-u-s-economy-in-the-1920s/>.

Things looked more positive in 1929 when the proportion of women rose to 5.2%. However, considering Polden's numbers, if 428 were admitted between 1919 and 1939, that would mean that approximately 192 were admitted between 1930 and 1939.<sup>221</sup> This would indicate that diversity in terms of sex did not increase in the preceding decade and in fact fewer women were admitted to the Inns of Court compared to 1919 and 1929. Overall while there was some diversity at the Inns of Court as some women were present, it was very minimal.

As a result of this research, there is a much clearer picture in terms of the trends in admissions between 1919 and 1929. First, Middle Temple and Inner Temple were the most popular Inns; Middle Temple saw most admissions of both men and women. Second, the 1920s saw the highest admissions of both men and women over this 10-year period. Now it is necessary to examine the calls to the Bar to understand how these compare with men and women as well as identifying any trends and variances.

### **Calls to the Bar: Men and Women**

Of the 236 women admitted to the Bar, 174 were called (73.7%). 62 women were not called, amounting to 26.3%. This section reviews the overall percentage of the 1919 to 1929 cohort of applicants who were called to the Bar (*Table 1.3*). It provides a year-by-year breakdown of calls to the Bar (*Table 1.4*) and compares the duration of call of men and women (*Tables 1.5 and 1.6*). From previous research, we understand that women were more likely to drop out than men.<sup>222</sup> However, this research provides a more complete picture as to how they proceeded through their legal training compared to men and why women did not proceed to call. For comparison purposes, it has only been possible to obtain call data for men at Middle Temple and Inner Temple due to the composition of, and access to, call registers. *Table 1.3* below details the overall percentage of the 1919-1929 cohort called to Bar.

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<sup>221</sup> Polden found that 428 women were admitted during the 20-year period; this research finds that 236 women were admitted between 1919 and 1929. This leaves a difference of 192 women admitted between 1930 and 1939. Polden, *Portia's Progress: Women at the Bar in England, 1919–1939*.

<sup>222</sup> Ibid.

	Men			Women		
	Admitted	Called	%	Admitted	Called	%
Middle Temple	1868	1316	70.4	90	72	80.0
Inner Temple	1808	1121	62.0	60	40	66.7
Gray's Inn	1287	-	-	47	38	80.9
Lincoln's Inn	1005	-	-	39	24	61.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>5968</b>			<b>236</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>73.7</b>

Table 1.3: Number and Percentage of the 1919-1929 Cohort Called to the Bar

Middle Temple saw the most women called and a high percentage (80%), but Gray's Inn was a fraction higher at 80.9%. The percentage of women called at Inner Temple is significantly lower at 66.7% of women called to the Bar. This variation is also seen with men: 70.4% of men were called at Middle Temple but only 62% were called at Inner Temple. Unfortunately, there is no comparable data for Gray's and Lincoln's Inn in respect of men. For women, we can see that Gray's Inn had the highest percentage of calls for women and Lincoln's Inn had the lowest.

From the above we can establish, in line with previous research, that women were no more likely to drop out than men.<sup>223</sup> Therefore, women were as likely to be called as men. This can also be seen today: more women were called to the Bar compared to men between 2017 to 2021.<sup>224</sup> To examine calls to the Bar further, *Table 1.4* below sets out a year-by-year breakdown of Calls at Middle Temple and Inner Temple in respect of men and women.

	Middle Temple						Inner Temple					
	Men			Women			Men			Women		
Year	Admitted	Called to Bar (No/%)		Admitted	Called to Bar (No/%)		Admitted	Called to Bar (No/%)		Admitted	Called to Bar (No/%)	
1919	256	206	80.5%	1	1	100.0%	160	104	65.0%	0	0	0.0%

<sup>223</sup> Ibid.

<sup>224</sup> Bar Standards Board, 'Call to the Bar and Tenancy Statistics', accessed 25 April 2023, <https://www.barstandardsboard.org.uk/news-publications/research-and-statistics/statistics-about-the-bar/call-to-the-bar-and-tenancy.html>.

1920	329	228	69.3%	33	25	75.8%	159	85	53.5%	3	3	100.0%
1921	133	97	72.9%	6	6	100.0%	157	107	68.2%	2	1	50.0%
1922	144	102	70.8%	3	2	66.7%	176	114	64.8%	8	4	50.0%
1923	123	94	76.4%	6	5	83.3%	165	109	66.1%	5	3	60.0%
1924	135	85	63.0%	7	7	100.0%	150	91	60.7%	10	6	60.0%
1925	144	84	58.3%	4	4	100.0%	175	108	61.7%	7	6	85.7%
1926	131	92	70.2%	7	7	100.0%	176	104	59.1%	6	4	66.7%
1927	112	79	70.5%	8	6	75.0%	165	108	65.5%	6	5	83.3%
1928	173	117	67.6%	4	3	75.0%	163	101	62.0%	5	3	60.0%
1929	188	132	70.2%	11	6	54.5%	162	90	55.6%	8	5	62.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1868</b>	<b>1316</b>	<b>70.4%</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>80.0%</b>	<b>1808</b>	<b>1121</b>	<b>62.0%</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>66.7%</b>

Table 1.4: Number and percentage of the 1919-1929 Cohort Called to Bar year by year at Middle Temple and Inner Temple

#### *Calls to the Bar - Women*

In respect of Middle Temple, for five of the 10 years (1919, 1921, 1924, 1925 and 1926), 100% of women admitted were later called. This amounts to 25 women in total. Excluding these years, at least 66% of those admitted were called, except for 1929 where 54.5% of women admitted were called (six out of 11). One of the reasons for the low call rate in 1929 was that three of the five women not called (60%) were international students who returned to their native country. Overall, Middle Temple saw a relatively high call rate across this 10-year period. At Inner Temple, 1920, 1925 and 1927 saw high call rates. In 1920, 100% of women admitted were later called; in absolute numbers this amounts to three women. 1925 and 1927 also saw a high proportion of women called, ranging from 70 to 85%. Aside from these three years, calls remained in the 50 to 60% range, with the fewest women being called in 1921 and 1922.

Although not listed in the table above, data from this research reveals that Gray's Inn saw the highest percentage of women called across the four Inns at 80.9%. 1920 and 1925 were the years that saw the highest call rates at 100%. In absolute numbers this amounts to four women in total (two each year). Overall, the number of women called was relatively high across the years ranging from 75 to 85%; this is except for 1926 and 1927, which saw 66.7 and 60% of women called.

Lincoln's Inn saw 100% of women called in 1922, 1925 and 1928; this amounts to 11 women in total. 60% to 75% were called in 1921, 1923, 1925 and 1929. Only half of those admitted in 1920 were called (three out of six). In 1926 33% of the women were called (one out of three), and in 1924 only 25% (one out of four).

### *Calls to the Bar: Men*

The call rate for men at Middle Temple and Inner Temple was always less than 100%. At Middle Temple, the percentage called to the Bar was high, in the high 60 to 70% range, except for 1924. Inner Temple saw a lower call rate with around 60% called. This is in line with Abel's finding that there was a decline in calls at the Bar after 1924, and that the pass rates on Part 1 of the Bar examination also fell.<sup>225</sup> However, this downward trend was not seen at Middle Temple.

From the above, it can be understood that the first women admitted to the Inns of Court did extremely well give the historical and social context. The Bar had only just opened to them and women were not really expected to work after marriage; indeed, the marriage bar remained in other professions. Some years saw 100% of women called, and although this was only a few women in absolute numbers, it does illustrate their determination and a drive to proceed and succeed through their legal training to the Bar. Men, on the other hand, had had access to the legal profession for centuries and indeed saw it as a kind of finishing school. Consequently, some entered without ever intending to practise and saw it merely as a stepping stone to society rather than a serious professional endeavour. There were, of course, those who took it very seriously and went on to have distinguished careers; but when access is always available, it can sometimes be taken for granted.

Taking the above into account, it is important to consider why women did not proceed to call. Research has revealed diverse and varied reasons why women did not continue to practise. Reasons include pursuing an alternative career path; marriage; returning to native country; ill-health or death; or, in one case, being struck off. Most women, 29 out of 62 (46.8%) did not

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<sup>225</sup> Abel, *The Legal Profession in England and Wales.*, p.68.

proceed to call because they continued with careers outside of the law, including the Civil Services, Medical or Education. For example, in 1920, there were five applications to the Middle Temple from women in the Civil Service.<sup>226</sup> Consequently, two potential factors as to why women did not proceed to call were women's career aspirations, motivations and aims: they did not actually want to practise as a barrister. It appears that these women did not really have the intention to practise as a barrister, so perhaps these admissions may have reflected a political motivation to qualify as a barrister, a seal of approval for Helena Normanton's tireless campaigns to enter the legal profession. Chapter 3 examines reasons for not being called, as well as the collective biographies of the Uncalled women.

Age also appears to be another factor affecting call rates. Polden found that mature women were less likely to proceed to call and under-graduates were less likely to be called.<sup>227</sup> As discussed further in Chapter 2, there was indeed a tendency for more mature women not to proceed to call; this was due to them returning to a career they had before they were admitted to the Bar. For example, those who were 40 to 49 years old when admitted, saw a 61.6% call rate.<sup>228</sup> However, 100% of women over 50 when admitted were called (four women in total). Therefore, not all mature women were less likely to proceed to call. In respect of very young women, there was indeed a low call rate of those under 18: 1 out of 4 was called (25%). However, one of the highest call rates was seen in women aged 18 to 21 when admitted: 69 out of 86 were called (90.2%). Therefore, it is not as clear cut as young under-graduates or mature women were less likely to be called. While there are no comparable figures for men during this period, Able has noted that in 1900, 37% of men called to Middle Temple were under 26.<sup>229</sup> This would place women in a similar age group to men as they would have been around this age when called; this is explored further in Chapter 2.

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<sup>226</sup> See Chapter 3: Uncalled Women: Katherine Robertson Andrew, Anne Wilson Hastings, Fanny Isabel Taylor, Alice Gertrude Troup and Edith Helen Pratt were all admitted to Middle Temple in the 1920s; they all worked in the civil service, but did not proceed to call.

<sup>227</sup> Polden, *Portia's Progress: Women at the Bar in England, 1919–1939*.

<sup>228</sup> See Chapter 2, Table 2.1 Age of Women Upon Admission to the Bar.

<sup>229</sup> Abel, *The Legal Profession in England and Wales*, p.74.

So far, this research has identified that women were no less likely to be called than men and has highlighted reasons why some were not called. It now considers the duration from admission to call to further understand if there was a difference between men and women. It also includes some individual examples of why some women took a long time to be called.

#### *Duration from Admission to Call: Men and Women*

To find out if there were any differences in how long it took men and women to be called, the duration of call was calculated for 1920 to 1929. 1919 has been excluded because only one woman was admitted to the Inns in that year (Helena Normanton, the moment the legislation was passed at the end of the calendar year). *Table 1.5* below details the average duration from admission to call for women and men at Middle Temple and Inner Temple, and for women only at Gray's Inn and Lincoln's Inn as data for these Inns is not yet readily available for men.

Inn	Average Duration of Call	
	Men	Women
Middle Temple	41.7	48.8
Inner Temple	47.7	45.1
Gray's Inn	-	44.3
Lincoln's Inn	-	58.9

Table 1.5: Average Duration from Admission to Call for Women and Men (months)

The average duration from admission to call for women at Middle Temple was 48.8 months, which is roughly four years. For men, the average was slightly shorter at 41.7 months (approximately three and a half years), but this includes 53 men who were already practising lawyers and admitted *addendum* (in addition). At Inner Temple, the average duration from admission to call for women was 45.1 months (three years nine months). For men, the average was slightly longer at 47.7 months (three years eleven months); only 10 men were admitted to the Bar within 12 months. As there is no significant difference between the duration of call for men and women at Middle Temple or Inner Temple it can be concluded that women were not likely to take longer than men to be called to the Bar. In respect of Gray's Inn, the average



duration from admission to call was 44.3 months (three years seven months). At Lincoln's Inn, the average duration of call for women was 58.9 months (approximately four years and five months). If the duration of call year by year is compared, and individual circumstances considered, more can be understood about why the duration of call is higher or lower. *Table 1.6* below includes a year-by-year breakdown of the duration of call.

	Middle Temple			Inner Temple			Gray's Inn		Lincoln's Inn	
Year	Men	Women	Difference	Men	Women	Difference	Men	Women	Men	Women
1919		34					N/A		N/A	
1920	40.1	52	11.9	34.6	40	5.4	N/A	36.3	N/A	126.7
1921	40.5	37.7	-2.8	39.7	33	-6.7	N/A	36.5	N/A	41.7
1922	37.4	33.5	-3.9	49.1	45.3	-3.8	N/A	46.7	N/A	37.6
1923	36.6	68.8	32.2	46.3	49.3	3.0	N/A	61.4	N/A	42.3
1924	42.7	49.1	6.4	51.8	51.1	-0.7	N/A	39.3	N/A	42
1925	39.6	33.8	-5.8	46.2	38.3	-7.9	N/A	56	N/A	121.5
1926	40	51.6	11.6	51	42.5	-8.5	N/A	42	N/A	43
1927	46.1	83.5	37.4	50.6	58.8	8.2	N/A	33.7	N/A	-
1928	41.8	37.7	-4.1	54.9	50.3	-4.6	N/A	47.6	N/A	37
1929	52.3	40	-12.3	52.7	42.2	-10.5	N/A	43.3	N/A	38.3
<b>Average</b>	<b>41.7</b>	<b>48.8</b>	<b>7.1</b>	<b>47.7</b>	<b>45.1</b>	<b>-2.6</b>		<b>44.3</b>		<b>58.9</b>

Table 1.6: Duration from Admission to Call for Women and Men (months) year by year

#### *Duration of Call: Women*

##### *Middle Temple*

Looking at the women first, 1922 saw the shortest duration of call on average at Middle Temple, taking 33.5 months (two years and eight months). Two of the three women admitted in 1922 were called: Emily Frost Phipps was the individual called the fastest in this year at around 33 months (two years nine months). Emily Phipps was admitted on 24 April 1922 and called 26 January 1925; she was not entitled to exemptions from the examinations or dining as she did not have a law degree and achieved a Class II in her Bar Finals. At the time of call, she would have

been around 59 years old. It appears that she did go on to practise, acting as standing counsel to the National Union of Women Teachers and having chambers at 3 Essex Court.<sup>230</sup>

However, Emily Frost Phipps was not the individual called the fastest overall, that was Beroe Bicknell, admitted on 18 November 1920 and called 13 June 1923; she took 30 months (two years and five months). Beroe Bicknell had a First-Class law degree, which would have allowed her to skip some of the exams. She was not entitled to any further exemptions as far as is known.<sup>231</sup> Beroe Bicknell went on to practise as a barrister, establishing a Chancery practice; in 1968, she was the first woman elected to the Institute of Conveyancers.<sup>232</sup>

The year with the longest average duration from admission to call was 1927, at 83.5 months (six years and 11 months). This is because Dorothy Johnson was admitted in this year on 8 November 1927 and she was not called until 1955, a difference of around 325 months, 27 years. Johnson had undertaken several positions in the Civil Service such as Inspector of Factories and was called to the Bar after her retirement.<sup>233</sup>

### *Inner Temple*

At Inner Temple, the shortest year on average from admission to call for women was 1921, taking 33 months (two years nine months). Only one of the two women admitted in this year was called: Edith Mary Price, known as Mary Price, admitted on 30 September 1921 and called on 2 July 1924. Mary Price had neither a law degree nor a Certificate of Honour, achieving a Class II in the Bar Final.<sup>234</sup> She practised briefly at the Chancery Bar before entering the Civil Service.<sup>235</sup>

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<sup>230</sup> Kean, Hilda. "Phipps, Emily Frost (1865–1943), feminist and headmistress." Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. 23 Sep. 2004; Accessed 11 Dec. 2024.  
<https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-51782>.

<sup>231</sup> Bicknell achieved a Class II in her Bar Final so this would not have entitled her to skip any dining.

<sup>232</sup> Polden, *Portia's Progress: Women at the Bar in England, 1919–1939*, p.311.

<sup>233</sup> 'Dorothy Johnson', *Who's Who & Who Was Who*, Oxford University Press, 1 December 2007, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ww/9780199540884.013.U156152>.

<sup>234</sup> *The Vote*, 'More Women Barristers', 18 January 1924., p.18.

<sup>235</sup> *The Times*, 'Miss Mary Price', 21 May 1980, p.18.

Mary Price was not the fastest individual called at Inner Temple, that was Dr Ivy Williams, who was called in 27 months (two years three months). Ivy Williams achieved a First Class in her Bar Final, which meant she could skip a term of dining; she also read Jurisprudence, meaning that she could skip some exams. As is well documented, Ivy Williams did not practise law and instead became a law lecturer.<sup>236</sup>

The longest duration from admission to call was in 1927, taking 58.8 months on average (four years 10 months). In this year, five out of the six women admitted were called; Joan Meredyth Chichele Julien, admitted on 16 November 1927, appears to have taken the longest. Joan Julien initially withdrew, training as a solicitor instead. In 1934 she passed the Law Society Final and Honour Examinations for admission to the Roll of Solicitors for the Supreme Court; She was also re-admitted to Inner Temple on 10 November in the same year. Joan Julien was called two years later, on 24 June 1936.<sup>237</sup>

### *Gray's Inn*

At Gray's Inn, the shortest duration from admission to call was in 1927 when it took 33.7 months (two years nine months). In this year, three of the five women admitted were later called; two were called in 32 months (two years eight months). Phylis Mabel Martin was admitted on 3 October 1927 and Josemee Marguerite Bernal Greenwood on 7 October 1927; both were called on 2 July 1930. Josemee Greenwood studied Languages at Leeds University and received a Class III for her Bar Finals so would not have been entitled to any exemptions.<sup>238</sup> She did go on to practise; this may indicate that she was keen to get started as a barrister, and explain her relatively fast time to call.<sup>239</sup> Less is known about Phylis Mabel Martin; she received a Class III for

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<sup>236</sup> Fox, Hazel. "Williams, Ivy (1877–1966), first woman barrister in England." Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. 23 Sep. 2004; Accessed 11 Dec. 2024. <https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-36924>.

<sup>237</sup> 'Jullien, Joan Meredyth Chichele' (1920-1946), Inner Temple Admissions Records, <https://archives.innertemple.org.uk/names/b2f1646e-904b-4090-91f3-71aaf7175233>.

<sup>238</sup> *The Vote*, 'Women's Law Success', 27 June 1930, p.202.

<sup>239</sup> Josemee Greenwood appeared in the 1934 and 1940 Law Directory and attended the Criminal Court Bar Mess in 1933. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 'UK, City and County Directories, 1766 - 1946', Ancestry.co.uk, 1934, <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui->

her Bar Final so would not be entitled to any exemptions in this regard. It is not known if she attended university. She does not appear to have gone on to practise.

The individual who was called to Gray's Inn in the fastest time was Olive Reid Morris, admitted on 17 October 1924 and called on 26 January 1927. Olive Morris took 27 months (the same time as Dr Ivy Williams), two years and three months. As a law graduate from Liverpool University, Morris was entitled to some exemptions from the examinations; however, she received a Class II for her Bar Final meaning that she was not entitled to skip any of the dining requirements. Morris went on to practise and married Ivan Herbert Cruchley, also a barrister, in 1929.<sup>240</sup>

The year that saw the longest time elapse from admission to call for women was 1923; women took 61.4 months on average to be called (five years and one month). In this year, Mary Christina Sheppard was admitted on 1 May 1923 and called on 17 October 1935. Sheppard qualified as a medical doctor before her call to the Bar and was noted as the Assistant Medical Officer for Walthamstow Borough Council; it is likely that she pursued this career path.<sup>241</sup> It is not clear why she wanted to formally qualify as a barrister, but she did give evidence in court on the postmortem of a body in 1924. Perhaps she felt that having a knowledge of the law would aid her in her profession.

#### *Lincoln's Inn*

At Lincoln's Inn, the fastest duration from admission to call was 1928 at 37 months (three years one month). In this year two out of two women were called, the fastest was Hannah Margaret Cross, taking 31 months (two years, six months). Hannah Cross was admitted to Lincoln's Inn on 2 November 1928 and called on 17 June 1931; she read Philosophy, Politics and Economics at

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content/view/28845220:3145?tid=&pid=&queryId=2b89a6cbc6cc1a8d9727620788d82c55&\_phsrc=iCe28  
&\_phstart=successSource; Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc. , 2018., 'Greenwood, Miss  
Josemee Bernal, London, England, City Directories, 1736-1943', Ancestry.co.uk, accessed 16 November  
2023, [https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-](https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/16228980:61265?tid=&pid=&queryId=c51d2723aaabb19f93322d80c5d49a0a&_phsrc=iCe4&_phstart=successSource)  
content/view/16228980:61265?tid=&pid=&queryId=c51d2723aaabb19f93322d80c5d49a0a&\_phsrc=iCe4  
&\_phstart=successSource; *The Times Saturday*, 'DINNERS', 14 October 1933, p.15.

<sup>240</sup> *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, 'Barristers Wed', 30 July 1929, p.5.

<sup>241</sup> Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 'UK Medical Registers, 1859-1959', Ancestry.co.uk, 2008,  
[https://www.ancestry.co.uk/imageviewer/collections/33538/images/31183\\_A400004-](https://www.ancestry.co.uk/imageviewer/collections/33538/images/31183_A400004-00513?ssrc=pt&treeid=157408340&personid=122159195790&usePUB=true&pId=15639)  
00513?ssrc=pt&treeid=157408340&personid=122159195790&usePUB=true&pId=15639.

Oxford University and achieved a Class III in her Bar Finals.<sup>242</sup> After her call, Hannah Cross went on to practise as a barrister. In 1935, she was one of only 12 members of the Chancery Bar Association and was the first woman member of the General Council of the Bar, 1938-45.<sup>243</sup> There was also another woman called in 31 months, Cicely Leadley-Brown, admitted 18 November 1921 and called 2 July 1924. It is not known if Cicely Leadley-Brown attended university, but she achieved a Class II in her Bar Final.<sup>244</sup> Cecily Leadley-Brown went on to practise for at least 16 years; she appeared in cases reported in newspapers from 1927 to 1940 and was listed in the 1946 Directory.<sup>245</sup>

The individual who was called the fastest overall was Cornelia Sorabji. As is well-known, Cornelia Sorabji was already a qualified lawyer in India; as a law graduate, she would have been entitled to exemptions from the exams and dining. She was admitted on 1 May 1922 and called on 13 June 1922, taking 13 months. The year with the longest duration from admission to call at Lincoln's Inn was 1920, taking 126.7 months (10 years six months). In this year, all the four women admitted were called. The reason for the significant length of time was because Alix Hester Marie Kilroy, who was admitted to Lincoln's Inn on 22 April 1925 and was not called until after her retirement from the civil service in 1956,<sup>246</sup> therefore taking 368 months, around 30 years. Kilroy took the longest to be called across the four Inns of Court.

#### *Duration of Call: Men*

#### *Middle Temple*

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<sup>242</sup> *The Vote*, 'Women's Law Successes', 23 January 1931, p.27.

<sup>243</sup> 'Hannah Wright', *The Times*, 25 February 2008, <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/hannah-wright-2mczk6g07v5>.

<sup>244</sup> 'More Women Barristers', 18 January 1924.,p.18.

<sup>245</sup> Cicely Leadley-Brown was a member of the Northern Circuit, Liverpool; chambers: 8 Cook Street, Liverpool. *Evening Express*, 'Four Months For Bigamy', 31 January 1940, p.4; *The Liverpool Echo*, 'Three Years' Penal: Sentence on Man with a Long Record', 1 November 1927, p.4; 'Leadley-Brown, Miss Cicely', Legal Lists, Barristers (1946), Trades Directory.

<sup>246</sup> Green, Arthur. "Meynell [née Kilroy], Dame Alix Hester Marie, Lady Meynell (1903–1999), civil servant." Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. 23 Sep. 2004; Accessed 11 Dec. 2024. <https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-65869>.

Turning now to the men at Middle Temple and Inner Temple. For men at Middle Temple, the shortest year on average from admission to call was 1923, taking 36.6 months (three years). This is slightly longer than the women by seven months. James Macfie, Deputy Judge Advocate General, Punjab, India was the fastest man, called in 1923 in just over two months.<sup>247</sup> Excluding those who were previously lawyers, John Edwards Goston Carberry, admitted on 17 September 1923 and called 26 January 1925, was the fastest individual to be called from the 1923 cohort.<sup>248</sup> Carberry went on to become one of the Chief Justices of Jamaica and his son also trained at Middle Temple.<sup>249</sup> Middle Temple saw many men admitted and called to the Inn over a relatively short period, zero to 12 months: around 50 men were called in under 12 months, all of them lawyers of some form such as a solicitor, a member of the Irish Bar or a vakil (a lawyer in their native country). There were a few men who were not lawyers who were called relatively quickly. One example is George Harold Lloyd Jacob, who was admitted on 11 November 1921 and called on 26 January 1923, with a duration of around 14 months.<sup>250</sup> George Jacob became a King's Counsel and Patent Law Judge at the High Court.<sup>251</sup>

The longest duration from admission to call was in 1929 taking 52.3 months, around four years four months. The reason why this year saw the longest duration from admission to call was because two men withdrew their admission to Middle Temple in 1929 but were then re-admitted in the 1940s; their duration from admission in 1929 to call in the late 1940s, was just over 220 months, around 18 years. The individual who took the longest time to be called was Edwin Donald Lewis Branch, admitted on 25 October 1921 and called on 30 April 1947. Edwin Branch withdrew on 4 November 1926 and was readmitted on 12 February 1947. It has not been possible to find out why Branch had such a significant delay to his call.

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<sup>247</sup> 'Middle Temple Admissions Register, 1910-1944 [online]', The Honourable Society of the Middle Temple, accessed 16 July 2024, <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mBwag9X-LkfPciZMa70ZNmbywwNOg1Yt/view>. p.873

<sup>248</sup> Ibid. p.874

<sup>249</sup> 'Nature by H.d Carberry', Scribd, accessed 13 June 2024, <https://www.scribd.com/document/213312629/Nature-by-H-D-Carberry>.

<sup>250</sup> 'Middle Temple Admissions Register, 1910-1944 [online]' p.863

<sup>251</sup> Kent-Jones, D. W. "Obituary: Sir George Harold Lloyd Jacob." *Proceedings of the Society for Analytical Chemistry* 7, no. 4 (January 1, 1970): 74–74.

### *Inner Temple*

For men, the year with the shortest duration from admission to call at Inner Temple was 1920, at around 34.6 months (roughly two years and 10 months). The individual who was called in the fastest time was Charles Robert Warren, who was admitted on 21 May 1920 and called under one month later on 16 June 1920.<sup>252</sup> Warren's profession was listed as 'solicitor' and this presumably allowed him exemptions to the usual formalities.<sup>253</sup> As with Middle Temple, there were a number of men who were called relatively quickly; at least 14 were already lawyers or had been called to the Irish Bar.<sup>254</sup> Of those who were not already lawyers, some were called in 12 months. Presumably these men would have been afforded some exemptions. For example, Neil Lawson, called to Inner Temple in 10 months, received a certificate from Middle Temple certifying that he had completed eight terms of commons and paid all duties.<sup>255</sup> The longest duration from admission to call for men was 1928, taking 54.9 months (around four years and six months). The reason why this year saw the longest duration is because Joseph Prendergast, an American Citizen, was admitted to the Bar in this year but was not called until 1963, 420 months later (35 years).<sup>256</sup> Joseph Prendergast was also called to the New York State Bar; he was also appointed the Executive Director of the National Recreation Association and served on various other committees. By 1963, he had been certified as a professional social worker.<sup>257</sup> Presumably these events delayed his call to the Bar.

When comparing the men and women's duration from admission to call at Middle Temple and Inner Temple it appears that there was not much difference between them. Both men and women's average duration is very similar at Inner and Middle Temple with only a few months

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<sup>252</sup> 'Inner Temple Admissions Records 1920-1946', ADM/2/11 (1920-1946), <https://archives.innertemple.org.uk/records/ADM>.

<sup>253</sup> Three other men who were admitted in 1920 also listed their profession as a 'solicitor'. One of them was called in two months.

<sup>254</sup> Ibid.

<sup>255</sup> Neil Lawson went on to become a Queen's Counsel, 1955; Benchet, 1961; and appointed a Justice of the High Court of Justice, 1971. See: 'Neil Lawson' (1920), Inner Temple Admissions Records, <https://archives.innertemple.org.uk/records/ADM>. <https://archives.innertemple.org.uk/records/ADM> Ibid.

<sup>256</sup> 'Inner Temple Admissions Records 1920-1946'.

<sup>257</sup> Ibid.

difference. Women therefore did not take any longer than men to be called on average. In addition, both men and women saw significant lapses in time from admission to call due to individual circumstances. The main difference is that a small proportion of men at Middle Temple and Inner Temple were called relatively quickly, in under 12 months, because they were lawyers or had been admitted to another Bar. Only one woman, Cornelia Sorabji of Lincoln's Inn, benefited from that privilege. There is some correlation between the duration of call and whether women proceeded to practise. Of the 10 women mentioned above who had the fastest duration times, 80% went on to practise. Conversely, 75% of the women who looked the longest time to be called did not go on to practise, choosing another profession such as the Civil Service. We can therefore see that women were no less competent than men in terms of completing their legal training. This shall now be examined further by reviewing the Bar Examinations.

## Bar Examinations

During the period concerned, Bar students sat several examinations, typically over the course of three years. There were two parts to the examinations, and each part consisted of different papers.<sup>258</sup> In the 1920s, Part I of the Bar Examinations included Roman Law; Constitutional Law and Legal History; Criminal Law and Procedure; and Real Property and Conveyancing (or Hindu and Mahomedan Law, or Roman-Dutch Law).<sup>259</sup> Part II was made up of the Final Examination, where students had to pass papers in Common Law; Equity; Law of Evidence and Civil Procedure; and a General Paper on the same three subjects.<sup>260</sup> There were eight Bar examinations, and these were held in Hilary, Easter and Trinity terms.<sup>261</sup> Some students were exempted from certain

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<sup>258</sup> Bourne, 'Helena Normanton and the Opening of the Bar to Women', 2016; Abel, *The Legal Profession in England and Wales*. Li Chen, 'The First Malayan Chinese Women Barristers and Their Pursuit of Legal Education in Britain, 1923–1934', *South East Asia Research* 29, no. 3 (3 July 2021): 332–47. Li Chen and Yi Li, 'Seeking "A Fair Field" for Women in the Legal Profession: Pioneering Women Lawyers from Burma of 1924–1935', *Britain and the World* 14, no. 2 (2021): 105–27.

<sup>259</sup> Chen, 'The First Malayan Chinese Women Barristers and Their Pursuit of Legal Education in Britain, 1923–1934'..., p.338. Chen and Li, 'Seeking "A Fair Field" for Women in the Legal Profession: Pioneering Women Lawyers from Burma of 1924–1935'.

<sup>260</sup> Chen, 'The First Malayan Chinese Women Barristers and Their Pursuit of Legal Education in Britain, 1923–1934'..., p.338.

<sup>261</sup> A. D. Tessyn and W. D. Edwards, 'Bar Examination Journal', *The Bar Examination Journal* 10, no. B (1982):i.; Chen, 'The First Malayan Chinese Women Barristers and Their Pursuit of Legal Education in Britain, 1923–1934'.



exams, such as Roman Law, if they could show they had passed an exam in that subject during their university studies.<sup>262</sup> The exams could be sat at different times, and at any time after admission to an Inn of Court. In preparation for the exams, students could attend lectures and classes set up by the Council of Legal Education (CLE), although many home students opted for correspondence courses or private tuition. In some cases, overseas students could not afford private tuition and so had to attend the lectures and become tutors themselves.<sup>263</sup>

This research has focused on the outcome of the Bar Final exams only; the Bar Finals consist of Part 1 and Part 2, but only the latter was compulsory for law graduates.<sup>264</sup> Consequently, the results of the Bar Final Part 2 have been collected and are referred to as the 'Bar Final'. It has been possible to identify the results of the Bar Final for all the 174 women called. For comparison purposes, a sample of the Bar Finals for men between 1922 and 1934 has been collected and Abel's figures have been relied on.<sup>265</sup> This focus period (1922 to 1934) has been chosen because 80% of the first women barristers were called to the Bar no later than 1934. To give some context to this result, the women were typically University educated. Chapter 2 explores this further, finding that approximately 79.6% of women admitted attended a university.<sup>266</sup> The majority of men were also university educated.<sup>267</sup> *Table 1.7* below illustrates the pass rate of the Bar Final exam between 1922 and 1934.

Year	Taking	Passing	Percentage
1922	500	425	85%
1923	478	404	85%
1924	517	411	79%

<sup>262</sup> Abel, *The Legal Profession in England and Wales*; Chen, 'The First Malayan Chinese Women Barristers and Their Pursuit of Legal Education in Britain, 1923–1934'.

<sup>263</sup> Gipson, Nora Myfanwy, 'Nora Myfanwy Gipson's Memoirs', 1980.

<sup>264</sup> Abel, p.43 notes that part 2 of the final was the only examination for the increasing proportion who read law as undergraduates.

<sup>265</sup> See Table 1.1 Bar examination pass rates, 1873-1974, p.311 in Abel, *The Legal Profession in England and Wales*.

<sup>266</sup> Dorothy May Last, admitted to Lincoln's Inn but not called, attended Southport Training College, a college that trained teachers; this was not a university, so she has been included in the 'none' category. *Northern Whig*, 'Southport Physical Training College', 6 September 1913, p. 6.

<sup>267</sup> Abel, *The Legal Profession in England and Wales*.

<b>1925</b>	535	376	70%
<b>1926</b>	456	349	77%
<b>1927</b>	449	359	80%
<b>1928</b>	456	324	71%
<b>1929</b>	551	352	64%
<b>1930</b>	607	391	64%
<b>1931</b>	610	311	51%
<b>1932</b>	659	363	55%
<b>1933</b>	554	262	47%
<b>1934</b>	558	302	54%

Table 1.7: Number of Men and Women Taking and Passing the Bar Final Part 2 between 1922 and 1934<sup>268</sup>

As can be seen, the pass rates for 1922 and 1928 were high: 85% passed in 1922 and 1923; 79% passed in 1924; 70 and 77% passed in 1925 and 1926 respectively. 1927 saw a slight rise when 80% passed. Although there was a slight decline in 1928, pass rates remained in the 70% range. From 1929, there began to be a decline in pass rates with 64 % passing in 1929 and 1930. A further decline can be seen in 1931 with 51% passing. Between 1932 and 1934 pass rates fluctuated between the 50 and 40% range. This leads to the question: why was there a decline in pass rates from 1928 and again from 1931?

Abel found that the pass rate continued to drop, remaining in the 40 and 50% from 1931 to 1946.<sup>269</sup> He suggests the decline could have been due to an increase in overseas students, of whom there were a significant amount during the interwar period.<sup>270</sup> Chen Li recognises this in his research into the first Malayan Chinese women barristers.<sup>271</sup> He found that out of the five

<sup>268</sup> Figures based on Table 1.1 Bar examination pass rates, 1873-1974, p.311 in Ibid. and my own data collection for women.

<sup>269</sup> This is based on the information in Abel's Table 1.1 Bar Examination pass rates 1873-1974, p.310-313 taken from *The Times* where Abel's data stops. Abel's own figures go further up to 1974, but this period is not relevant to this research. See Ibid.

<sup>270</sup> Ibid., p.42 and 44.

<sup>271</sup> Chen, 'The First Malayan Chinese Women Barristers and Their Pursuit of Legal Education in Britain, 1923-1934'.

Chinese women admitted to the Inns of Court, only two of them (Lim Beng Hong and Lucy See) passed every examination at the first attempt. Lucy See achieved the best overall performance amongst the five women in the Bar Examination, achieving a Class II honours in the Bar Final. In contrast, Teo Soon Kim passed the Constitutional Law and Legal History paper on her fourth attempt. Lim Beng Tek failed the Criminal Law and Procedure paper once, while Wong Beng Sim failed that same paper twice and eventually gave up on the Bar Examination altogether and returned home (Wong Beng Sim had not studied law or enrolled at a law school and was fresh out of school, so the demands on her would have been quite high).<sup>272</sup>

More generally, Abel notes that the pass marks rose dramatically during and after both wars. This suggests that examiners recognised the sacrifice of those who had served in the armed forces and, also needing to make up for the deaths suffered by the Bar, lowered the pass mark.<sup>273</sup> As well as this, new regulations came into force in 1931, which could have affected pass rates.<sup>274</sup> From existing sources, we know that the Council of Legal Education offered lectures for Bar students; however, few English students attended these, opting for private crammer or correspondence courses instead.<sup>275</sup> South African student Nora Gipson, admitted to Middle Temple on 25 January 1928 and called 29 April 1931, remembers that:

*Reading for the Bar involved attendance at lectures, where I found I was not only the sole white person in the room, apart from my lecturer, but also the only woman... Apparently, the English students had private coaching... I do not think I ever exchanged one word with the other students from Nigeria, India, Jamaica, etc. To earn some money, I started coaching in my second year...*<sup>276</sup>

Nora Gipson's account is interesting. If, as Abel suggests, overseas students struggled with the Bar Exams and if, as Nora Gipson's quote suggests, most of them were attending the lectures provided by the Council of Legal Education, it would appear that these lectures were not beneficial or sufficient in terms of legal training. It has been possible to identify that at least 52

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<sup>272</sup> Ibid., p.338.

<sup>273</sup> Abel, *The Legal Profession in England and Wales.*, p.42 and 44.

<sup>274</sup> Ibid.

<sup>275</sup> Bourne, 'Helena Normanton and the Opening of the Bar to Women', 2016.

<sup>276</sup> Gipson, 'Nora Myfanwy Gipson's Memoirs', p.79.

of the 65 (80%) of international students attended a university,<sup>277</sup> which suggests that they were academically capable. Some may have faced a language barrier but nonetheless were able to embark on the Bar exams; they could speak and read English.

We also learn that Nora Gipson found the subjects required for the Bar exams 'less abstruse than those in the curriculum for the Bachelor of Law Degree at the London School of Economics'.<sup>278</sup> She notes that Latin was a distinct advantage as they had to read Justina's Principles of Roman Law in Latin. Gipson noted:

*The bulky textbook entitled Equity gave me quite a shock: it required a lot of concentration and was hard to digest, while a fat, red book on the Law of Tort looked to be something extraordinary but turned out to be simply about civil wrongs and remedies. The Law of Contract I thought was fascinating.*<sup>279</sup>

From Nora Gipson's memoirs we can understand, as would be assumed, that law graduates were at an advantage when it came to reading for the Bar. Indeed, Abel found that law graduates passed the Bar Final examination without difficulty; non-law graduates could pass with around nine months of study.<sup>280</sup> When the Bar exams were introduced, Duman noted that they were laughable, suggesting they were easy.<sup>281</sup> However, overtime, it appears that if an individual wanted to pass the Bar exams, and achieve one of the top grades, a substantial amount of effort was required. Despite Nora Gipson undertaking a law degree and appearing to take her exams seriously, she only managed to achieve a Class III for her Bar Final. This suggests that the Bar Exams were indeed tricky and required a considerable amount of study.

To get a better understanding of how women fared in the Bar Final, it is possible to compare men and women's results. *Table 1.8* below illustrates the Bar Final Examination Results of men and women between 1922 and 1934.

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<sup>277</sup> Research presented in Chapter 4.

<sup>278</sup> Ibid., p.80.

<sup>279</sup> Ibid., p.80.

<sup>280</sup> Abel, *The Legal Profession in England and Wales.*, p.44. This is said in the context of the exams in the 1960s; however, the exams are likely to have become harder not easier so this could also be reliable for the nature of the exam in the 1920s.

<sup>281</sup> Duman, *The English and Colonial Bars in the Nineteenth Century.*

	Men			Women		
Inn	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class I	Class II	Class III
Middle Temple	11	71	279	2	42	25
Inner Temple	11	102	302	2	11	27
Gray's Inn	10	74	208	3	14	19
Lincoln's Inn	11	14	159	1	14	8
<b>Total</b>	43	261	948	8	81	79

Table 1.8: Comparison of Women and Men's Bar Final Results Between 1922 and 1934

In total, 168 women were called to the Bar between 1922 and 1934. Across the four Inns, eight women achieved a Class I, also known as a Certificate of Honour. Therefore, 4.7% of women achieved a Class 1 during this period. 81 women achieved a Class II, amounting to 48.2% of those women called. 79 achieved a Class III, which is 47%. The most common result that women achieved was a Class II. However, this is only a difference of 1.2%. 1354 men passed the Bar Final between 1922 and 1934. With the men, 43 achieved a Class I across the four Inns; this amounts to 3.2%.<sup>282</sup> 296 men achieved a Class II, which equates to 21.9%. Finally, 948 achieved a Class III, this equates to 70%. Most men therefore achieved a Class III.

The above data identifies that proportionally woman achieved better results compared with men (albeit slightly): men mostly achieved Class III and women achieved mostly Class II. Firstly, this illustrates that women were academically on a par with men. It also suggests, as was also the case with the higher proportion of women being called, that women who were admitted to the Inns were more capable and determined - perhaps because it was not their social right to be there in the first place and they had to fight for admission. In the case of men's calls to the Bar, the position may be more nuanced. On the one hand, they had access to the Bar since its 13<sup>th</sup> origins, which meant that they have always been able to become a barrister and perhaps took

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<sup>282</sup> The sample included 1354 men who passed the Bar Final between 1922 and 1934. Figures based on Table 1.1 Bar examination pass rates, 1873-1974, p.311 in Abel, *The Legal Profession in England and Wales*. and my own data collection for women.

this right for granted. However, Polden argues that the notion of the Inns of Court being a finishing school died out after the First World War, and that men subsequently took it more seriously.<sup>283</sup> Certainly, many men went on to practise as barristers or used the skills they gained from their legal training in a different field such as politics.<sup>284</sup> Yet if men were taking it more seriously and there was an abundance of male barristers as role models, why were only 60-70% called to the Bar? While this question is beyond the remit of this study (although it would make for fascinating future research), it is likely that individual factors and circumstances would have played a part, as they did with women.

## Conclusion

This chapter has presented important data about women's admissions to the Inns of Court. 236 women and 5968 men were admitted to the Inns of Court between 1919 and 1929. Proportionally, women made up 4% of admissions. Two findings in respect of admissions were identified through analysing this data. First, Middle Temple admitted the most men and women overall, meaning it had the highest percentage of admissions; Inner Temple saw the second highest admissions. The reason for this was because historically Middle Temple, along with Inner Temple, saw the most admissions. Middle Temple also built a new gothic library in the late 1800s, which may have attracted new students. In addition, there was a significant influx of overseas students, although all Inns of Court would have benefited from this. The second finding was the high number of admissions for both men and women in the 1920s. In respect of women, the likely explanation is that the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act 1919 was passed on 23 December 1919, making 1920 the first full year that women could be admitted to the Bar. In respect of men, there are two potential reasons there was a peak in admissions in 1920. The world had recently

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<sup>283</sup> Polden, *Portia's progress: Women at the Bar in England, 1919–1939*.

<sup>284</sup> One example is Lord Denning who was called to Lincoln's Inn in 1924 and went on to have a distinguished legal career as a King's Counsel and judge. He also bucks the trend slightly because his father was a draper, owning a small shop, which suggests he came from humble beginnings. Goff, Robert. "Denning, Alfred Thompson [Tom], Baron Denning (1899–1999), judge." *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. 23 Sep. 2004; Accessed 5 Dec. 2024.  
<https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-72037>.

recovered from the Spanish Flu pandemic (1918 and 1920), and men had returned from the First World War.

Of the 236 women admitted to the Bar, 174 were called (73.7%). The percentage of women called at Middle Temple and Gray's Inn was proportionally high; however, the percentage called at Inner Temple was significantly lower than expected given its higher admissions. This variance was also seen with men. From the above, it can be established that women were no more likely to drop out than men. This could be an indication of women's capability and perseverance; it could also be that for the majority, those who were admitted to the Inns in the first place wanted to practise as a barrister and therefore worked hard to achieve their goal.

In respect of the Bar exams, the Bar Final results of women called between 1922 to 1934, and a sample of men called between the same period were compared to understand any differences here. It was found that there was a decline in pass rates from 1928 and again from 1931. This was likely due to an increase in overseas students, of whom there were a significant amount during the interwar period. New regulations came into force in 1931, which could also have affected pass rates. From Nora Gipson's memoirs we can understand more about what it was like to take the Bar Exams as an overseas student. First, we can understand that having a Law degree was a distinct advantage, but that studying law at the Bar was still challenging and required intensive study. Nora Gipson, for example, achieved a Class III for her Bar Final despite having a law degree, studying, and tutoring other students. In addition, the majority of those who attended the lectures provided by the Council of Legal Education were overseas students; the English students undertook private tutoring. The interesting question that arose from this was how beneficial the lectures provided by the Council of Legal Education were. If most overseas students struggled with the Bar Exams and they were attending the lectures provided by the Council of Legal Education, it appears that perhaps what they were providing was not sufficient in terms of legal training.

In terms of diversity of sex, it can be understood that the Inns of Court were not diverse across this 10-year period. Men made up 96% and women made up 4% of admissions between 1919 and 1929. Diversity did not increase as the years went on. 1920 looked a little promising, with women making up 6.2% of the total admissions, but this proportion dropped significantly between 1921 and 1928 (except for 1924). Things looked more positive in 1929 when the proportion of women rose to 5.2%; this is not a marked increase but at least a step towards greater diversity.

Despite the fact that women were as academically competent as men in terms of their Bar Final pass rates and call rates, they still had to act more like men and 'deliberately de-emphasized their femininity to accord with the Inns of Court's masculine culture and increase their chances of professional success'.<sup>285</sup> A lack of diversity at the 1920s Bar may not be surprising given the social and historical context of the Inns of Court and legal profession more broadly. Today, the Bar is certainly becoming more diverse: in 2023, 52.6% of students at the Inns were female; however, this drops to 41.2% of practising barristers; and 19.9% of King's Counsel.<sup>286</sup> However, when it comes to practising and the higher levels of the profession then, diversity is still a challenge today.

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<sup>285</sup> Pepitone, 'Gender, Space, and Ritual: Women Barristers, the Inns of Court, and the Interwar Press'; Sommerlad Hilary and Sanderson, *Gender, Choice and Commitment*, p.60.

<sup>286</sup> Bar Standards Board, 'Diversity at the Bar 2023', January 2024, file:///Users/charlottecoleman/Downloads/Diversity-at-the-Bar-2023Final-Version.pdf.



## Chapter 2 : Age, Education and Family Status: Diversity among the First Women at the Inns of Court

*Several of the women called in the early years after the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act were significantly older than their male counterparts, having waited their whole lives for the privilege.<sup>287</sup>*

Chapter One compared the admissions, calls and Bar Final results of men and women at the Inns of Court to understand diversity in terms of sex and women's competency. This Chapter identifies and focuses on the attributes of the first women admitted to the Inns of Court between 1919 and 1929 to explore diversity between them as a group. Attributes can be 'ascribed' or 'social'. Ascribed attributes include age, sex or ethnicity; social attributes include qualities such as social or marital status and education.<sup>288</sup> Initially, the age and education of the first woman admitted to the Inns of Court are reviewed to understand diversity among these women in this respect. Analysis then turns to the family status of the first women at the Inns, looking at the fathers' profession, mothers' occupation, wider family connections in the legal profession and marital status. Some brief biographical information about the mothers of the women admitted to the Inns, and the husbands of those women who were married before admission, is provided to aid understanding of the social status of the first women. Through statistical analysis diversity between the first women at the Inns of Court can be better understood. Analysis aims to find out if the first women at the Inn of Court were a similar age, if they were mostly university educated. It will review their social and marital status and identify what the 'typical' (if any) woman at the Inns of Court was like between 1919 and 1929.

### Age

It has been possible to identify, from the Admission Registers at the Inns of Court, the age of all 236 women who were admitted to the Bar between 1919 and 1929. *Table 2.1*, below, details the

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<sup>287</sup> 'The First Women Admitted as Members of Lincoln's Inn'.

<sup>288</sup> Kadushin, *Understanding Social Networks: Theories, Concepts, and Findings*; Borgatti, Everett, and Johnson, *Analyzing Social Networks*; Nickerson, Charlotte, 'Ascribed Status: Definition & Examples', Simply Psychology, 26 February 2023, <https://www.simplypsychology.org/ascribed-status.html>.

age of these women at the time of their admission to the Bar. Ages have been grouped into seven categories: under 18 years; 18-21; 22-25; 26-29; 30-39; 40-49; and over 50. As most applications came from the 18 to 20s age group (70.6 %) this group has been divided up into 18-21, 22-25 and 26-29, to identify any possible trends. They have been grouped in this way because 18 to 21 years is the age at which people typically went to university or finished their further education. At 22 to 25, they would likely have finished their university studies and perhaps embarked on their career. At 26 to 29, they would have been considered mature students and would likely have been doing something before their application to the Bar. While it is noted that neither women nor men needed a university degree to become a barrister at this time,<sup>289</sup> categorising women in this way gives an idea of whether the majority were typically of university age or not.

	No. of Women				
Age	Admitted	Called	Not Called	% Called	% of total admissions
<18	4	1	3	25	1.7
18-21	86	69	17	80.2	36.4
22-25	51	36	15	70.6	21.6
26-29	30	21	9	70	12.7
30-39	48	35	13	73	20.3
40-49	13	8	5	61.6	5.5
>50	4	4	0	100	1.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 2.1: Age of Women Upon Admission to the Bar

As can be seen, most of the women admitted to the Bar between 1919 and 1929 were from the 18 to 21 age brackets: 86 in total (36.4%). The next highest age bracket of admissions was 22 to

<sup>289</sup> Candidates should have passed an examination of a standard not lower than the Oxford and Cambridge Senior Local, equivalent to A Levels today. Bedwell, 'Conditions of Admission to the Legal Profession throughout the British Empire'.

25, where 51 women were admitted (21.6%). Overall, the under 30s age group is extremely dominant, as 171 of the 236 women admitted between 1919 and 1929 (72.5%) were in this group. However, the 30 to 39 age categories did see a fair few admissions, with 48 women admitted (20.3%). Overall, the over 30s comprised 27.5% of all admissions. Across this 10-year period, there were four women admitted when they were 17 and four women in the over 50s category. They are set out below in *Table 2.2*.

Inn	Name	Admitted	Called	Age at Admission
Gray's Inn	Mary Robina Stevens	8-Oct-1920	28-Jan-1924	17
Lincoln's Inn	Candida Dhunbar Saklatvala	4-Nov-1926	Not Called	17
Middle Temple	Lala Smit	1-Nov-1927	Not Called	17
Lincoln's Inn	Beng Sim Wong	16-Apr-1929	Not Called	17
Lincoln's Inn	Mercy Ashworth	16-Apr-1920	26-Jan-1923	51
Middle Temple	Emily Frost Phipps	24-Apr-1922	26-Jan-1925	56
Lincoln's Inn	Cornelia Sorabji	1-May-1922	13-Jun-1923	54
Gray's Inn	Florence Ada Coxon (nee Neale)	7-Jun-1928	26-Jan-1933	65

Table 2.2: Youngest and Oldest Women Admitted to the Inns of Court

Three of the four women (75%) who were 17 years old did not go on to be called. Candida Saklatvala was born in England and was of mixed (Anglo-Indian) ethnicity.<sup>290</sup> As will be explained in Chapter 3, she married Erick Carl Albert Backhaus, Civil Servant, in July 1934 when she was approximately 25 years old; they later had a child.<sup>291</sup> Although there was an 80 year gap between her admission and marriage, the fact that she sat law exams in 1932, 1933 and 1934 is evidence that she was proceeding with her legal studies throughout this period. She failed her Bar Final in

<sup>290</sup> Candida Saklatvala's father Shapurji Saklatvala was Born into one of India's wealthiest families and moved to London in 1907 see: UCL, 'Shapurji Saklatvala', The Equiano Centre, 1 October 2019, <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/equiano-centre/drawing-over-colour-line-database/spotlight-sitters/shapurji-saklatvala>.

<sup>291</sup> Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc, 'England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1916-2005', Ancestry.com., Accessed 3 May 2023. The Candida Dhunbar Saklatvala Backhaus profile on Ancestry.com suggests the couple had a child but the date is not revealed because they are still living.

the Trinity term of 1934 and did not attempt the exam again. She had kept her 12 terms and so would have been eligible for call if she had passed the Bar Final.<sup>292</sup> It is possible that she did not continue with her call because of her marriage. Candida Saklatvala continued to live in England until she died in 1971, a few months after her husband.<sup>293</sup> Lala Smit and Beng Sim Wong were among the international students admitted. They did not proceed to call because they returned to their native country.<sup>294</sup> The stories of the Uncalled women are told in Chapter 3.

Conversely, all four women in the over 50s category were called: Mercy Ashworth, Emily Frost Phipps, Cornelia Sorabji and Florence Coxon. Lincoln's Inn suggests a reason for this 'success' rate, it is because these women had 'waited their whole lives for the privilege'.<sup>295</sup> Mercy Ashworth was the second woman to be called by Lincoln's Inn. She had chambers in Lincoln's Inn and appears to have undertaken some legal work.<sup>296</sup> Emily Frost Phipps was a well-known feminist and head teacher. After resigning her headship, she moved to London and trained for the Bar. Eventually, she became the standing counsel for the National Union of Women Teachers.<sup>297</sup> Cornelia Sorabji is another well-known woman barrister; she was the second Indian woman to be called to the Bar, and her story is covered further in Chapter 4: International Women at the Inns of Court.<sup>298</sup> Before being admitted to Gray's Inn, Florence Coxon had already achieved a 'first' for women when she became the first female mayor of King's Lynn in 1925.<sup>299</sup> She entered the Bar after beginning to 'study law as a hobby' and was called when she was 70

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<sup>292</sup> It was stated on her Bar Final record that she had kept 12 terms. Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, London, England, UK, The Law Society: Examination Records 1836-, and Reference: CLE 11/, 'UK and Commonwealth, Law Examination Records, 1836-1948', Ancestry.co.uk, accessed 24 July 2024, [https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/45568585:62335?tid=&pid=&queryId=30793c66-3542-4959-9dbf-4677d76da5e7&\\_phsrc=iCe1093&\\_phstart=successSource](https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/45568585:62335?tid=&pid=&queryId=30793c66-3542-4959-9dbf-4677d76da5e7&_phsrc=iCe1093&_phstart=successSource).

<sup>293</sup> 'England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1858-1995 [database on-Line]', Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010, Source Information Ancestry.com.

<sup>294</sup> Chen and Li, 'Seeking "A Fair Field" for Women in the Legal Profession: Pioneering Women Lawyers from Burma of 1924-1935'; 'Lala Smit', *Sunday Sun*, 6 November 1927, p.2.

<sup>295</sup> 'The First Women Admitted as Members of Lincoln's Inn'.

<sup>296</sup> Ibid.

<sup>297</sup> Kean, *Phipps, Emily Frost*.

<sup>298</sup> Mossman, *The First Women : A Comparative Study of Gender, Law and the Legal Profession*.

<sup>299</sup> Williams, Rachael, *Our First Female Mayor: Florence Ada Coxon JP OBE* (Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk, 2019).

year-old.<sup>300</sup> According to Nora Gipson's memoirs, she tutored 'a 70 year old woman, the Mayoress of Norwich';<sup>301</sup> this is likely to be Florence Coxon (which also suggests the networks and connections of this small group of women).

Polden has suggested that there is some correlation between age at admission and whether a student proceeded to call. He has suggested that a 'substantial number of dropouts were mature women most of whom are known to have embarked on a profession' and the 'very young women... chose another course'.<sup>302</sup> Polden's figures appear to be slightly contradictory: on the one hand, he finds that among the over-40s category between 1919 and 1939, 80% were called; this would suggest that while more mature women completed their studies (and so did not drop out), many did not proceed to call/practice because they returned to a career. Yet Polden has noted that a substantial number of mature women dropped out. While the definition of 'mature' remains uncertain, he was correct to suggest that mature women (those over 40) were less likely to proceed to call because they returned to a career they had before they were admitted to the Bar (as we shall see in Chapter 3). The exception here is the over 50s category, which had a 100% call rate.

Second, Polden has noted that many of the other women were very young when they entered the Bar, often as under-graduates. Here, Polden has suggested that they chose another course, perhaps they were not entirely sure what career path to take. It has been seen that the very young students in the under 18 category did indeed see a relatively low call rate with only 25% called, suggesting that perhaps they were not sure of their career path or life course. However, we can see that the 17-year-old Candida Saklatvala undertook several of her Bar exams; this suggests that she did want to pursue this path, although perhaps not that career. In the end, it was marriage that appeared to halt her progress. It appears that it was not just career uncertainty but also social and family circumstances that affected call rates in the younger students. Moreover, the highest call rate was seen in the 18 to 21 category. This places some doubt as to

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<sup>300</sup> *Coventry Evening Telegraph*, 'Woman Who Became Barrister at 70', 6 July 1951, p.3.

<sup>301</sup> Gipson, 'Nora Myfanwy Gipson's Memoirs', p.79.

<sup>302</sup> Polden, *Portia's Progress: Women at the Bar in England, 1919–1939.*, p.303.

Polden's assertion that under-graduates were less likely to be called as research has found that the highest call rate was seen in the 18 to 21 category. It is clear from the above data that the under 30 age group saw the most admissions, particularly the 18 to 21 age category. This is likely because widened educational opportunities, including access to universities,<sup>303</sup> and employment opportunities, as well as the publicity of these. Each will be looked at in turn.

### *Educational opportunities*

From 1870 primary education became compulsory: both boys and girls attended elementary schools meaning they were educated up to 14 years old.<sup>304</sup> By 1902 the number of girls in secondary education rose. There were even some opportunities for girls from working-class backgrounds to attend university with scholarships, although this was offered to a small number.<sup>305</sup> With university extension, women (mainly middle-class) consisted of about 15% of the student population by 1900.<sup>306</sup> London University was the pioneer, admitting the first woman on the same terms as men in 1878.<sup>307</sup> Oxford finally conferred degrees to women in 1920;<sup>308</sup> Cambridge did not do so until much later in 1948. Many other universities offered courses, including law, to women.<sup>309</sup> Women therefore had some new opportunities to pursue the academic qualifications they may have needed for their future careers. However, although widened opportunities, university education was generally not common among women because of the cost. Sue Bruley notes that 'only a tiny minority [of women] went into higher education' during this time, usually due to the cost of funding a degree.<sup>310</sup> This suggests that middle-class women would likely benefit most from the educational opportunities in the 1920s.

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<sup>303</sup> Pugh, *Women and Women's Movement in Britain, 1914-1959*; Bruley, Sue, *Women in Britain Since 1900* (London: Macmillan Press Ltd, 1999).

<sup>304</sup> Bruley, *Women in Britain Since 1900*.

<sup>305</sup> Ibid.

<sup>306</sup> Dyhouse, Carol, *No Distinction of Sex? Women in British Universities, 1870-1939* (London: University College of London, 1997), p.7.

<sup>307</sup> 'Leading Women since 1868', University of London, accessed 17 July 2024, <https://www.london.ac.uk/about/history/leading-women-1868>.

<sup>308</sup> 'Guide to First Woman Graduates', Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford, accessed 17 July 2024, <https://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/universityarchives/guides/first-woman-graduates>.

<sup>309</sup> For example, Liverpool University, Aberystwyth University, Manchester University, Edinburgh University to name a few.

<sup>310</sup> Bruley, *Women in Britain Since 1900*, p.68.

### *Employment opportunities*

From the 1870s, white-collar roles such as those in the civil service, local government and education, significantly expanded women's employment opportunities. Meta Zimmeck has estimated that the number of women clerks rose from 2000 in 1851 to 166,000 in 1911.<sup>311</sup> This is an 8200% increase over 50 years. However, the 1920s saw an economic slump and widespread unemployment, creating a challenging environment for men and women.<sup>312</sup> Long-term male unemployment inevitably decreased employment opportunities for women. Thus, while more work opportunities were suited to women, the economic circumstances limited the number of openings available to them. There were some positive steps: for example, the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act 1919 went some way towards widening employment opportunities and opened up the legal professions to women. While the impact of this is the subject of some debate, as few women practised, women did now have the option of a legal career.

### *Publicity/expectations of women in work*

Between the 1890s and the 1930s a plethora of books about careers for girls were published.<sup>313</sup> The legal profession was not painted in a favourable light; Beatrice Davy commented in *Careers for Girls* in 1928 that 'For a woman who must earn her own living the Bar is the very last profession in the world.'<sup>314</sup> However, not all women thought the Bar was out of the question; in 1924, Venetia Stephenson did a radio broadcast about "Careers for the Woman Barrister".<sup>315</sup> This would have had a wide reach, as radio was hugely popular and one of the main media at the time. Both factors would likely have influenced younger women in their career choices. Historian Martin Pugh found that there was a trend in society towards higher levels of employment amongst women in their 'late teens, 20s and early 30s; but the older age group shows a

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<sup>311</sup> Zimmeck, Meta, 'Jobs for the Girls: The Expansion of Clerical Work for Women, 1850-1914', *Unequal Opportunities: Women's Employment in England, 1918-1914*, 1800, 153–77.

<sup>312</sup> Pugh, *Women and Women's Movement in Britain, 1914-1959*.

<sup>313</sup> Robinson, *Ladies Can't Climb Ladders: The Pioneering Adventures of the First Professional Women.*, p.109.

<sup>314</sup> J., A. R. *Careers for Girls* (London: Hutchinson, 1928)., p.53.

<sup>315</sup> 'Today's Broadcasting Programme: Woman's Hour: Careers - The Woman Barrister', *Nottingham Journal*, 20 February 1924.

decline.’<sup>316</sup> Moreover, economic factors resulting from the First World War would also have contributed to the rise of working women in this age group. Many women had to be financially independent as their families or the state could not afford to support them, and it was considered acceptable to work for this reason.<sup>317</sup>

### *Significance of the 18 to 21 age group*

The fact that the under 30s age category, particularly the 18 to 21 age group, was the most dominant is significant and adds nuance to the composition of the Inns of Court and Bar for two main reasons. Firstly, there is a commonly held idea that it was mostly mature women who were admitted and called to the Bar. In fact, the median age of the 236 women admitted to the Inns of Court between 1919 and 1929 was 23 years and the average age was 26 years. This is not significantly old, and certainly younger than the popular first women barristers whose stories are well known; these include Dr Ivy Williams, Helena Normanton, Sybil Campbell and Cornelia Sorabji, all of whom were in the over 30s category.

In terms of calls to the Bar, a more nuanced picture emerges in terms of age. When commenting on Mercy’s Ashworth’s age at call (54 years), Lincoln’s Inn notes that:

*Several of the women called in the early years after the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act were significantly older than their male counterparts, having waited their whole lives for the privilege.*<sup>318</sup>

While Lincoln’s Inn does not quantify what they mean by ‘early years’ or ‘significantly older’, this statement reinforces the notion that the women at the Inns of Court were more mature. If we examine the average ages of the women who were called between 1919 and 1929, a more nuanced picture emerges as set out in *Table 2.3* below.

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<sup>316</sup> Pugh, *Women and the Women’s Movement in Britain, 1914-1959.*, p.74.

<sup>317</sup> Ibid.; Bruley, *Women in Britain Since 1900*; Robinson, *Ladies Can’t Climb Ladders: The Pioneering Adventures of the First Professional Women*.

<sup>318</sup> ‘The First Women Admitted as Members of Lincoln’s Inn’.



Call Year	Average Age
1922	29.5
1923	31
1924	27.3
1925	31
1926	23.3
1927	22.9
1928	26.4
1929	21.8
<b>Average age (10 years)</b>	<b>26.2</b>
<b>Median age (10 years)</b>	<b>23</b>

Table 2.3: Average Ages of the Women Called between 1922 and 1925

To give some context, it is necessary to understand the average age of men when they were called to the Bar. While there is no comparable data for this time, research has found that in 1900, 25% of the barristers called were under 21, and another 37% were under 26.<sup>319</sup> From this, it can be assumed that men would have been around 23.5 years old when they were called. If this age is taken as a benchmark, women called in the early years (approximately 1922 to 1925) were older than their male counterparts, with an average of 29.5 years. However, this is not necessarily ‘significantly’ older. After 1925, the average age of those called is younger and more in line with men.

From the above, we can understand that the age demographic at the Inns of Court is more nuanced than first thought. The dominance of the 18 to 21 age group at admission is clear, and this would suggest that many women would likely have been 21 to 24 when called to the Bar (still young); however, the average age is 26.2 years and therefore slightly above this prediction. This is because there were other more mature women who were also being admitted and called. There is a clear trend that the average ages of the women called in the second half of the decade decreased, suggesting that the women who had ‘waited their whole lives for this privilege’ had

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<sup>319</sup> Abel, *The Legal Profession in England and Wales.*, p.74.

now fulfilled their ambitions and applications were now coming from younger women who wanted to become barristers. From this data, we can infer that the Inns of Court were age diverse to an extent, particularly in the first half of the decade. This would perhaps give justification to Robina Stevens' quote: 'I am so glad that some other ladies are young'; she wrote this when referring to a 23-year-old woman (likely Mary Selina Jones) in her diary.<sup>320</sup> Certainly, the Inns of Court and Bar were not populated only by mature women and therefore the group should be understood in a more age-diverse way.

Age is not just significant in terms of understanding the demographic of the Inns of Court. Age distribution can be 'extremely significant for the internal politics of the Bar',<sup>321</sup> meaning there are tensions between younger and older barristers, particularly when the small number of older barristers resist the challenge to tradition posed by the large number of younger barristers. This was also seen in respect of women: Enid Rosser Locket describes Helena Normanton as 'a war horse from the Old Feminist days'. Rosser Locket was 'of the new generation of women and was therefore not a fanatical feminist'. However, she later notes that Normanton 'mellowed and tamed' and was 'regarded with much affection'.<sup>322</sup>

## Education

Out of 236 women, it has been possible to identify the university educational status of 202 women (85.6%). As identified to date, 188 out of the 202 (93%) women are known to have attended a university as an internal or external student; 14 women did not attend a university;<sup>323</sup> and the educational status of 34 women is unknown. It is important to note that those who were 'external' students may not have benefited from the social capital of university meaning the network of relationships and connections you build throughout your time at university, both

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<sup>320</sup> 'Robina Stevens Diary Extract', *Graya* 89: 39–41.

<sup>321</sup> Abel, *The Legal Profession in England and Wales*., p.74.

<sup>322</sup> Broomfield, Katie, Enid Rosser Locket', *Celebrating the Centenary of Women Lawyers*, 8 June 2017, <https://celebratingthecentenaryofwomenlawyers.wordpress.com/enid-rosser-locket/>.

<sup>323</sup> Dorothy May Last, admitted to Lincoln's Inn but not called, attended Southport Training College, a college that trained teachers; this was not a university, so she has been included in the 'none' category. 'Southport Physical Training College'.

personally and professionally.<sup>324</sup> Some women attended more than one university; for example, a woman might have undertaken an undergraduate degree in India before attending an English university, perhaps to study a Master of Arts. For research purposes, the university of the women's undergraduate degree has been counted.

University	Called	Uncalled	Total	% Admitted
Oxbridge	48	19	67	28.4
London	48	13	61	25.8
England (other)	22	7	29	12.3
Wales	3	1	4	1.7
Ireland	5	0	5	2.1
Scotland	5	4	9	3.8
Europe	1	1	2	0.8
India	7	0	7	3.0
USA	1	0	1	0.4
Australia	2	1	3	1.3
None	11	3	14	5.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>85.6</b>

Table 2.4: University Attended by Women Admitted to the Bar between 1919 and 1929

As illustrated in *Table 2.4* above, the universities most attended were Oxbridge (Oxford and Cambridge), as 67 women out of 236 attended one of these universities (28.4% of total admission). The next most prevalent universities were the London universities.<sup>325</sup> In total, 61 women attended these either as external or internal students (25.8%). After these two groups, most women attended other universities in England, amounting to 12% of total admissions.<sup>326</sup>

<sup>324</sup> University of Chester, 'Why Social Capital Is Important for Students', accessed 14 August 2024, <https://www.chester.ac.uk/about/news/articles/why-social-capital-is-important-for-students/>.

<sup>325</sup> London Universities include: the University of London, the London School of Economics (LSE), University College London (UCL), King's College and Bedford College.

<sup>326</sup> Other Universities in England include Liverpool University, Bristol, Manchester, University College Leicester, St Mary's Medical School, Sheffield University and Leeds University.

There are two important findings from this data: first, most women who were admitted to the Inns of Court between 1919 and 1929 either had a degree or were reading for a degree (as either internal or external students). This finding adds to previous research, which notes that between 1919 and 1939, approximately 60% of women admitted to the Bar attended a university.<sup>327</sup> Second, the majority of those who had attended or were attending a university were at Oxbridge (Oxford or Cambridge) or one of the London Universities. This is in line with the findings of previous research.<sup>328</sup> Taking the historical context into account, it is quite remarkable that such a high proportion of women were either undertaking a degree or already had one. While there were widening educational opportunities for women, the cost of undertaking further education could be quite significant, unless a scholarship was available; therefore, only a small percentage of women went into higher education during this time.<sup>329</sup>

At least eight of these women attended the same university at the same time. Auvergne Doherty and Olive Clapham both registered at Oxford University in 1916 and were both members of the Society of Home-Students. They were both of a similar age, in their early 20s, and both matriculated and graduated on 30 October 1920 when the degree of BA was conferred.<sup>330</sup> Caroline Frances Kirby also matriculated in October 1920 and was a member of the Society for Oxford Home Students.<sup>331</sup> Although she read Theology, a different course, she may well have known Auvergne Doherty and Olive Clapham.<sup>332</sup> It is nevertheless possible they knew each other. Ilma de Jong and Iris de Freitas both attended Aberystwyth University. Iris de Jong attended from 1919 to 1921, when she matriculated with a BA; it was noted that she was likely to have been the first woman student from the college to be called to the Bar, but in fact Iris de Freitas was the first.<sup>333</sup> Ilma de Jong studied Botany, Latin and Modern Languages and Law, graduating as

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<sup>327</sup> Polden, *Portia's Progress: Women at the Bar in England, 1919–1939*.

<sup>328</sup> Ibid.

<sup>329</sup> Bruley, *Women in Britain Since 1900.*, p.68.

<sup>330</sup> Coleman, 'Thwarted Ambitions: The Biography of Auvergne Doherty, an Aspiring Female Barrister'.

<sup>331</sup> Archive Reference No. OUA/UR 2/1/, 'Email to Charlotte Coleman from Faye McLeod Keeper of the University Archives Bodleian Library', 12 July 2023.

<sup>332</sup> This essentially means that she was too unwell to sit her final examinations, as so was awarded a degree without classification.

<sup>333</sup> Aberystwyth : University College of Wales, 'Reports Submitted to the Court of Governors / University College of Wales, Aberystwyth : University College of Wales (Aberystwyth, Wales), Vol. 1916-1924', Internet Archive, accessed 18 January 2024,

Bachelor of Arts in 1922.<sup>334</sup> Alix Hester Marie Kilroy studied Philosophy, Politics and Economics at Somerville College, Oxford from 1922 to 1925.<sup>335</sup> Here she befriended Evelyn Sharp who graduated in Modern History in 1925.<sup>336</sup> Margaret Jones-Bateman was admitted to the University of Oxford on 14 October 1925 as a member of the Society of Oxford Home Students and graduated in 1929.<sup>337</sup> Joan Baker Alexander was admitted in 1926 as a member of St Hilda's Hall, and graduated in 1929.<sup>338</sup> They were both awarded the Winter Williams Scholarship to study law.<sup>339</sup> In 1928, they both passed their Jurisprudence exam with Class 2 and in 1929 they passed the Degree of Bachelor of Civil Law with a Class 2.<sup>340</sup> Joan Baker Alexander was called to Inner Temple in 1930, but she did not practise.<sup>341</sup> Margaret Jones-Bateman did not proceed to call, instead becoming a solicitor.<sup>342</sup> Therefore, before these women were admitted to the Inns, it can be understood that they had some connections, friendships and possibly networks between them.

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<https://archive.org/details/reportsubmitted1916univ/page/n269/mode/2up?q=jonge>.<https://archive.org/details/reportsubmitted1916univ/page/n269/mode/2up?q=jongelbid>., p.269, 345, 437 and 479.

<sup>334</sup> 'Aberystwyth University Honours First Female Lawyer in the Caribbean', Aberystwyth University, 7 March 2016, <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/news/archive/2016/03/title-181429-en.html>.

<sup>335</sup> 'Alix Kilroy (dame Alix Meynell)', Civil Servant .org, accessed 24 July 2024, [https://www.civilservant.org.uk/women-alix\\_kilroy.html](https://www.civilservant.org.uk/women-alix_kilroy.html); Green, *Meynell [née Kilroy], Dame Alix Hester Marie, Lady Meynell*, 2004.

<sup>336</sup> 'Alix Kilroy (dame Alix Meynell)'; Theakston, Kevin. "Sharp, Evelyn Adelaide, Baroness Sharp (1903–1985), civil servant." *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. 23 Sep. 2004; Accessed 11 Dec. 2024. <https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-31672>.

<sup>337</sup> Millea, Alice, B. 'Email to Charlotte Coleman from Assistant Keeper of the University Archives at Oxford', 4 July 2023.

<sup>338</sup> Hildreth, Victoria, 'Email to Charlotte Coleman from Middle Temple Archivist', 29 June 2023.

'Alexander, Joan Baker, Miss', The Inner Temple Collections, accessed 4 July 2023, <https://archives.innertemple.org.uk/names/8366c831-af1d-40a7-bdc3-beaa8a91fc56>.<https://archives.innertemple.org.uk/names/8366c831-af1d-40a7-bdc3-beaa8a91fc56lbid>. 'Alexander, George Glover', The Inner Temple Collections, accessed 4 July 2023, <https://archives.innertemple.org.uk/names/7109f80b-53dc-457c-85ca-284630376462>.

<sup>339</sup> Margaret Jones-Bateman and Joan B. Alexander (St Hilda's) were both awarded the Winter Williams Scholarship. 'Oxford - Appointments', *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, 24 November 1926, 3. Millea, 'Email to Charlotte Coleman from Assistant Keeper of the University Archives at Oxford'.

<sup>340</sup> Millea, 'Email to Charlotte Coleman from Assistant Keeper of the University Archives at Oxford'.

<sup>341</sup> As discussed in Chapter 3, Joan Baker Alexander worked as a Female Enquiry Officer for Birmingham City Police between July 1930 and May 1933. He likely reason for leaving the police force was because she married in October 1933. 'West Midlands, England, Police Files and Ledgers, 1850-1950 [database on-Line]', Ancestry.com (2020), This collection was indexed by Ancestry World Archives Project contributors., Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., <https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/20803:61651?ssrc=pt&tid=173290049&pid=152267502274>.

<sup>342</sup> *Western Mail*, 'Law Society Examinations: Final', 31 March 1934, p.6.

### *Subject Read at University*

Of the 188 women who attended university, it has been possible to identify the subject that 146 of these women read; it is not known what the remaining 42 women read. For the purposes of this research there are nine categories of subjects:

1. Law and Jurisprudence.
2. Business, including Commerce and Economics, and Philosophy, Politics and Economics (PPE).
3. Maths.
4. Science.
5. Medicine.
6. Arts including English and Philosophy and Bachelor of Art (BA).
7. History and Classics.
8. Languages, including French, Medieval and Modern Language.
9. Joint Honours of which five included Law joining with another subject such as History.

<b>University</b>	Law & juris	Business & PPE	Maths	Science	Medicine	Arts & BA	History & Classics	Language	Joint Hons	<b>Total</b>
Oxbridge	18	7	3	3		5	9	8	4	57
London	19	2		1	2	4	9	1	1	39
England (other)	11	1			2	5	4	1		24
Wales	1					2				3
Ireland	1			1	1	1				4
Scotland					3	2	1		2	8
Europe	1					1				2
India	1	1		2		2				6
USA										0
Australia	2								1	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>146</b>

Table 2.5: Subject Read by Women Admitted to the Bar between 1919 and 1929

As can be seen, the most popular subject was Law and Jurisprudence with 54 of the 146 of women (37%) reading this subject; there were also five Joint Honours degrees that included Law as one of the subjects. The London Universities were most popular with the first women at the Inns of Court, followed by Oxford and Cambridge. As discussed in Chapter 1, it was advantageous for students to study law not only because they were granted an exemption from certain exams but also because this laid good foundations for reading law at the Inns. It can be assumed that their choice to study law reflected their chosen career path as a barrister or solicitor. Indeed, of the 54 who read law at university, 46 were called (85.2%). History and Classics was also a popular category, accounting for 23 out of 148 (15.5%) of applicants; the vast majority read History, and only two women undertook Classics.

In respect of men, a very substantial proportion of barristers had also been graduates. In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, around 75% were graduates at Middle Temple and 80% were graduates at Inner Temple.<sup>343</sup> Men typically attended, or were attending, Oxbridge (Oxford and Cambridge) and London. For example, in 1877 at Middle Temple, 47% attended Cambridge, 36% Oxford and 17% London; Inner Temple was similar.<sup>344</sup> These three universities continued to produce at least 75% of all graduate barristers (men and women) throughout the 1950s. In this respect, it can be understood that women entering the Inns of Court were of a similar educational demographic to men. The Inns of Court were not therefore particularly diverse in terms of educational background as most women were university educated. Moreover, quite a few of them were undertaking, or already had, a Law degree. Of course there was some variation; some women read Science, Maths or Medicine, or attended another university such as Aberystwyth, Liverpool or Manchester. Nevertheless, overall, there were more commonalities than differences in terms of educational background.

## **Family Status**

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<sup>343</sup> Abel, *The Legal Profession in England and Wales.*, p.47.

<sup>344</sup> *Ibid.*, p.47.

From the above, it can be understood that the Inns of Court were diverse to an extent in terms of age, particularly in the first half of the 1920s. It was not very diverse in terms of educational background as most women already had a degree or were completing their undergraduate degree in parallel with their legal training at the Bar. What about family status and social background? Polden noted that it was not particularly useful to derive social status from the father's profession because some of the first women barristers obtained their status from their husbands.<sup>345</sup> This section has therefore drawn on other data including the mother's occupation, wider family connections and marital status to understand the wider impact of the family. This helps us better understand the demographic at the Bar. Historians should tread with caution when attributing a social status to an individual based on their entry in an official register based on the 'concept' of the occupation, as 'indicated' in the document; Morris calls this the 'concept-indicator relationship'.<sup>346</sup> Morris highlights how the context of the source document is important, for example, a 'gentleman' in the poll book might be a 'merchant' in the trade directory.<sup>347</sup> Consequently, while this research has identified the occupations of the fathers and mothers, caution has been applied in attributing social status as a result of this.

### *Father's Profession*

This research has identified the father's occupation for 235 women admitted to the Inns of Court (99.6%); the father's occupation for one woman, Ondan Kunathadathil Meenakshi Devi, is unknown. In some cases, the father's occupation includes more than one employment or role. For example, the father of Margaret Janet Richmond Bryce (admitted to Inner Temple in 1924, but not called) was both a doctor and a barrister; he has been included in the legal category.<sup>348</sup> Rosaline Joan Youard's father was a baron, but also a barrister and judge; he, too, has been included in the legal category.<sup>349</sup> If the father was a member of the legal profession, be it a solicitor or barrister, they were classified as 'Legal' for comparison purposes.

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<sup>345</sup> Polden, *Portia's Progress: Women at the Bar in England, 1919–1939*.

<sup>346</sup> Morris, 'Chapter 9: Document to Database and Spreadsheet', p.150

<sup>347</sup> Ibid.

<sup>348</sup> Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., '1911 England Census [database on-Line]', Ancestry.co.uk, 2011, <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/19386446:2352>.

<sup>349</sup> After more than twenty years of practice as a barrister, James Atkin (Rosaline Joan Youard's father) became a judge of the King's Bench division of the High Court in 1913 and was awarded a knighthood.



There were 10 classifications for the father's occupations:

1. Gentlemen.
2. Legal:<sup>350</sup> including a solicitor, barristers and the judiciary.
3. Commerce: including industry such as:
  - a. Merchants, manufacturers, brewers, shipowners, proprietors, landowners, hotel proprietors; farmers; managers.
  - b. Financial: brokers, accountants, clerks, underwriters.
4. Medical, including doctors, GPs, surgeons, dentists, chemists.
5. Engineers.
6. Clergy including vicars, reverends and rabbis.
7. Educational including school masters, lecturers and historians.
8. Military including the Navy.
9. Public Service, including Civil Service such as police officers, sheriffs, clerks, foreign commissioners and consulates, and Parliamentary and Ministerial including MPs, parliament secretaries, ex-presidents.
10. Other, including grocers, farmers, estate agents, artists, architects, journalists, coppersmiths and warehousemen.

	Called	Uncalled	Total	% of Admissions	Call rate (%)
Gentlemen	1	0	1	0.4	100.0
Legal	32	15	47	20.0	68.1
Commerce	68	15	83	35.3	81.9
Medical	14	3	17	7.2	82.4
Engineer	6	2	8	3.4	75.0
Clergy	8	8	16	6.8	50.0
Educational	4	3	7	3.0	57.1

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Łukasz Jan Korporowicz, 'ATKIN, JAMES RICHARD Baron Atkin of Aberdovey (1867 - 1944), Lawyer and Judge', accessed 22 February 2024, <https://biography.wales/article/s14-ATKI-RIC-1867>.

<sup>350</sup> If the father is a member of the legal profession, this has taken priority when classifying.

Military	6	2	8	3.4	75.0
Public Service	16	8	24	10.2	66.7
Other	17	7	24	10.2	70.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>73.2</b>

Table 2.6: Father's Occupation of the Women Admitted to the Inns of Court between 1919 and 1929

As can be seen in *Table 2.6* above, the majority of the women's fathers were part of the commerce and industry sector (including finance). This amounted to 83 in total (35.3%). Women with fathers in the legal profession was the next largest category, with 47 applicants in total (20%). Looking at Public Service and Other professions, each saw 24 women admitted (10.2% each). The call rates were particularly high for those with fathers in the Commerce, Medical, Engineering and Military, as at least 75% of the women in each of those groups were called. The Legal sector was not as high at 68.1%, but even so, a fair number of women were called. Duman found that in 1885, 18% of fathers of men at the Inns of Court were either a barrister or solicitor; 15% of fathers were in the business sector; 12% were members of the clergy; 5% were medical professionals; 5% were in the civil service; 32% were either urban gentry, land owners or rural gentry.<sup>351</sup> Therefore, the most common father's profession among men who were at the Bar was 'Gentleman'. While there is clearly a difference with women, as the majority had fathers in the business sector, it should be noted that four of the fathers were Earls (meaning they were nobles or gentlemen) as illustrated in *Table 2.6* below. However, three of these men have been classified in the Legal category because they were also barristers.

Inn	Women's Details			Father's Details		
	Name	Admitted	Called	Classification	Status	Profession
Lincoln's Inn	Elizabeth Adeline Mary Bligh Clifton	3-Jan-1923	26-Jan-1926	Gentleman	Earl	Landowner
Lincoln's Inn	Mary Frances Macnaghten	23-Apr-1923	Not Called	Legal	Baron	Barrister, judge

<sup>351</sup> Duman, *The English and Colonial Bars in the Nineteenth Century.*, p.17.

Middle Temple	Sylvia Fletcher-Moulton	17-Nov-1924	12-Jun-1929	Legal	Baron	Barrister, judge
Inner Temple	Ankaret Cecilia Carolyn Howard	27-Apr-1925	2-May-1928	Military	Earl	Captain, peer, politician
Gray's Inn	Rosaline Joan Youard (nee Atkin)	11-Oct-1928	9-Jun-1937	Legal	Baron	Barrister, judge

Table 2.7: Fathers of the Women at the Inns of Court who were 'Gentlemen'

Baroness Elizabeth Adeline Mary Bligh Clifton's father was Charles James Stanley Howard, 10th Earl of Carlisle; he was also a soldier, peer, and Liberal Unionist politician.<sup>352</sup> Mary Frances Macnaghten's father was Sir Edward Charles Macnaghten of Dundarave, known as Baron Macnaghten; he was also a barrister and KC, and so has been included in the legal category.<sup>353</sup> Sylvia Fletcher-Moulton's father was John Fletcher Moulton, who was known as Baron Moulton, but was also a distinguished judge and politician.<sup>354</sup> Ankaret Cecilia Carolyn Howard's father Charles James Stanley Howard was the Earl of Carlisle; however, he appeared in the Military category as he was formerly Captain 3rd Battalion Border Regiment. He was also a peer and politician.<sup>355</sup> Rosaline Joan Youard was the daughter of James Richard Atkin; known as Baron Atkin, he has been included in the Legal category because he was a judge and barrister at Middle Temple.<sup>356</sup> He was also the Treasurer at Gray's Inn and had the pleasure of calling his own daughter to the Bar there.<sup>357</sup>

<sup>352</sup> Ridgway, Christopher. "Howard, George James, ninth earl of Carlisle (1843–1911), artist and politician." Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. 23 Sep. 2004; Accessed 11 Dec. 2024. <https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-34019>.

<sup>353</sup> Lunney, Linde, 'Macnaghten, Sir Edward', Dictionary of Irish Biography, October 2009, <https://www.dib.ie/biography/macnaghten-sir-edward-a5271>.

<sup>354</sup> Mathew, Theobald, and Mooney, Hugh. "Moulton, John Fletcher, Baron Moulton (1844–1921), judge and politician." Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. 23 Sep. 2004; Accessed 11 Dec. 2024. <https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-35132>.

<sup>355</sup> 'Carlisle 10th Earl (Charles James Stanley Howard)', *Who, Who's Who & Who*; Oxford University Press, 1 December 2007, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ww/9780199540884.013.U184471>.

<sup>356</sup> Lewis, Geoffrey. "Atkin, James Richard, Baron Atkin (1867–1944), judge." Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. 23 Sep. 2004; Accessed 11 Dec. 2024. <https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-30492>.

<sup>357</sup> Ibid.

Therefore, there were a few ‘gentleman’ fathers among the first women admitted to the Inns of Court; however, they were the minority. This is in line with previous research. For example, Abel, when surveying admissions between 1927 and 1935, found that the proportion hailing from fathers who were gentlemen was declining and that new occupations, such as company officials, were making an appearance.<sup>358</sup> Polden found a similar trend, noting that only one father described themselves as a ‘gentleman’; there were others among them but they did not state this as their occupation on the admissions form. In terms of the family status of the women admitted to the Inns it is clear that, between 1919 and 1929, only a small minority were from noble families. Rather, their fathers were typically in ‘white-collar’ occupations, indicating that they were likely to be of middle-class backgrounds.<sup>359</sup> Gentlemen fathers were not the only type of fathers: some early women barristers had fathers with ‘blue-collar’<sup>360</sup> jobs.

Polden identified three cases of blue-collar or working-class professions among the fathers: a coal miner, a cooper and a boot-finisher; Abel identified two: a silk thrower and a silk spinner. This research has identified three additional blue-collar occupations, as set out in *Table 2.8* below.

Inn	Women's Details			Father's Details	
	Name	Admitted	Called	Classification	Profession
Middle Temple	Audrey Clara Harverson	19-Jan-1920	26-Jan-1923	Other	Carpenter
Middle Temple	Emily Frost Phipps	24-Apr-1922	26-Jan-1925	Other	Coppersmith (deceased)

<sup>358</sup> Abel analysed 164 men and women called to Lincoln’s Inn between 1927 and 1935 (eight-year period). Abel, *The Legal Profession in England and Wales*.

<sup>359</sup> The term “white-collar,” popularised in the 1930s, refers to the crisp, button-down, white shirts that are worn by business professionals; white-collar jobs have a higher barrier to entry, in terms of education, and earn an annual salary rather than an hourly wage, these roles are often perceived as more prestigious and desirable. Kelly, Jack, ‘What Is The Difference Between Blue-Collar And White-Collar Jobs?’, *Forbes Magazine*, 26 October 2023, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/jackkelly/2023/10/26/what-is-the-difference-between-blue-collar-and-white-collar-workers/>.

<sup>360</sup> The term “blue-collar” was first coined in the early 20th century when labourers donned durable fabrics, like blue denim or chambray. The dark colour would help disguise the dirt and grease, which were a part of their job. Ibid.

Lincoln's Inn	Jessie Elliot Alderson (nee Murdoch)	26-Mar-1924	Not Called	Other	Carpenter
Gray's Inn	Nora Burke-Bloor	5-Nov-1927	Not Called	Other	Warehouseman

Table 2.8: Fathers of the Women at the Inns of Court who had 'blue-collar' Professions

Jessie Elliot Alderson nee Murdoch's father was a carpenter.<sup>361</sup> She was the first woman to be awarded a Ferguson Scholarship for Philosophy in 1904.<sup>362</sup> In 1911 she married Alan Alderson, a solicitor. She was admitted to Lincoln's Inn in 1924 and sat two exams: Roman Law in 1924,<sup>363</sup> and Constitutional Law and Legal History in 1925.<sup>364</sup> She did not proceed to call because she continued her career in lecturing. Audrey Clara Harverson's father was listed as a carpenter and her paternal grandfather as a builder.<sup>365</sup> However, later in the 1911 Census, he lists his profession as 'private means' so the family's social status is uncertain.<sup>366</sup> Emily Frost Phipps's father was a 'coppersmith'.<sup>367</sup> Nora Burke-Bloor's father was a 'warehouseman'. Nora Burke-Bloor was admitted to Gray's Inn in 1927 but was not called; instead, she worked as a teacher.<sup>368</sup> Her paternal grandfather was a 'railway servant', and her maternal grandfather was a 'druggist'.<sup>369</sup>

Taking the above into account, there were potentially 10 women, at most, at the Bar whose fathers were blue-collar workers. Put in the context of the total admissions, this is very few. It can therefore be concluded that the family status, tenuously indicating social status, at the Inns

<sup>361</sup> Douglas, William, *The Ferguson Scholars, 1861-1955* (Glasgow: Glasgow University Press, 1956), p.219.

<sup>362</sup> John Ferguson, a Scottish businessman and philanthropist, was the founder of the Ferguson Bequest Fund, making the Ferguson Scholarship possible. Upon his death in 1856, he left a significant legacy of £50,000 for Ferguson Scholarships in connection with Scottish Universities. In 1897, women were allowed to compete for the Ferguson Scholarship. Ibid.

<sup>363</sup> *The Vote*, 'Women's Bar Success', 7 November 1924, p.2.

<sup>364</sup> *The Vote*, 'Women's Bar Successes', 1 May 1925, p.139.

<sup>365</sup> Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc., '1881 England Census', Ancestry.com, 2004, <https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/14566082:7572>.

<sup>366</sup> Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., '1911 England Census [database on-Line]'.  
<sup>367</sup> Ibid.

<sup>368</sup> '1939 England and Wales Register [database on-Line]', Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2018., Ancestry.com, accessed 8 May 2023, <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/35119637:61596?ssrc=pt&tid=70543637&pid=392007790326>.

<sup>369</sup> Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 'Nottinghamshire, England, Church of England Marriages and Banns, 1754-1937', Ancestry.com, 2022, <https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/91644172:61840?ssrc=pt&tid=166370383&pid=292560896425>.

of Court was largely middle-class, based on the white-collar professions of the fathers of the women who entered. Even those who were daughters of fathers in blue-collar professions appeared to have some form of wealth. Jessie Alderson, for example, married a solicitor; Nora Burke-Bloor's grandfather appeared to be a pharmacist. Therefore, while there was a minimal amount of diversity in terms of social background, the vast majority were of a middle-class background.

#### *Mother's Occupation*

Identifying the mother's occupation was a much harder task because mothers did not have to list their profession on the Inns of Court admissions form. In official documents, such as the official census, the mother's occupation was simply 'wife', which does not reflect their professional status. Moreover, some women derived their status from their husband, meaning that their status did not necessarily reflect their family background. Nevertheless, with the caveats in mind, identifying the mother's occupation can give us some indication about family status and social background at the Inns of Court. It also gives some further context as to the influence these women may have had on their daughters. Due to time constraints, it has not been possible to thoroughly identify what all the mothers of the women admitted during this period did. However, it has been possible to trace the occupation for 28 out of 236 (11.9%) of the mothers. Similar categories of occupations have been followed as for the fathers, above, except for 'Gentleman' being 'Lady' and the addition of 'Activist' for those women who were involved in feminist groups or activities. The occupations of the mothers are listed below, and some brief biographical details are given to provide some additional context.

Occupation	Number
Lady	5
Law	1
Commerce	3
Educational	2
Public Service	3
Other	7
Activist	7

<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>
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Table 2.9: Mother's Occupation of the Women Admitted to the Inns of Court between 1919 and 1929

Table 2.10 below includes further details about the 'Ladies'. As with the fathers, some of the mothers were 'ladies' but were classified in another category.

Inn	Women's Details			Mother's Details	
	Name	Admitted	Called	Status	Classification
Middle Temple	Ida May Coffin Duncan	12-Apr-1920	26-Jan-1923	Lady	Lady
Lincoln's Inn	Baroness Elizabeth Adeline Mary Bligh Clifton	3-Jan-1923	26-Jan-1926	Lady	Lady
Lincoln's Inn	Mary Frances Macnaghten	23-Apr-1923	Not Called	Lady	Lady
Inner Temple	Patricia Hackett	2-May-1927	27-Jan-1930	Lady	Commerce
Gray's Inn	Grace Geraldine Prescott	16-Jan-1928	17-Nov-1930	Lady	Public Service
Gray's Inn	Rosaline Joan Youard	11-Oct-1928	9-Jun-1937	Lady	Lady
Lincoln's Inn	Hannah Margaret Cross	2-Nov-1928	17-Jun-1931	Lady	Lady

Table 2.10: Mothers of the Women Admitted to the Inns of Court between 1919 and 1929, who were Ladies

### *Ladies*

Numerically, the number of Ladies is like the number of Gentlemen identified: there are five Ladies and there were four identified Gentlemen (although not all were categorised as gentlemen). This suggests that only a few of the women at the Inns of Court were from an upper-class background. The status of three of the women was derived from their husbands; the rest had derived their status from parentage. Rosaline Joan Youard's mother, Lucy Elizabeth Atkin,

derived her status from her husband;<sup>370</sup> as did Mary Frances Macnaghten's mother, Rt Hon Dame Edith Minnie Powell Baroness Macnaghten.<sup>371</sup> Patricia Hackett's mother, Deborah Vernon Hackett, was also known as Lady Hackett when she married Sir John Winthrop Hackett (40 years her senior).<sup>372</sup> Grace Geraldine Prescott's mother, Bessie Prescott, was known as Lady Prescott.<sup>373</sup> She derived her status from her husband, Sir William Prescott, who was not historically a nobleman; he was called to the Bar at Gray's Inn but later became a civil engineer and worked on a number of government projects.<sup>374</sup> The remaining three mothers came from noble families: Ida May Coffin Duncan's mother, Eliza Marian Coffin, came from an old and very distinguished Anglo-American family.<sup>375</sup> Elizabeth Adeline Mary Bligh Clifton's mother, Jemima Adeline Beatrice Blackwood, was a lady; she married Edward Henry Stuart Bligh, 7th Earl of Darnley.<sup>376</sup> Hannah Margaret Cross came from a wealthy family. Her mother, Hon Eleanor Mary Phillimore, was the daughter of Sir Walter George Francis Phillimore, 1st Baron Phillimore.<sup>377</sup>

### *Law*

In the field of law, Enid Rosser Locket's mother, Esther Locket, was a JP of Swansea and was Swansea's third woman councillor.<sup>378</sup>

### *Commerce*

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<sup>370</sup> Lewis, 'Atkin, James Richard, Baron Atkin'.

<sup>371</sup> Lunney, 'Macnaghten, Sir Edward'.

<sup>372</sup> Alexandra Hasluck, 'Deborah Vernon Hackett (1887–1965)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, 1 January 1983, <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/hackett-deborah-vernon-6513>.

<sup>373</sup> *The Leader*, 'Lady Prescott Dead', 20 September 1940, p.8.

<sup>374</sup> 'Prescott, Col Sir William (Henry)', *Who's Who & Who Was Who*, 1 December 2007, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ww/9780199540884.013.u230632>.

<sup>375</sup> 'Ida Coffin Duncan', *copwick.net*, accessed 2 January 2024, <https://copwick.net/familyhistory/duncan/ida-coffin-duncan/>.

<sup>376</sup> Eshelman, John E., and Reading, P.A., 'Jemima Adeline Beatrice Blackwood', *Person Page-2994*, 1947, <https://www.thepeerage.com/p7081.htm>.

<sup>377</sup> Eshelman, John E., and Reading, P. A. 'Hon. Eleanor Mary Phillimore', *Person Page-2994*, 1947, <https://www.thepeerage.com/p54941.htm>.

<sup>378</sup> 'Congratulations to Swansea Branch', *The Vote*, 17 July 1931, 230; Logan, Anne Frances Helen, 'Making Women Magistrates: Feminism, Citizenship and Justice in England and Wales 1918-1950' (PhD thesis, University of Greenwich., 2002).



Turning to business, Patricia Hackett's mother, Deborah Vernon Hackett was a mining company director at Tantalite Ltd and was also a welfare worker.<sup>379</sup> Her story is quite remarkable, illustrating her resilience and determination in mining tantalite.<sup>380</sup> Loveday Shackell Farquharson's (nee Banes) mother, Florence Banes, was a shopkeeper and confectioner; she was noted as an 'employer'.<sup>381</sup> Florence Banes' family were florists and had their own shop so it is possible that she had been influenced by this.<sup>382</sup> Also included in this category is Helena Normanton's mother, Jane Normanton, who ran a small grocery shop and also turned her family home into a boarding house.<sup>383</sup>

Compared to the fathers, there were of course few women who were in the legal profession. This is not surprising given that the 1919 Act had only just granted women access to the profession. Although there are only three examples of the mother's profession here, and not enough to draw solid conclusions, it is nonetheless fascinating to understand that these women were financially independent to some degree. There is not enough evidence to make claims about their social status, but these were clearly determined women.

### *Education*

The two women in the education category were Olive Clapham's mother, Catherine Clapham (née Gill), and Evelyn Acworth's mother, Marion Whiteford Acworth. Catherine Clapham was a schoolmistress.<sup>384</sup> Marion Whiteford Acworth assisted her husband, Joseph John Acworth, in his

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<sup>379</sup> Hasluck, 'Deborah Vernon Hackett (1887–1965)'.

<sup>380</sup> Tantalite was scarce throughout the world but available in Western Australia. Initially, it was difficult to persuade Australian governments to process the mineral in its country of origin, so she went to the United States. In World War II her tantalum was used in developing radar. Ibid.

<sup>381</sup> Ancestry.com, '1901 England Census', Ancestry.co.uk, 2005, <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/11698764:7814?ssrc=pt&tid=192285135&pid=152500753317>; Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., '1911 England Census [database on-Line]'.

<sup>382</sup> 'Sales by Auction', *Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette*, 24 October 1867; 'Oldfield Nursery', *Bath Annual Directory of 1862/63*, 1862.

<sup>383</sup> Bourne, *Helena Normanton and the Opening of the Bar to Women*, 2016.

<sup>384</sup> Derry, Caroline. "Clapham, Olive Catherine [married name Miles] (1898–1973), barrister." Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. 8 Nov. 2018; Accessed 11 Dec. 2024. <https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-112040>.

technical work. She was the third woman to earn the Associateship, and the first to do so in physics.<sup>385</sup>

### *Public Services*

The public services section there were three women identified: Vida Mar Struge Crichton's mother, Edna Crichton, was York's first woman Lord Mayor.<sup>386</sup> Agnes Bickerton's mother, Alice Cooper Bickerton, was a town councillor and was also a 'ready champion of the rights of women' and president of Macclesfield Women's Liberal Association.<sup>387</sup> Grace Geraldine Prescott's mother, Bessie Prescott, was known as Lady Prescott and was Mayoress of Godmanchester. Grace Prescott was also Mayoress of Godmanchester between 1931 and 1932 and was the youngest mayor in England.<sup>388</sup> The public service occupation was typically more middle-class roles, suggesting this family was from this type of background.

### *Other*

The 'Other' categories are set out in *Table 2.11*, and some are discussed below.

Inn	Name	Admitted	Called	Mother's Occupation
Middle Temple	Josephine Letitia Denry Fairfield	13-Jan-1920	26-Jan-1923	Musician - Widow (Scottish musician, Pianist)
Inner Temple	Ivy Williams	26-Jan-1920	10-May-1922	Wife (formerly domestic servant)
Inner Temple	Joan Clarkson	5-Apr-1922	26-Jan-1925	Dairy Farmer (born New Zealand)
Middle Temple	Florence Earengy [nee How]	13-May-1925	26-Jan-1928	Wife (formerly domestic servant)
Lincoln's Inn	Pauline Elinor St. Clare Stephens	20-Nov-1925	28-Jan-1929	Deceased (artist)
Inner Temple	Edris Irene Froggat	9-Nov-1928	17-Nov-1932	Assistant at Post Office

<sup>385</sup> Barrett, Anne, *Women At Imperial College; Past, Present And Future* (World Scientific, 2017); 'Obituary Notice', *Journal of the Chemical Society*, no. 0 (1 January 1927): 959–60.

<sup>386</sup> 'Edna Annie Crichton, York's First Woman Lord Mayor – HerStoryYork', accessed 22 February 2024, <https://www.herstoryyork.org.uk/edna-annie-crichton-yorks-first-woman-lord-mayor/>.

<sup>387</sup> 'Siddington, Obituary', *Alderley & Wilmslow Advertiser*, 16 January 1948, 8.

<sup>388</sup> 'Lady Prescott Dead'.

Inner Temple	Elsa Care Barker	25-Jan-1929	17-Nov-1933	Widow + leading contralto at the Carl Rosa
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Table 2.11: Mother's Occupation in the Other Category

There were two musicians: Josephine Letitia Denry Fairfield's mother was a Scottish musician.<sup>389</sup> Elsa Care Barker's mother was a leading contralto at the Carl Rosa Opera Company; her father was a composer and conductor, so she came from a musical family.<sup>390</sup> Elsa Barker's main ambition was to be a successful playwright. She wrote a number of plays that were performed, one of which was about a ballerina who gave up ballet to look after her family; this was inspired by her mother, who had similarly given up her operatic career.<sup>391</sup> Pauline Elinor St. Clare Stephens practised at the Bar for a while before becoming a teacher in India.<sup>392</sup> Her mother was an artist, and her father was Pembroke Stephens, QC, leader of the Parliament Bar.

There were two domestic servants: Ivy William's mother, Emma Ewers,<sup>393</sup> and Florence Earengy's (nee How) mother, Hannah Walker, who was listed as a 'domestic servant' before her marriage in 1871.<sup>394</sup> While it could be said that the blue-collar workers could suggest a working-class background, as Polden points out, women can obtain their social status from their husband. For example, Ivy William's mother may have been working class, but her father was not, as he was a solicitor. Therefore, Ivy Williams derived her social status from him, and the family was middle-class.

### Activist

<sup>389</sup> Harris, Alana, "Lady Doctor among the 'Called'": Dr Letitia Fairfield and Catholic Medico-Legal Activism beyond the Bar', *Women's History Review* 29, no. 4 (6 June 2020): 696–715.

<sup>390</sup> 'Personal Papers of Elsa Malik, 1924 - 2005', Archive Search, University of Cambridge, accessed 22 February 2024, [https://archivesearch.lib.cam.ac.uk/repositories/19/archival\\_objects/370769](https://archivesearch.lib.cam.ac.uk/repositories/19/archival_objects/370769).

<sup>391</sup> Ibid.

<sup>392</sup> 'Pauline Elinor St. Clare Stephens Students Register Entry', 1923, Cambridge University Archives.

<sup>393</sup> 'Ivy Williams', Inner Temple, 16 August 2019, <https://www.innertemple.org.uk/women-in-law/our-women/ivy-williams/>.

<sup>394</sup> Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, '1871 England Census', Ancestry.com, 2004, <https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/1846303:7619?ssrc=pt&tid=11330432&pid=13865162262>.

‘Activist’ may be stretching occupation slightly, but there is certainly evidence that many of these women were involved in women’s rights campaigns or groups. To name a few, Mithan Ardeshir Tata’s<sup>395</sup> mother, Herabai Tata, took up the cause of women’s votes in India and became honorary secretary of the Women’s Indian Association.<sup>396</sup> Auvergne Doherty’s mother was president of the Women’s Franchise League at Claremont, Western Australia.<sup>397</sup> Cornelia Sorabji’s mother, Francina Ford Sorabji was a keen supporter of girls’ education in their home place of Poona (now Pune), India, and was a trailblazer for women’s rights.<sup>398</sup> It may well have been the case that more of the other mothers were also activists, but these have not yet been identified.

Although only a small sample size has been identified, the fact that a fair few of the mothers of the women admitted to the Inns of Court were either feminists or involved in women's rights is interesting because it shows diversity in terms of views. Certainly, there were also forward-thinking fathers who influenced their daughter’s choices, such as Auvergne Doherty’s father who was a merchant wool broker.<sup>399</sup> This research helps us to understand that some of these women were perhaps encouraged by their mothers, though perhaps from a different viewpoint. Whereas men encouraged their daughters to not let sex be a barrier, women understood that sex was indeed a barrier but believed that women could overcome it.

From the above, we can understand that the first women admitted to the Inns of Court would have had very strong, determined and passionate mothers. This would undoubtedly have influenced their lives and potentially their career choices. For the most part, there is an indication

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<sup>395</sup> Mukherjee, Sumita. "Tata [married name Lam], Mithan Ardeshir [Mithibai] (1898–1981), social reformer and barrister." Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. 15 Feb. 2018; Accessed 11 Dec. 2024. <https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-111939>.

<sup>396</sup> ‘Herabai and Mithan Tata at LSE’, LSE History, 31 October 2018, <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/lsehistory/2018/10/31/a-mother-and-daughter-at-lse-herabai-and-mithan-tata/>.

<sup>397</sup> Coleman, ‘Thwarted Ambitions: The Biography of Auvergne Doherty, an Aspiring Female Barrister’.

<sup>398</sup> Staveley-Wadham, Rose, ‘The Amazing Career of Indian Lawyer Cornelia Sorabji’, The British Newspaper Archive Blog | Amazing finds and news from over 300 years of historical newspapers (The British Newspaper Archive Blog, 21 March 2023), <https://blog.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/2023/03/21/the-amazing-career-of-indian-lawyer-cornelia-sorabji/>.

<sup>399</sup> Coleman, ‘Thwarted Ambitions: The Biography of Auvergne Doherty, an Aspiring Female Barrister’.

that these ‘occupations’ were middle-class; only around three were blue-collar, including domestic servant and potentially post-office assistant. This concurs with the demographic derived from the fathers and presents the picture of a middle-class Bar during the 1920s. On balance, the family status, potentially linking to social status, was not particularly diverse at the Inns of Court as the majority were from middle-class families.

### *Wider Family Legal Connections*

Polden has touched on the fact that some of the first women barristers were the grandchildren of the judiciary or from legal families. For example, Sybil Campbell was the granddaughter of Sir William Bovill, a Victorian chief justice, and Hannah Cross came from a family of lawyers on her mother’s side.<sup>400</sup> In total 17 women (7.2%) had extended family members who were in the legal profession. Eight women had maternal grandfathers who were solicitors, barristers or members of the judiciary. Six women had husbands who were barristers or solicitors; there were some other family members including an uncle, brother and stepfather who had legal careers. *Table 2.12* details these women; note that marriages to men in the legal profession have only been included if they were married before entry to the Inns of Court.

Inn	Name	Admitted	Called	Family Member	Occupation
Lincoln's Inn	Jessie Elliot Alderson	26-Mar-1924	Not Called	Husband	Solicitor
Lincoln's Inn	Peroja Jamshed Bahadurji	1-Nov-1929	26-Jan-1933	Grandfather (maternal)	Barrister (LI)
Inner Temple	Elsa Care Barker	25-Jan-1929	17-Nov-1933	Husband	Barrister
Gray's Inn	Phyllis Lucy Morgan Blake (nee Turner)	1-Oct-1925	20-Jun-1928	Husband	Barrister

<sup>400</sup> Polden, *Portia's Progress: Women at the Bar in England, 1919–1939*.

Middle Temple	Sybil Campbell	16-Jan-1920	17-Nov-1922	Grandfather (maternal)	Chief Justice
Inner Temple	Alexandra Millicent Christides	21-Oct-1927	2-Jul-1930	Grandfather (maternal)	Solicitor's clerk
Inner Temple	Joan Clarkson	5-Apr-1922	26-Jan-1925	Grandfather (maternal)	Barrister
Inner Temple	Isabella Crawshaw	9-Nov-1926	Not Called	Husband	Barrister
Lincoln's Inn	Hannah Margaret Cross	2-Nov-1928	17-Jun-1931	Grandfather (maternal)	Judge
Inner Temple	Theodora Llewellyn Davies	9-Jan-1920	17-Nov-1922	Uncle	Barrister (IT)
Middle Temple	Beatrice Honour Davy	24-Jan-1920	17-Nov-1922	Grandfather (maternal)	Solicitor
Middle Temple	Lilian Maud Dawes	22-Jan-1920	17-Nov-1922	Brother	Solicitor
Middle Temple	Florence Earengy [nee How]	13-May-1925	26-Jan-1928	Husband	Solicitor + Barrister
Middle Temple	Cynthia Nancy Rachel Gover	22-Oct-1923	26-Jan-1927	Grandfather (maternal)	Judge & KC
Inner Temple	Patricia Hackett	2-May-1927	27-Jan-1930	Stepfather	Solicitor
Lincoln's Inn	Ilma Gertrude May de Jonge	22-Nov-1920	27-Jan-1947	Grandfather (maternal)	Barrister & Judge
Middle Temple	Gladys Siddie Powell	13-Oct-1924	17-Nov-1927	Husband	Barrister (MT)

Table 2.12: Wider Family's Occupations in the Law

As can be seen, at least eight women were the granddaughters of solicitors, barristers or judges on their mother's side. Peroja Jamshed Bahadurji's grandfather was Sir M. M. Bhownaggee, who was admitted to Lincoln's Inn in 1885 and KCIE, MP; he was the second Indian to be a British MP.<sup>401</sup> Through her mother, Constance Mary Gorst, Joan Clarkson is the granddaughter of a

<sup>401</sup> Sir M. M. Bhownaggee's daughter, Miss Perin married Dr J. N. Bahadurji: 'G U P', *The Homeward Mail*, 5 March 1904, 310; Encyclopaedia Iranica Foundation, 'BHOWNAGGEE, Mancherjee Merwanjee',

distinguished barrister, Sir John Eldon Gorst.<sup>402</sup> Cynthia Nancy Rachel Gover's grandfather was a high court judge in Jamaica and King's Counsel.<sup>403</sup> Ilma Gertrude May de Jonge's grandfather was Robert Abraham Swan, barrister and judge at British Guiana.<sup>404</sup>

Jesse Elliot Alderson's husband, Alan Stuart Alderson, was a solicitor and clerk.<sup>405</sup> Elsa Care Barker's husband, Jalal Uddin Malik, was called to the Bar at Inner Temple but soon went into business; he encouraged her to read for the Bar and perhaps influenced her decision to choose Inner Temple.<sup>406</sup> Phyllis Lucy Morgan Blake's husband, Charles Anthony Morgan Blake, was a solicitor and was then called to the Bar at Middle Temple; he practised at the Queen's Bench Division of the High Court.<sup>407</sup> Isabella Crawshaw's husband, Dr Frank McKenzie Crawshaw, was a barrister at Gray's Inn, Hare Court and Temple London, and was also a doctor.<sup>408</sup> Florence Earengy's husband, William George Earengy, was a solicitor and county court judge, and was later called to the Bar at Middle Temple; he became a QC. He was involved in the fight for women's suffrage alongside his wife and wrote *Women Under the Law*, published in 1913 by Women's Freedom League.<sup>409</sup>

Lilian Maud Dawes' brother, Albert Henry Dawes, was approximately 10 years her senior and was a solicitor.<sup>410</sup> Lilian Maud Dawes was amongst the first women called to the Bar in 1922; however,

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accessed 27 February 2024, <https://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/bhownagagree-mancherjee-merwanjee-parsi-statesman>.

<sup>402</sup> Naomi Clifford, 'Chelsea Volunteer Ambulance Drivers: Joan Clarkson', Lawyers of London, accessed 14 December 2023, <https://www.layersoflondon.org/map/records/chelsea-volunteer-ambulance-drivers-joan-clarkson>.

<sup>403</sup> *The Citizen*, 'Gossip of the Day', 15 January 1927, p.4.

<sup>404</sup> 'Ilma Gertrude May Dejonge', Ancestry.com, accessed 27 February 2024,

[https://www.ancestry.com/family-tree/person/tree/133411/person/392196554999/facts?\\_gl=1\\*1cj6ded\\*\\_up\\*MQ..\\*\\_ga\\*MjEwMjEyMDA0Mi4xNzA5MDY5Mzk1\\*\\_ga\\_LMK6K2LSJH\\*ZTk2N2RhODctNDRkZS00NjA5LTk0NDgtY2Y0MjlmOWEwZTdiLjEuMC4xNzA5MDY5NDQ0LjAuMC4w\\*\\_ga\\_4QT8FMEX30\\*ZTk2N2RhODctNDRkZS00NjA5LTk0NDgtY2Y0MjlmOWEwZTdiLjEuMC4xNzA5MDY5NDQ0LjAuMC4w](https://www.ancestry.com/family-tree/person/tree/133411/person/392196554999/facts?_gl=1*1cj6ded*_up*MQ..*_ga*MjEwMjEyMDA0Mi4xNzA5MDY5Mzk1*_ga_LMK6K2LSJH*ZTk2N2RhODctNDRkZS00NjA5LTk0NDgtY2Y0MjlmOWEwZTdiLjEuMC4xNzA5MDY5NDQ0LjAuMC4w*_ga_4QT8FMEX30*ZTk2N2RhODctNDRkZS00NjA5LTk0NDgtY2Y0MjlmOWEwZTdiLjEuMC4xNzA5MDY5NDQ0LjAuMC4w).

<sup>405</sup> *Blyth News*, 'DEATHS', 20 July 1936., p.2.

<sup>406</sup> *Obituary for the Girton College Annual Review*, 'ELSA CARE MALIK (NEE BARKER)', 2005.

<sup>407</sup> *Portsmouth Evening News*, 'Retired Liss Barrister Dies', 16 October 1959., p.5.

<sup>408</sup> *Leicester Evening Mail*, 'To Be Married In His Own Abbey', 20 July 1926, p.4.

<sup>409</sup> *Gloucester Journal*, 'Husband and Wife as Barrister', 21 January 1928, p.24; W. G. Earengy, *Women Under the Law* (London: Women's Freedom League, 1908).

<sup>410</sup> Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., '1911 England Census [database on-Line]'.

very little is known about her. She was born around 1897 in London, the daughter of William T Dawes and Eliza.<sup>411</sup> She had three siblings: two older brothers, Albert and Percy Dawes, and a younger sister, Audrey M Dawes.<sup>412</sup> Her sister, Audrey Dawes, married a barrister, Philip Frederick Skottowe of Middle Temple, in 1929.<sup>413</sup> Philip F Skottowe was admitted to Middle Temple on 31 March 1922 and called in May 1925.<sup>414</sup> It is possible that Lilian Dawes knew him while she was at Middle Temple as there was some overlap. He wrote a number of books, two of which were about the Law, and the other which tells the story of the Skottowe family, who were once the occupiers of Bury Hill House.<sup>415</sup> When Audrey and Philip Skottowe were married in 1929, it was commented that Audrey May Dawes was the daughter of the late Mr and Mrs W. T. Dawes.<sup>416</sup> Unfortunately, it has only been possible to trace Albert Henry Dawes's actions and death. Gladys Siddie Powell married Darpho L Powell, barrister of Middle Temple. A newspaper noted that she was the 'first wife in the history of the English Bar to enter her husband's profession and oppose him in court'.<sup>417</sup>

Theodora Llewelyn Davies's maternal grandfather was Sir Charles John Crompton QC of Inner Temple, he became known as a deeply read lawyer, and consequently acquired great experience in the practical part of the profession both on the Northern and Western Circuits and in

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<sup>411</sup> Ancestry.com, '1901 England Census'; Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., '1911 England Census [database on-Line]'.  
<sup>412</sup> Ancestry.com, '1901 England Census'.

<sup>413</sup> *Uxbridge & W. Drayton Gazette*, 'Marriages', 16 August 1929, p.1; Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 'London, England, Church of England Marriages and Banns, 1754-1938 [database on-Line]', Ancestry.com, 2010, <https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/921837685:1623?ssrc=pt&tid=47016436&pid=222085557695>.  
<sup>414</sup> Inner Temple, 'Registers of Admissions'.

<sup>415</sup> Skottowe, Philip Frederick, *The Law Relating to the Blind* (London: Butterworth, 1933); Skottowe, Philip Frederick, *The Law Relating to Sunday* (London: Butterworth & Company Limited, 1936); Skottowe, Philip Frederick, *The English and Empire Digest. Cumulative Supplement* (LexisNexis, 1971); Skottowe, Philip Frederick, *Leaf and Tree* (Research Pub.Co., 1963).

<sup>416</sup> *The Times*, 'Marriages', 12 August 1929, Vol, 45279.

<sup>417</sup> *Gloucester Journal*, 'Husband and Wife Barristers', 17 December 1927, p.11.



Westminster Hall.<sup>418</sup> Her uncle was Arthur Llewelyn Davies; he worked at Inner Temple.<sup>419</sup> She also had a distant uncle, Malcolm Macnaghten who was a relative though her mother's family the Booths, was a barrister of Lincoln's Inn and judge.<sup>420</sup>

Although only a small cross section of women has been identified as having extended family in the Law, the influences of family members can be appreciated. Maternal grandfathers have played a particularly important role likely through the influence of mother. Husbands have also encouraged or influenced their wives to study at the Bar. The significance of this is, again, adding nuance to our perception of the barriers women faced at the Bar. While sexism and discrimination were indeed a barrier for many of the women at the Inns of Court and during practice, we can see that some did have a supportive male network within the family. This is also seen to some extent for the women who married barristers after they joined the Inns of Court.

## **Marital Status**

Analysis of the marital status of the first women admitted to the Inn of Court first involves identifying whether they were married on admission; married between admission and call; married after call; did not marry; or whether their marital status is unknown. It has been possible to identify the marital status of 223 women out of 236 (94.5 %); the marital status of 13 women is unknown. Information about marital status has been gathered from family history websites and newspaper publications. There are a couple of inconclusive cases, including Ruth Epstein and Averyl Harcourt. It appears that Ruth Epstein did get married, but it is not clear who her husband was. There is no official evidence that Averyl Harcourt got married, but she presented herself as

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<sup>418</sup> 'Sir Charles John Crompton QC', Ancestry.co.uk, accessed 6 June 2024, <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/family-tree/person/tree/61030808/person/46067758045/facts>; J. J. Heath Caldwell, 'Cromptoncharles1865 - JJHC', JJHC, accessed 6 June 2024, <https://www.jjhc.info/cromptoncharles1865>.

<sup>419</sup> 'Theodora Llewelyn Davies', Inner Temple, 27 November 2019, <https://www.innertemple.org.uk/women-in-law/our-women/theodora-llewelyn-davies/>.

<sup>420</sup> 'Telephone Conversation with Jean Macintyre (Mary Frances Macnaghten's Granddaughter) and the Author', 24 July 2023.

a married woman and had a child with someone.<sup>421</sup> *Table 2.13* below sets out the marital status of the first women admitted to the Inns of Court between 1919 and 1929.

	Marriage Time							
	Upon Admission	Between Admission & Call	After Call	Married but not called	Total married	Did not marry	Unknown	Total Women
<b>No.</b>	19	9	71	34	129	94	13	236
<b>% of total admissions</b>	8.1	3.8	30.1	14.4	54.7	39.8	5.5	100

Table 2.13: Marital Status of the Women Admitted to the Inns of Court between 1919 and 1929

### *Significance of marriage*

As can be seen from the above, the vast majority (129 out of 236, or 54.7%) of the women, admitted to the Inns of Court between 1919 and 1929 married at some point, either before admission, between admission and call or after call. Just under 40% of women did not marry. It has not been possible to identify the marriage rates of male barristers. However, looking at social trends more broadly, it can be seen that ‘almost 90% of men born in 1908 were married by the time they were 40 years old. The same was true of men born in 1948. Among men born in 1960, 78% were married by 40; for those born in 1970, the figure is 63%. A similar pattern is evident for women.’<sup>422</sup> The Office of National Statistics (ONS) found that approximately 68% of men and 77% of women born in the 1940s married on average.<sup>423</sup> Based on these statistics, this would mean that the vast majority of men and women born in the early to mid-1900s married, and marriage rates started to decline in the 1970s. Taking the above into account, it can be

<sup>421</sup> Juliet Gayton, ‘Email to Charlotte Coleman Regarding Averyl Harcourt’, 12 December 2023.

<sup>422</sup> Olympic Britain: Social and Economic Change Since the 1908 and 1948 London Games. (United Kingdom: House of Commons Library, 2012.)

<sup>423</sup> This was based on finding the average of the total marriages per 1000 and converting this to a percentage. Office for National Statistics, Cohort and Cohabitation Analysis, Table 2 Interpretation, Online Available:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/file?uri=/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/marriagecohabitationandcivilpartnerships/datasets/marriagestatisticscohabitationandcohortanalyses/2011/cohabitationandcohortanalyses11.xls>. Accessed 22 November 2024.

understood that the percentage of women at the Inns of Court who married was low when compared to societal trends; 54.7% of women at the Inns married, whereas approximately 77% of women born in 1940 married. While these figures are not wholly comparable, it can be assumed that marriage rates of those born before the 1940s would be similar, if not higher, as marriage rates did not decline until the 1970s.<sup>424</sup> This thesis will now consider the potential reasons why some of these women may not have married, offering general analysis based on societal trends as well as individual examples of the first women barrister's circumstances.

### *Why did women not marry?*

One reasons for declining marriage rates after the 1970s was cohabitation: it was more common for women in more recent cohorts to cohabit with a partner, either as a precursor to or instead of marriage.<sup>425</sup> While cohabitation may have been less common in the early to mid-1900s, one of the first women barristers, Margaret Prothero (admitted to Gray's Inn in 1926 and called 1929), did cohabit with a man but not marry him; she was in a relationship with Alfred Lewis Warner and went by his surname (Warner) except at work where she was still Margaret Prothero; she continued to live with Warner until he died at 84; they had one daughter. He had problems divorcing his wife (who was French and living in France) and was likely a Catholic.<sup>426</sup> Although called to the Bar, Margaret Prothero worked as a solicitor and appears to have lived a fulfilled, albeit unconventional, life where she was able to work and have a family. Other women outside of the law also cohabited. For example, there was an instance when a woman secretly cohabited with her teacher colleague to avoid losing her job because of the marriage bar.<sup>427</sup> This case was different to Prothero's because the woman teacher concerned 'lived in fear' of getting caught

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<sup>424</sup> It is expected that previous decades would have a similar percentage of marriage rate or higher as marriage rates did not decline until 1970.

<sup>425</sup> Olympic Britain: Social and Economic Change Since the 1908 and 1948 London Games.

<sup>426</sup> Sabin, Saga, "Email to Charlotte Coleman from Saga Sabin, Margaret Prothero's daughter", 16 December 2019.

<sup>427</sup> One young teacher admitted to living with her lover (also a teacher) to avoid being dismissed due to the marriage bar. She noted that she 'lived in a state of constant terror'. Oram, Alison, *Women Teachers and Feminist Politics 1900-29*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996), p.56. The marriage bar applied to women who were salary-earners meaning they were paid per annum. Robinson, Jane, *Ladies Can't Climb Ladders: The Pioneering Adventures of the First Professional Women*.

firstly because of the conception that she was 'living in sin' but also because she would lose her job due to the marriage bar.<sup>428</sup> From this we can see that women did enter relationships outside of a conventional marriage due to the legal restrictions of the time. While these women may have been the minority, we can see that some women were indeed cohabiting.

A more recent reason for declining marriage rates was the fact that since 2005, same-sex couples have been able to form civil partnerships.<sup>429</sup> Women and men in the 1900s did not have the option of entering a same-sex relationship openly. The Offences Against the Person Act 1861 made sure that homosexual relationships (between men) at the Bar and in society were non-existent, at least publicly.<sup>430</sup> While lesbian relationships were not illegal, despite an attempt in 1921 to add the offence of 'gross indecency between women' to the Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill,<sup>431</sup> they were socially unacceptable and were kept out of the public's mind through deliberate avoidance of legislation in this area. In private, it was likely a different story as can be seen in the case of Gladys Steyn, the first South African woman admitted and called to the Bar of England and Wales (her story is told in more detail in Chapter 4, the International Women). She had a lesbian relationship with Petronella van Heerden, the first Afrikaner woman to qualify as a medical doctor; their relationship lasted about five years.<sup>432</sup> Gladys Steyn eventually married a man when she was 52 years old (around 30 years after her same-sex relationship). Her heterosexual marriage may indicate that her lesbian relationship was a phase, yet Gladys also repeatedly erased or changed notes and letters in her archive to distort her relationship with van Heerden. Perhaps she was embarrassed about her intimate relationship with van Heerden;

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<sup>428</sup> Ibid.

<sup>429</sup> Olympic Britain: Social and Economic Change Since the 1908 and 1948 London Games.

<sup>430</sup> In the Offences against the Person Act 1861, the death penalty for buggery was replaced with life imprisonment or for any term not less than 10 years. The Act was subsequently adapted, modified and incorporated into the codes of various British colonies throughout Africa, the Caribbean and South Pacific over the next half-century. See Human Dignity Trust, A History of LGBT Criminalisation, 2024. Online: <https://www.humandignitytrust.org/lgbt-the-law/a-history-of-criminalisation>, Accessed 22 November 2024.

<sup>431</sup> Derry, Caroline. Lesbianism and Feminist Legislation in 1921: the Age of Consent and 'Gross Indecency between Women'. History Workshop Journal, 2018, 86 (Autumn) pp. 245-267; Derry, Caroline, "Chapter 28: DPP v Jonathan Cape and Leopold Hill (1928)." In *Women's Legal Landmarks*, edited by Erika Rackley and Auchmuty.

<sup>432</sup> Ibid.

<sup>432</sup> van der Westhuizen, Christi. "Lesbian dis/appearances: epistemic violence against internal dissidents in the formation of Afrikaner Identity." In *Violence: South African Perspectives*.

Gladys's mother did not approve.<sup>433</sup> Given the story of Gladys Steyn, it is likely that other women barristers also had same-sex relationships.

Today, same-sex relationships are legally recognised. The Bar Standards Board has collected recent data about sexual orientation. It was revealed that 52.9% of men and women at the Bar were heterosexual and 4.2% were either bisexual, gay or lesbian<sup>434</sup> While quite a high percentage 'preferred not to say' or gave 'no information' (42.6%), it can be seen that while the majority of barristers today are heterosexual some people at the Bar were, importantly, willing to say they are of a different sexual orientation. However, it has been noted that homosexuals have experienced some form of discrimination at the Bar or in their professional lives.<sup>435</sup> For example, one woman recalled that in her chambers, 'some bloke coming up to me asking why I was a lesbian and hadn't I ever considered having sex with men'; another man remembered 'One of my fellow students was at an Inns' qualifying session and was talking to a bencher who sort of jokingly or flamboyantly said, "I don't trust fags like you"'.<sup>436</sup> Therefore, while there is evidence of some progress regarding sexual identity at the Bar, individual perceptions at the Inns of Court still have some way to go.

Others may have chosen not to marry or to delay marriage, either to retain their independence or to focus on their career, or perhaps because they could not afford it. For example, a male barrister noted in 1928 that some women had no intention of following this conventional path [of marriage], preferring independence.<sup>437</sup> There was indeed a movement among some women

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<sup>433</sup> Ibid.

<sup>434</sup> 1.5% classified the sexual orientation as Bisexual; 2.7% as Gay or Lesbian; 52.9% as Heterosexual; 0.2% as other meaning pansexual or asexual; 4.7% prefer not to say; 37.9% had no information. See: Bar Standards Board. 2024. "Diversity at the Bar 2023 A Summary of the Latest Available Diversity Data for the Bar," January. file:///Users/charlottecoleman/Downloads/Diversity-at-the-Bar-2023Final-Version.pdf.

<sup>435</sup> Mascon Marc and Vaughan, Steven, *Sexuality at the Bar: An Empirical Exploration into the Experiences of LGBT+ Barristers in England & Wales*, University of Westminster, 2017.

<sup>436</sup> Ibid, p.2 and 3.

<sup>437</sup> A male barrister noted that many young women are wedded to independence with no intention of contemplating conventional wedlock or being tied down by children see Cairns, J.A.R. *Careers for Girls*, (London: Hutchinson, 1928).

to condemn marriage as a trade and see single life as an opportunity for independence.<sup>438</sup> Derry, for example, notes that by the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, some feminists identified the power of refusing heterosexual relations arguing that ‘women should not marry until men righted their wrongs against women’ or ‘condemned marriage as a trade’.<sup>439</sup> In addition, ‘women’s opportunities for independence and engagement in the public spheres were growing’, making the role of women in public and private spheres an urgent topic of debate.<sup>440</sup> In this way, with expanded educational, career and employment opportunities, the traditional narrative of marriage may not have been appealing to heterosexual women. Enid Rosser Locket, admitted to Lincoln’s Inn in 1922 and called in 1927, declined her proposal of marriage in 1923, delaying it until 1944. She noted:

*‘Matrimony to me I knew would be the end of life as I wanted it to happen, and there were many things I wanted to achieve before renouncing independence and all that marriage would mean. My life was, I fear, much too glamorous for any young man to compete with successfully’*<sup>441</sup>

This clearly illustrates that some women viewed marriage as restrictive and therefore either delayed the process or forfeited it entirely either following unconventional paths such as cohabiting or same-sex partnerships or remaining a spinster. This may have worked both ways; if one of the woman barristers was independent, confident and well-educated, some men may have been threatened by this. Nora Gipson recalls that her fiancée (not the man she eventually married) did not attend her Call Night at Middle Temple because ‘in those days, men looked askance at highly educated women, presumably because they thought a woman could not combine learning with being a good wife and mother. There was a lot of prejudice to

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<sup>438</sup> Derry, Caroline, “Chapter 28: DPP v Jonathan Cape and Leopold Hill (1928).” In *Women’s Legal Landmarks*; Holden, Katherine, ‘Nature takes no notice of morality’: singleness and married love in interwar Britain<sup>1</sup>, *Women’s History Review*, 2002, 11:3, 481-504, DOI: 10.1080/09612020200200332.

<sup>439</sup> Ibid. The notion of marriage as a trade links to suffragette Cicely Hamilton’s book *Marriage as a Trade*, where she claims marriage was closely managed by men and complicit women who are essentially controlled by men and their capabilities degraded see: Cicely Hamilton, *Marriage as a Trade*, New York: Moffat, Yard and Company, 1909.

<sup>440</sup> Ibid.

<sup>441</sup> Locket, Enid, *Ramblings: The Story of Enid Rosser* (unpublished typescript in Women’s Library collection, LSW Library, LOCKET).

overcome.’<sup>442</sup> Fortunately, Nora Gipson did not end up marrying him. It shall be seen below that some men were supportive of their potential wife’s ambitions and achievements, but clearly others were threatened by this. Fortunately, Nora Gipson did not end up marrying him.

From Nora Gipson’s memoirs it can also be seen that money may have been a reason not to marry. In Nora Gipson’s case, her fiancé was not satisfied with the family’s economic circumstances, and the engagement was ended for this reason.<sup>443</sup> Some women may have wanted to marry but perhaps could not afford it. Reid suggested that working and saving pushed marriage ages into the mid-twenties for both men and women and that marriage was also responsive to economic circumstances, meaning when people were earning more or had stable earnings, they could afford to marry.<sup>444</sup> The average age at first marriage is now 31; in the 1970s it was 23, and in 1925 approximately 26.<sup>445</sup> The vast majority of the first women at the Inns were in their 20s when they married and so were similar to the national average age.

Some women intended to marry, only to find that individual circumstances dictated that it was not to be. For example, Kathleen Burgess planned to marry Averell Deverell’s twin brother but had a severe nervous breakdown and committed suicide.<sup>446</sup> Jessie Irene Wall, known as Irene, was engaged but ‘lost the man she loved in the early days of the [First World] war; their engagement had been about to be made public when she received news of his death.’ She did not marry.<sup>447</sup> The First World War also made widows of other first women at the Inns including

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<sup>442</sup> Gipson, Nora Myfanwy. ‘Nora Myfanwy Gipson’s Memoirs’, 1980.

<sup>443</sup> Nora Gipson noted that she was shocked when she found out that her father received a lawyer’s letter (sent on behalf of her then fiancée) demanding to know how much money he would receive upon marriage. Gipson explained to him that her family spent their money on her education. Thus, the engagement came to an end. Ibid, p.92.

<sup>444</sup> Reid, Alice, “The Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure, Cambridge.”, 2024, Past group members: <https://www.campop.geog.cam.ac.uk/blog/2024/07/11/what-age-did-people-marry/>. Accessed: 21 November 2024.

<sup>445</sup> Olympic Britain: Social and Economic Change Since the 1908 and 1948 London Games. United Kingdom: House of Commons Library, 2012; Reid, “The Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure, Cambridge.”.

<sup>446</sup> Goldthorpe, Liz, ‘Dublin University Women Graduates’ (January and February 2018), Ireland, TRINITY ARCHIVES (Susan Parkes material).

<sup>447</sup> Jessie Irene Wall was called to the Bar, but she did not practice as a barrister, instead undertaking various roles in the Civil Service. See: “Jessie Irene WALL (1890-1953).”, Badsey Society Online. <https://www.badseysociety.uk/sladden-archive/people/626>. Accessed: 22 November 2024.

such as Violet Mary Hume who was inspired by her first husband to study law at the same Inn as him (her story is told in Chapter 3 as she was not called to the Bar).<sup>448</sup> More broadly, it is estimated that the total number of women widowed as a result of the First World War was between 3 and 4 million.<sup>449</sup>

This thesis has given some social context regarding marriage trends in society that are relevant to the period concerned and highlighted why some of the first women at the Inns of Court did not marry. It has identified that some women may have cohabited or entered same-sex relationships; some may have wanted to retain their independence or delay marriage; money may have been a consideration and of course individual circumstances such as being robbed of their fiancés due to the First World War played a part. This thesis will now review the women who married and give some brief biographical information about the husbands, grouped by profession, to understand if this may have affected the women's social status. It will also consider if marriage was a barrier or call or practice.

#### *Women Who Were Married on Admission*

A small minority of women, 19 of the 236, were married before they were admitted to the Inns of Court (8.1 %). As can be seen from *Table 2.14* below, these women were typically relatively mature upon admission to the Inns of Court, with their ages ranging from 27 to 65. Polden estimates that 32 of the women admitted to the Bar between 1919 and 1939 were married upon entry to the Inns of Court.<sup>450</sup> If his numbers are accurate, this would mean that only 13 women admitted between 1930 and 1939 were married. This seems unlikely given that he estimates 428 were admitted during the twenty-year period. The women who were married prior to entering the Inns of Court have been identified below, in *Table 2.14* to understand if any of them derived

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<sup>448</sup> 'TO THE GLORIOUS MEMORY OF THOSE MEMBERS OF THE BAR OF THIS COURT WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES WHILE SERVING IN THE GREAT WAR 1914-1918', Roll of honour - London - central criminal court, old Bailey, accessed 22 July 2024, <https://www.roll-of-honour.com/London/OldBailey.html>.

<sup>449</sup> Bette, Peggy, and Winter, Jay. "War Widows / 1.0 / Encyclopaedic - 1914-1918-Online (WW1) Encyclopaedia." 1914-1918-Online (WW1) Encyclopaedia. July 2, 2024. <https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/war-widows/>. Accessed: 22 November 2024.

<sup>450</sup> Polden, *Portia's Progress: Women at the Bar in England, 1919–1939*.



their social and/or financial status from their husbands, as well as any other commonalities. Some brief details have been provided about their husbands' occupational status below.

Inn	Name	Admitted	Called	Age on admission	Marriage year	Husband's occupation	Father's Profession
Lincoln's Inn	Gwyneth Marjory Thomson (nee Bebb)	27-Jan-1920	Not Called	29	1917	Solicitor	Education
Middle Temple	Averyl Harcourt (nee Duek Cohen)	19-Mar-1920	Not Called	40	Unknown	Unknown	Clergy: Chief Rabbi
Lincoln's Inn	Violet Mary Hume (nee Hope)	21-Sep-1921	Not Called	34	1912	Barrister	J.P. and Sheriff
Lincoln's Inn	Jessie Elliot Alderson (nee Murdoch)	26-Mar-1924	Not Called	40	1911	Solicitor	Carpenter
Middle Temple	Gladys Sddie Powell (nee Chitham)	13-Oct-1924	17-Nov-1927	35	1915	Barrister	Shipowner
Inner Temple	Gwyneth Evans (nee Cooper Willis)	20-Oct-1924	12-Jun-1929	29	1919	Medical	Barrister, KC (Inner Temple) bencher
Inner Temple	Ruth Elizabeth Sophia Thompson	19-Mar-1925	27-Jan-1930	28	1917	Brewer	Court Clerk
Gray's Inn	Phyllis Lucy Morgan Blake (nee Turner)	1-Oct-1925	20-Jun-1928	27	1923	Solicitor	Doctor
Middle Temple	Florence Earengy (nee How)	13-May-1925	26-Jan-1928	47	1899	Barrister	Merchant
Middle Temple	Mary Josephine Clark (nee McCormick)	16-Oct-1925	20-Jun-1928	36	1913	Unknown	Doctor Surgeon
Gray's Inn	Nora Mary Brooks (nee Popplewell)	26-Mar-1926	2-Jul-1930	32	1917	Soldier in WWI	Lecturer
Inner Temple	Isabella Crawshaw (nee Burnett)	9-Nov-1926	Not Called	27	1926	Barrister	Engineer

Inner Temple	Eva Louise Roberts (nee Glasier)	18-Dec-1926	26-Jan-1931	39	1916	Public Servant	Medical
Lincoln's Inn	Alice Grace Jenny Bragg (nee Hopkins)	17-May-1927	Not Called	27	1921	Physicist (Sir)	Doctor
Inner Temple	Joan Meredyth Chichele Jullien (nee Plowden)	16-Nov-1927	24-Jun-1936	37	1918	Lieutenant	Barrister + Judge
Gray's Inn	Florence Ada Coxon (nee Neale)	7-Jun-1928	26-Jan-1933	65	1884	Dentist	Merchant
Inner Temple	Freda Kunzlen Corbet (nee Mansell)	1-Nov-1929	8-Jun-1932	29	1925	Shop owner	Commercial Clerk
Lincoln's Inn	Alice Greta Morrice (nee Hunt)	6-Nov-1929	17-Nov-1932	40	1911	Metal broker	Merchant
Gray's Inn	Loveday Shackell Farquharson (nee Banes)	16-Nov-1929	26-Jan-1934	40	1919	Doctor	Accountant

Table 2.14: Women who were Married Before Admission to the Inns of Court between 1919 and 1929

### *Legal Professional*

Seven women were married to men in the legal progression. Three married solicitors: Gwyneth Thomson's husband was a solicitor. In August 1920, she gave up her work at the Ministry of Food in order to study for the Bar and help her husband in his practice at Tewkesbury.<sup>451</sup> Jessie Elliot Alderson's husband, Alan Alderson, was a solicitor.<sup>452</sup> Phyllis Lucy Morgan Blake's husband was a solicitor.<sup>453</sup> Four women were married to barristers: Violet Mary Hume was widowed; her husband, Edward Archibald Hume, had been a barrister but unfortunately died in 1915 due to 'wounds' sustained while serving in the First World War.<sup>454</sup> Violet Hume later married her second

<sup>451</sup> Auchmuty, 'Bebb [married Name Thomson], Gwyneth Marjory'.

<sup>452</sup> Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., '1911 England Census [database on-Line]'.

<sup>453</sup> The Yorkshire Post, 'Coming Calls to the Bar', 16 June 1928, 12.

<sup>454</sup> 'TO THE GLORIOUS MEMORY OF THOSE MEMBERS OF THE BAR OF THIS COURT WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES WHILE SERVING IN THE GREAT WAR 1914-1918', Roll of honour - London - central criminal court, old Bailey, accessed 22 July 2024, <https://www.roll-of-honour.com/London/OldBailey.html>.

husband, a military man, Major Sir Duncan McCallum.<sup>455</sup> Gladys Sddie Powell's husband was a barrister. It was reported in *The Daily Mail* that she was 'the first wife in the history of the English Bar to enter her husband's profession' and that 'she will appear on the South Wales Circuit' where her husband's practice lies.<sup>456</sup> Florence Earengy's husband, William George Earengy, was a solicitor and county court judge and was later called to the Bar at Middle Temple; he became a QC. He was involved in the fight for women's suffrage alongside his wife and wrote *Women Under the Law*, published in 1913 by Women's Freedom League.<sup>457</sup> Isabella Crawshaw married Frank Mackenzie Crawshaw, who was a barrister at Hare Court, Temple, London and also a doctor.<sup>458</sup>

### *Medical Professionals*

Three women were married to men in the medical profession. Gwyneth Evans's husband, John Howell Evans, was a surgeon and lecturer in surgery at the Prince of Wales General Hospital.<sup>459</sup> Their marriage did not last, as she later married Henry Sumner Hyatt Moore, a dental surgeon, in 1934.<sup>460</sup> Sadly, in 1949, Gwyneth Moore appears to have committed suicide. It was found that her mind was disturbed and her husband noted that she had been depressed.<sup>461</sup> Gwyneth Evans was Irene Cooper Willis's younger sister.<sup>462</sup> Their father, Edward Cooper Willis, was a surgeon; he later joined the Inner Temple in 1863, becoming Queen's Counsel in 1882 and a bencher in

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<sup>455</sup> *The Oban Times*, 'Major Sir Duncan McCallum Passes', 17 March 1958, p.5.

<sup>456</sup> *The Daily Mail*, 'Learned Friend', 18 November 1927, p.3.

<sup>457</sup> 'Husband and Wife as Barrister'; Earengy, *Women Under the Law*.

<sup>458</sup> 'To Be Married in His Own Abbey'.

<sup>459</sup> 'Evans, John Howell (1870 - 1962)', Royal College of Surgeons of England, accessed 22 July 2024, [https://livesonline.rcseng.ac.uk/client/en\\_GB/lives/search/detailnonmodal/ent:\\$002f\\$002fSD\\_ASSET\\$002f\\$002fSD\\_ASSET:377535/one?qu=%22rcs%3A+E005352%22&rt=false%7C%7C%7CIDENTIFIER%7C%7C%7CResource+Identifier](https://livesonline.rcseng.ac.uk/client/en_GB/lives/search/detailnonmodal/ent:$002f$002fSD_ASSET$002f$002fSD_ASSET:377535/one?qu=%22rcs%3A+E005352%22&rt=false%7C%7C%7CIDENTIFIER%7C%7C%7CResource+Identifier).

<sup>460</sup> 'Gwynaeth Cooper-Willis', Ancestry.co.uk, accessed 4 June 2024, <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/family-tree/person/tree/157408340/person/122159196449/facts>.

<sup>461</sup> *Westminster & Pimlico News*, 'Fell to Death from Third Floor Flat', 25 May 1945, p.5.

<sup>462</sup> *The Penrith Observer*, 'Seven More Women Called to the Bar', 25 November 1924, p.6. mentions that Irene Cooper Willis was called; she was daughter of the late Edward Cooper Willis, King's Counsel and Bencher of Inner Temple. *Weekly Dispatch*, 'More Women at the Bar: Daughter of Noted Lawyers', 9 June 1929, p.11.note that Mrs Gwwneath Howell Evans is daughter of Edward Cooper Willis, late bencher of Inner Temple.

1887.<sup>463</sup> Florence Ada Coxon's husband, Stephen Arthur Coxon Thomas, was a dentist, Major and Mayor of King's Lynn (1923-1924). He also began reading at the Bar at the same time as his wife.<sup>464</sup> He was a student at Gray's Inn at the time of his death in 1935, so it is likely he died before he was called.<sup>465</sup> Loveday Shackell Farquharson's husband, Donald Charles Farquharson, was a doctor.<sup>466</sup>

### *Commerce and Industry*

A further three women were married to men in the commerce and industry sector. Ruth Elizabeth Sophia Thompson married Oscar William Bowerman, a brewer, in 1917.<sup>467</sup> It is not known why she chose to apply to the Inns of Court using her maiden name. Freda Kunzlen Corbet's husband, William Corbett, was a newspaper shop owner and member of the Independent Labour Party.<sup>468</sup> Alice Greta Morrice's husband, Kenneth Morrice, was a metal broker.<sup>469</sup>

### *Military*

Only two women were married to military men: Nora Mary Brooks's husband, Joseph Parkes, appears to have served in World War I as a soldier and died.<sup>470</sup> It is not known what his profession was before he fought in the War. Joan Meredyth Chichele Jullien's husband was Lieutenant Charles Armand Marie Jullien.<sup>471</sup>

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<sup>463</sup> 'Willis, Edward Cooper', Inner Temple Collections, accessed 7 June 2024, <https://archives.innertemple.org.uk/names/ae875943-f216-4887-9762-f427249323ea>; Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 'UK Medical Registers, 1859-1959'.

<sup>464</sup> *Daily News (London)*, 'Six New Women Barristers: One Aged Seventy', 20 January 1933, p.9.

<sup>465</sup> *Times / Tennessee Hospital Association*, 'Major Stephen Coxon', 26 February 1936, p.19.

<sup>466</sup> Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 'UK & Ireland, Medical Directories, 1845-1942', Ancestry.co.uk, 2016., <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/1132275:61053?ssrc=pt&tid=78048399&pid=48376376582>.

<sup>467</sup> '1939 England and Wales Register [database on-Line]'.

<sup>468</sup> 'Freda Corbet', Inner Temple, 20 November 2019, <https://www.innertemple.org.uk/women-in-law/our-women/freda-corbet/>.

<sup>469</sup> '1939 England and Wales Register [database on-Line]'.

<sup>470</sup> 'UK, World War I Pension Ledgers and Index Cards, 1914-1923', Ancestry.co.uk, accessed 22 July 2024, <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/21190118:61588?ssrc=pt&tid=165065578&pid=422530697726>.

<sup>471</sup> *Reading Mercury, Oxford Gazette, Newbury Herald, and Berks County Paper*, 'Society and Personal', 17 August 1918, p.5.

### *Civil Servant*

Eva Louise Roberts's husband, Arthur T. C. Roberts, appeared to be a public servant working on the Highways and Sanitary Commissioners Board.<sup>472</sup>

### *Education*

Alice Grace Jenny Bragg's husband was Sir William Bragg, an Australian physicist and Nobel Prize winner, in 1921.<sup>473</sup>

### *Unknown*

Averyl Harcourt, who came from a Jewish family, supposedly married a Christian when she was 17-years-old, and had a son when she was 18; a year later, in 1894, she was baptised as a Christian.<sup>474</sup> According to a private family memoir, her marriage was an act of independence, like her career, as marrying a Christian and converting to Christianity led her family to disown her.<sup>475</sup> Averyl Harcourt's case is a rather sorrowful one. Not only did her family disown her because of this alleged marriage but she also appears to have been very much alone throughout her life. Despite passing herself off as married and having a child, there was no formality or evidence of a husband.

Looking at the above, it is difficult to draw firm conclusions regarding the social status these women may have gained from their husbands. It is likely that Jessie Elliot Alderson may have gained some social status from her husband as her father was a carpenter; she received a

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<sup>472</sup> *Barbados Agricultural Reporter*, 'City Highways and Sanitary Commissioners', 21 February 1912, p.3.

<sup>473</sup> Her first child, Stephen, was born in 1921; David in 1926; Margaret Alice in 1931; and Patience Mary in 1935. Glazer, A.M. and Thomson, Patience, *Crystal Clear: The Autobiographies of Sir Lawrence and Lady Bragg* (OUP Oxford, 2015).

<sup>474</sup> Juliet Gayton notes that there is no evidence that she married but she posed as a married or widowed woman throughout most of her life: Gayton, Juliet, 'Seemah Later Marjorie Later Averyl Duek Cohen Later Harcourt', accessed 7 June 2023, <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/family-tree/person/tree/181823004/person/242360638329/story>.<https://www.ancestry.co.uk/family-tree/person/tree/181823004/person/242360638329/story>lbid. Juliet D. Gayton to Charlotte Coleman, Email Correspondence, 7 June 2023.

<sup>475</sup> Dr Julia Gayton has provided a History Chart of Dr Averyl Harcourt's life. In this she includes an extract from the Swifts – who descend from the Duek Cohens; the extract is from their grandmother's private family memoirs. Gayton to Coleman, 7 June 2023.

scholarship to go to university suggesting that the family could not pay for this. Her story is told in Chapter 3 as she was not called to the Bar. Nevertheless, the husbands' professions listed above were mostly white-collar, middle-class professions such as lawyer, doctor, dentist or civil servant. In this way, while the women themselves may not have gained any social status from them, they would not have entered a socially detrimental partnership either. There were quite a few barristers and solicitors among the husbands, seven out of 19 (36.8%). This could have gone some way towards influencing their wives to take up the legal profession.

#### *Women Married Between Admission and Call*

From *Table 2.15* below it can be understood that 9 out of 236 (3.8%) of women married between admission and call. Except for two women (Helena Normanton and Mildred David), all the women were in their early to mid-20s with the age at admission ranging from 20 to 25. This suggests that, in line with social trends, the women married in their mid-20s.

Inn	Name	Admitted	Called	Age on admission	Marriage year
Middle Temple	Helena Florence Normanton	24-Dec-1919	17-Nov-1922	35	1921
Inner Temple	Ethel Lloyd	29-Jan-1920	26-Jan-1925	24	1922
Lincoln's Inn	Ilma Gertrude May de Jonge	22-Nov-1920	27-Jan-1947	20	1923
Inner Temple	Katherine Allison Swan	18-Nov-1922	26-Jan-1926	24	1924
Middle Temple	Phyllis Manley	19-Dec-1924	28-Jan-1935	22	1926
Inner Temple	Ankaret Cecilia Carolyn Howard	27-Apr-1925	2-May-1928	25	1927
Middle Temple	Mildred Mary David	23-Mar-1926	8-Jun-1932	37	1927
Gray's Inn	Rosaline Joan Youard	11-Oct-1928	9-Jun-1937	20	1929
Inner Temple	Elsa Care Barker	25-Jan-1929	17-Nov-1933	23	1929

Table 2.15: Women who Married between Admission to the Inns of Court and Call to the Bar

It is understood that a minority of women 9 out of 236 (3.8%) married between admission and call. In the case of the women above, marriage was not a barrier to their legal studies; it is estimated that only two of these women practised as barristers: Helena Normanton and Ethel Lloyd.<sup>476</sup> The legal profession did not have a legal marriage bar, meaning that women could continue working as barristers after marriage. However, as will be explored further in Chapter 3, it is estimated that 16 women did not proceed to call because they married. Therefore, while these women were able to marry, continue their legal studies, and some of them practise as barristers, when looking more deeply at reasons why women were not called, marriage is one of the more common factors for discontinuing legal studies at the Inns of Court. This suggests that there was something of an informal marriage bar given the social expectations of the time. It is interesting that this was not the case for women who were already married before admission, as most did proceed to call: 13 out of 19 (68.4%). Therefore, perhaps the individual's priorities changed after marriage as well as social expectations at the time.

Looking at broader social statistics, it is also not so straightforward to say that marriage meant ceasing working. In 1911, for example, only 9.6% of women had been employed according to the census; this fell to 8.7% in 1921 but rose to 10% in 1931.<sup>477</sup> Therefore, despite a widespread ban on employing married women via the marriage bar, the number of women employed actually increased.<sup>478</sup> Therefore, perhaps some women benefited from working in professions where the marriage bar did not apply such as the law.

As can be seen, most women either married after call or did not marry at all. This means that most women were single when they entered the Inns of Court and that there was therefore not much diversity in terms of marital status. Marriage may not have been on the agenda for some of these women by choice, circumstances or sexual preference. A glimpse of differing sexual identities among the women at the Inns of Court can be seen, but most women followed the

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<sup>476</sup> See Chapter 5.

<sup>477</sup> Pugh, Martin, *Women and the Women's Movement in Britain since 1914* 3<sup>rd</sup> ed (London: Palgrave, 2015), p. 74.

<sup>478</sup> Ibid.

conventional, heterosexual path and married. By examining the marital status of the first women at the Inns of Court, a more nuanced picture emerges in respect of sexual identities, the understanding of marriage, social trends and barriers that these women may have faced. The reasons for not proceeding to call will be explored in Chapter 3 along with the stories of the uncalled women.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has found that most women admitted to the Inns of Court between 1919 and 1929 were under 30, with the 18 to 21 age categories being particularly dominant. This finding revises previous research that suggests under-graduates were less likely to be called. To the contrary, the 18 to 21 age group saw a call rate of 36.3%, the highest of all the ages. It is possible that widened educational opportunities, employment opportunities, and the publicity of these, may have been why this age group was particularly dominant. Age was significant at the Inns of Court because first, it provides nuance to current understanding of the Inns of Court in the 1920s: it was not just mature women who were there but young women also (there was a median of 23 years and an average age of 26 years). Second, it illustrates that there was diversity in terms of age at the Inns of Court during this 10-year period. Third, it draws attention to potential tensions between younger and older barristers, particularly when the small number of older barristers resisted the challenge to tradition posed by the large number of younger barristers.

Most women who were admitted to the Inns of Court (93%) were university educated; they either had a degree or were reading for a degree. The most attended universities were Oxford, Cambridge and London; in total, 54.2% of the women attended one of these. Law and Jurisprudence were the most common subjects, indicating that the women's degree choice aligned to their career ambitions of becoming a barrister. The Inns of Court were not therefore particularly diverse in terms of educational background as most women were university educated. Moreover, quite a few of them were undertaking, or already had, a Law degree.



The majority of the women's fathers were part of the commerce and industry sector (35.3%) followed by the legal profession (20%). This sector also saw the highest call rate at 83.1%. There were a few who had fathers in blue-collar professions, but these were few and far between. Therefore, most women admitted to the Inns of Court were therefore from middle-class backgrounds. Importantly, from this research we can now begin to understand the importance of mothers. We can see that they would have had a strong influence on their daughters' lives. Family members such as grandfathers, may also have influenced these women.

Most women admitted to the Inns of Court, 129 women out of 236 (54.7%), married either at admission, after admission or after call. Compared with women in society more broadly, fewer of the women barristers married. Reasons for not marrying include individual choice or circumstances such as cohabiting; being in a same-sex relationship; choosing not to marry to retain independence; the financial implications or cost of marriage; and unfortunate circumstances such as death. Marriage was not a barrier to call if women were already married at the time of their admission; however, it could start to become a barrier to call if they married between admission and call. As explored further in Chapter 3, it can be inferred that marriage was a barrier to practise. This is not because of any formal marriage bar, but because of the gender and social conventions at the time; individual priorities may also have changed.<sup>479</sup> This analysis provides a more nuanced picture of how marriage affected call and practice in the 1920s and why some women did not marry.

Was there a typical woman at the Inns of Court between 1919 and 1929? While it is necessary to be cautious when stereotyping, it appears that the typical woman at the Inns of Court in the 1920s was between the ages of 18 and 21, university educated, of a middle-class background and likely single.

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<sup>479</sup> Bruley, *Women in Britain Since 1900*.

## Chapter 3 : Uncalled and Unfulfilled? Diversity of Professional Motivations and Ideas

*'It has always been the case that a high proportion of the men admitted to the Inns were never called to the Bar.'*<sup>480</sup>

Following on from Chapter 2, which examined the attributes of the first women admitted to the Inns of Court, this chapter now focuses on the 62 women who were admitted to the Inns of Court between 1919 and 1929 as part of the first female cohort but were not subsequently called to the Bar (26.3%). It has been possible to identify possible reasons why 59 of these 62 women were not called (95.2%). Through collective biographies, the journey of these women to the Bar is uncovered and examined whether they had any intention of practising as a barrister, their participation (or not) in the Bar exams and common themes among them. It is important to tell the stories of these women because most of them are unknown within the legal history field. Some of these women, particularly those who had careers in the civil service, achieved recognition elsewhere, in the context of their profession. Those who did not achieve much professionally are largely lost in the historical record. Through uncovering their stories, it has been possible to document their stories in the context of the first women barristers and add to our understanding and interpretation of success and failure at the Inns of Court. From this research, it can be understood that the women who entered the Inns of Court had diverse motivations and aims - not all of them wanted to practise as barristers. There were some who tried and failed; others tried and did not want to continue, prioritising other options such as marriage or alternative careers. There were also some whose lives were cut short, preventing them from completing their legal training and denying them the opportunity to be called to the Bar. Yet all of them were there, among the firsts.

### **Why did these women not proceed to call?**

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<sup>480</sup> Polden, *Portia's Progress: Women at the Bar in England, 1919–1939.*, p.302.

For the research period concerned, 1919 to 1929, 62 women did not proceed to call (26.3 %). This thesis has sought to understand the likely reasons why they were not called to establish their motivation and understand if more women wanted to become barristers but had their ambitions thwarted. In some cases, it was straightforward to classify this. For example, Doris May Salkeld Green died approximately a year after her admission.<sup>481</sup> For others, there was more than one potential reason why they were not called, such as marriage and an alternative career path. One of the challenges in identifying the motives, reasons or circumstances of these women was a significant lack of sources. The majority of these women are not mentioned in textbooks and published papers about the first women barristers and very few personal sources have been uncovered. It has therefore been challenging to determine why they were not called to the Bar. Nevertheless, reasons for not proceeding to call have been classified and the event that happened first has been denoted as the reason for not proceeding to call. Individual stories have been explored further, below, to add nuance to their experiences. *Table 3.1* below lists the reasons why these women did not proceed to call.

Reason why not called	No.	% of total uncalled
Other career	29	46.8
Marriage	16	25.8
Return to Native country	7	11.3
Ill health or death	4	6.5
Struck off	1	1.6
Unknown/Other	5	8.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 3.1: Reasons for Why Women did not Proceed to Call between 1919 and 1929

<sup>481</sup> 'Doris May Salkeld Green', England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1858-1995 (2010), Ancestry.com, Ancestry.com. database on-line, [https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/3509909:1904?tid=&pid=&queryId=a913aeb3b4089071ee95e5af7498168e&\\_phsrc=785-1999996&\\_phstart=successSource](https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/3509909:1904?tid=&pid=&queryId=a913aeb3b4089071ee95e5af7498168e&_phsrc=785-1999996&_phstart=successSource).

As can be seen, the main reason why women did not proceed to call is that they undertook a different career; 29 out of 62 did so (46.8%). 16 of the women (25.8%) got married within four years of their admission. There are five outliers within the marriage section; one of them was already married and had children soon after her admission. The other four married six to eight years after admission; however, they also appear to have taken longer to do their Bar exams. As a result, their marriage date was only one to three years after their last Bar exam. Seven of the women (11.1%) returned to their native country. Of the four women who are listed as 'ill health or death', three sadly died and one was admitted to a psychiatric hospital.

### Other Career

Many women who were not called to the Bar continued to fruitful employment, the majority of them outside the law. Focusing now on the 29 women who undertook a different career, or indeed continued with the career that they were qualified or worked in before their admission, 12 worked in the Civil Service. Six women worked in the education field as either lecturers or teachers; four qualified as medical doctors either before or shortly after admissions to the Inns; three undertook administrative roles; two became solicitors; and of the two 'other', one had various roles and the other was a musician. *Table 3.2* details the uncalled women's career path after admission to the Inns of Court, and although the evidence is 'sketchy' each life will be looked at in turn as much as possible.

Inn	Name	Admitted	Age at Admission	Other Career
Gray's Inn	Ethel Denison James	25-Apr-1923	27	Administrative (Clerk)
Inner Temple	Margaret Janet Richmond Bryce	27-Oct-1924	22	Administrative (Secretary)
Middle Temple	Enid Angela Stevens	9-Nov-1929	20	Administrative (Assistant)
Middle Temple	Katherine Robertson Andrew	24-Apr-1920	30	Civil Service

Middle Temple	Anne Wilson Hastings	24-Apr-1920	34	Civil Service
Middle Temple	Fanny Isabel Taylor	11-Jun-1920	36	Civil Service
Middle Temple	Alice Gertrude Troup	1-Nov-1920	30	Civil Service
Middle Temple	Edith Helen Pratt	20-Nov-1920	37	Civil Service
Inner Temple	Gwendolen MacAndrew Fixsen	28-Feb-1923	37	Civil Service
Lincoln's Inn	Alix Hester Marie Kilroy	22-Apr-1925	22	Civil Service
Inner Temple	Aline Mackinnon	14-Apr-1926	26	Civil Services, MP
Lincoln's Inn	Enid Russell-Smith	7-Jun-1926	23	Civil Service
Inner Temple	Evelyn Sharp	4-May-1927	23	Civil Service
Middle Temple	Susan Margaret Ranken Hayes	26-Apr-1928	35	Civil Service
Inner Temple	Miriam Blanche Pease	16-Nov-1929	42	Civil Service
Gray's Inn	Mary Selina Share Jones	27-Jan-1920	46	Doctor
Inner Temple	Mary Martin	11-Jan-1924	39	Doctor
Gray's Inn	Sybil Gertrude Overton	17-Nov-1927	32	Doctor
Lincoln's Inn	Christabel Sybil Eyre	4-Nov-1929	38	Doctor
Lincoln's Inn	Marjorie Powell	16-Jan-1920	26	Education (Lecturer)
Lincoln's Inn	Jessie Elliot Alderson [nee Murdoch]	26-Mar-1924	40	Education (Lecturer)
Inner Temple	Alice Lorraine Campbell Holt-Kentwell	8-Oct-1924	22	Education (Teacher)
Lincoln's Inn	Vida Mary Struge Crichton	23-Oct-1924	22	Education (Lecturer)

Gray's Inn	Nora Burke-Bloor	5-Nov-1927	19	Education (Teacher)
Inner Temple	Caroline Frances Kirby	14-Jun-1928	41	Education (Teacher)
Inner Temple	Dorothy Laura Muriel Stacpole	15-Nov-1921	24	Other (Various)
Middle Temple	Anna Karenia Warliker	19-Nov-1929	26	Other (Musician)
Inner Temple	Marion Graham [Graeme] Billson	13-Sep-1922	20	Solicitor
Gray's Inn	Margaret Jones-Bateman	16-Jun-1926	26	Solicitor

Table 3.2: Uncalled Women who Pursued Different Career Paths

The lives of each woman have been set out as a 'fact file' and follow the same format.

### *Careers in Administration*

Three women who were admitted to the Inns of Court undertook administrative roles after they were admitted. The age range was 20 to 27 years, with Ethel Denison James being the oldest. Prior to admission, two of the women had been students. It is possible that Ethel Denison James held some kind of administrative position before admission. The two younger applicants did not take any Bar examinations; they might not have been fully committed, or they may never have had any intention of being called to the Bar. Each woman will be reviewed in turn and to try to give some context and texture to their lives and careers:

### **Ethel Denison James**

Admission: 1923 (Gray's Inn, aged 27)

Bar Exams: Real Property and Conveyancing (April 1926)<sup>482</sup>  
Criminal Law and Procedure (June 1926)<sup>483</sup>

<sup>482</sup> *The Vote*, 'More Women Barristers', 23 April 1926, p.2.

<sup>483</sup> *The Vote*, 'Women's Bar Success', 11 June 1926, p.179.

Prior to her admission to Gray's Inn in 1923, Ethel Denison James graduated from the University College of Wales Aberystwyth with an Honours (Class II) in Political Science in 1910.<sup>484</sup> She later became a rating clerk in the Rates and Taxes Section of the Surveyor's and Estates Dept of the Great Western Railway;<sup>485</sup> the 1939 Census confirms that she was living with her mother and her occupation was Clerk at the Great Western Railway.<sup>486</sup> This suggests that perhaps the family did not have the finances to continue with her legal training. She may also have had some caring responsibilities for her elderly mother.

### **Margaret Janet Richmond Bryce**

Admission: 1924 (Inner Temple, aged 22)

Bar Exams: No record found

Margaret Janet Richmond Bryce attended Bedford College between 1919 and 1925. She was 22 years old when she was admitted to Inner Temple in 1924. When asked for a reference, her previous teacher was not initially complimentary, noting that she 'gave a considerable amount of trouble' during her schooling. Later, she noted a change in her behaviour and said that although clever, she had a 'great deal of energy' and a 'strong will', and that she would do well with guidance.<sup>487</sup> Correspondence in her Bedford file indicates that she was trying to find a job in 1927, and possibly earlier. She soon found a position as a secretary at Women's House, Secondary Settlement, and in 1939 she listed her profession as 'secretary in an educational

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<sup>484</sup> Ethel Denison James passed the Intermediate Exams (Latin, French and History) in 1907; Intermediate - Philosophy, Ordinary - Latin, History, English Law in 1908; Ordinary - Political Science, Special - History (completed examinations for graduation) in 1909; Degree examinations (Arts): James, Ethel Denison Honours - Political Science (Class II): *Manchester Courier*, 'London University: Honours and Pass List', 9 August 1907, p.10; 'The Calendar of the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth', 1907 - 1911; 'University of Wales Student Registers 1905', National library of wales viewer, accessed 7 July 2023, <https://viewer.library.wales/4659170>.

<sup>485</sup> Mussell, 'Women Admitted to Gray's Inn'.

<sup>486</sup> Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2018., '1939 England and Wales Register', Ancestry.com, accessed 16 May 2023, <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/8374131:61596?ssrc=pt&tid=168739785&pid=392190250132>.

<sup>487</sup> 'Margaret Janet Richmond Bryce: London, England, Royal Holloway and Bedford College Student Registers, 1849-1931', Ancestry.co.uk, accessed 12 March 2024, <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/8175:61821?tid=&pid=&queryId=73043554-d226-45e0-8eab-a5d1c39ecd13&phsrc=iCe651&phstart=successSource>.

institution - seeking work'.<sup>488</sup> It is likely that this was the Froebel Educational Institute. In her last letter of 1939, she wrote that she felt a 'little disappointed' in her role because she felt that she had 'taken a step backwards'.<sup>489</sup> Her letters also reveal that she found it challenging to find a job after the war. It is therefore likely that Margaret Richmond Bryce did not continue with the Bar because she pursued another career path. From her letters, it appears that she wanted to earn money, and secretarial work was a secure way of doing this.

### **Enid Angela Stevens**

Admission: 1929 (Middle Temple, aged 20)

Bar Exams: No record found

Enid Angela Stevens was 20 years old when she was admitted to Middle Temple. Unfortunately, she died in 1935 when she was just 27 years old; she was listed as a spinster.<sup>490</sup>

### *Careers in the Civil Service*

12 women pursued a career in the Civil Service, and all had taken one or more of the Bar exams. If they were not planning on being called, it is interesting that some of them undertook Bar exams as this may not necessarily have helped their career. However, some of them did appear in court after their admission so it is possible this legal knowledge may have assisted them. Nine of the women had careers in the Civil Service before admission; they were all in their 30s or above, with the oldest being 42 years old. Of these 12 women, five were admitted to Middle Temple in 1920 between April to November. Choosing Middle Temple may have been a seal of approval to Helena Normanton's tireless campaigns to enter the legal profession. These women may also have wanted to make their mark in the historical record. The Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act

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<sup>488</sup> Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., '1939 England and Wales Register', Ancestry.co.uk, accessed 15 May 2023, [https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/3539120:61596?tid=&pid=&queryId=1c4b0e2fa83dd7cacc5f660fbd6bdc8bd6b&\\_phsrc=7851546273&\\_phstart=successSource](https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/3539120:61596?tid=&pid=&queryId=1c4b0e2fa83dd7cacc5f660fbd6bdc8bd6b&_phsrc=7851546273&_phstart=successSource).

<sup>489</sup> 'Margaret Janet Richmond Bryce: London, England, Royal Holloway and Bedford College Student Registers, 1849-1931'.

<sup>490</sup> 'England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1858-1995 [database on-Line]'.



had only just been enacted and by being admitted to the Inns of Court, they were etching their names among other 'firsts'. Given that they were more mature applicants, they would certainly have been aware of the struggles women faced professionally and otherwise. Whatever their reasonings, there are several common factors which perhaps indicate a motive for their choices, rather than coincidence. The remaining three applicants did not have a role or career in the Civil Service before joining the Inns and were much younger than the group. Each woman will be reviewed in turn:

### **Katherine Robertson Andrew**

Admission: 1920 (Middle Temple, aged 30)

Bar Exams: Hindu and Mohammedan Law<sup>491</sup> (April 1925)

Criminal Law and Procedure<sup>492</sup> (May 1925)

Katherine Robertson Andrew had a career in the Civil Service before she was admitted to Middle Temple in 1920. Records show that she sat two exams in 1925. She became part of the Women's Royal Navy Service and Inspector of Factories.<sup>493</sup>

### **Anne Wilson Hastings**

Admission: 1920 (Middle Temple, aged 34)

Bar Exams: Roman Law exam (1922)<sup>494</sup>

Real Property and Conveyancing exam (1926)<sup>495</sup>

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<sup>491</sup> *The Vote*, 'Women Barristers', 15 April 1921, p.2.

<sup>492</sup> *The Vote*, 'Women's Bar Success', 1 May 1925, p.3.

<sup>493</sup> Polden, *Portia's Progress: Women at the Bar in England, 1919–1939*.

<sup>494</sup> *Common Cause*, 'Prospective Women Barristers', 5 May 1922, p.106.

<sup>495</sup> 'Women's Bar Success', 11 June 1926. 'Women's Bar Success', 1 May 1925. 'Women's Bar Success', 11 June 1926.

Anne Wilson Hastings continued her career as an Inspector of Factories, which often involved attending court to prosecute factory owners.<sup>496</sup> In one case, she noted that the accused factory owner had been treated 'very leniently' with just a £2 fine.<sup>497</sup>

### **Fanny Isabel Taylor**

Admission: 1920 (Middle Temple, aged 36)

Bar Exams: Constitutional Law and Legal History (1921)<sup>498</sup>

Criminal Law and Procedure (1922)<sup>499</sup>

Roman Law (1924)<sup>500</sup>

In 1928, Fanny Isabel Taylor appeared before the court in her capacity of Factory Inspector and prosecuted a factory owner due to an accident involving an employee.<sup>501</sup> In 1937 she received an OBE for her services.<sup>502</sup>

### **Alice Gertrude Troup**

Admission: 1920 (Middle Temple, aged 30)

Bar Exams: Roman Law exam (1921)<sup>503</sup>

In 1925, Alice Gertrude Troup was mentioned in a prosecution case in her capacity of District Officer in Birmingham under the Trade Board Act<sup>504</sup> and as a Trade Board Inspector in 1939.<sup>505</sup>

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<sup>496</sup> A search of Anne Wilson Hasting via the British Newspaper Archive reveals nine articles that list her appearance at court to prosecute factory owners, ranging from 1926 to 1940. For example 'Pittenweem Baker Fined', *Dundee Courier*, 31 August 1927, 3; 'Kirkcaldy Magistrate Before Sheriff', *Dundee Evening Telegraph*, 31 July 1929, 7; 'Ride in a Hoist', *Westminster & Pimlico News*, 5 April 1940.

<sup>497</sup> 'Pittenweem Baker Fined'.

<sup>498</sup> *The Vote*, 'Examination Results', 3 June 1921, p.1.

<sup>499</sup> *Common Cause*, 'Women and the Bar', 23 June 1922, p.2.

<sup>500</sup> 'More Women Barristers', *The Vote*, 27 June 1924, 6.

<sup>501</sup> *Coventry Herald*, 'Case Against a Manufacturer Dismissed', 25 August 1928, p.2.

<sup>502</sup> 'Taylor, Fanny Isabel, HM Deputy Inspector of Factories, Home Office, since 1933', *Who's Who & Who Was Who*, 1 December 2007, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ww/9780199540884.013.u232499>.

<sup>503</sup> 'Examination Results', 3 June 1921.

<sup>504</sup> *Walsall Observer*, 'Bloxwhich Firm Fined', 17 January 1925, p.4.

<sup>505</sup> Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., '1939 England and Wales Register'.

### **Edith Helen Pratt**

Admission: 1920 (Middle Temple, aged 37)

Bar Exams: Roman Law exam (1921)<sup>506</sup>

Edith Helen Pratt was admitted to Middle Temple in 1920. She passed the Roman Law exam in 1921.<sup>507</sup> Before she was admitted to the Bar, she worked in the Civil Service as a Factory Inspector and then became Deputy Chief Controller (Overseas) for the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps while serving in France during the First World War.<sup>508</sup> In 1917, she received an OBE for her services in the civil service.<sup>509</sup> She did not pursue her application at the Bar, instead continuing with her career in the civil service.

### **Susan Margaret Ranken Hayes**

Admission: 1928 (Middle Temple, aged 35)

Bar Exams: Roman Law exam (1929)<sup>510</sup>

Susan Margaret Ranken Hayes was a 'temporary civil servant' before she was admitted to Middle Temple aged 35.<sup>511</sup> After her admission, it appears that she undertook various roles in the Civil Service. In 1928 she was Chief Deputy Advisor to the Technical Department of the Special Grants Committee, Minister of Pensions; she was a War Damage Staff Officer in 1943, and Higher Executive Officer of the Central Land Board in 1951.<sup>512</sup> In 1944 and 1950 she was in debt to the Inn; the reason she gave for being late to make the 1940s payments was illness and a death in

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<sup>506</sup> 'Examination Results', 3 June 1921. According to Polden's Index, Pratt failed Roman Law in 1923 and passed Law in 1924. Polden, 'Index to Women: Portia's Progress Women at the Bar in England 1919 - 1939'. The 1921 paper notes that she passed Roman Law.

<sup>507</sup> 'Examination Results', 3 June 1921. According to Polden's Index she failed Roman Law in 1923 and passed Law in 1924. Polden, 'Index to Women: Portia's Progress Women at the Bar in England 1919 - 1939'. The 1921 paper notes that she passed Roman Law.

<sup>508</sup> 'Edith Pratt at Exmouth', National Trust, accessed 21 August 2023, <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/devon/edith-pratts-history-and-legacy-in-exmouth>.

<sup>509</sup> *Western Times*, 'Another Devonshire Lady in the Honours List', 31 August 1917, p.8.

<sup>510</sup> *The Vote*, 'Bar Examinations - Women', 18 January 1929, p.6.

<sup>511</sup> 'Susan Margaret Ranken Hayes Admission Papers' (29 April 1928), Middle Temple, London.

<sup>512</sup> See Susan Margaret Ranken Hayes in Polden, 'Index to Women: Portia's Progress Women at the Bar in England 1919 - 1939'.

the family.<sup>513</sup> While she ultimately pursued a different career path, it does appear that costs were an issue. This could be another reason that she could not continue her application at the Bar. Correspondence between her and Middle Temple reveals that she wanted to keep her membership at the Inn, despite financial difficulty.<sup>514</sup> It therefore appears that being part of this 'barrister' or Middle Temple network was important to her. Perhaps if her circumstances were different, she would have continued with her application.

### **Miriam Blanche Pease**

Admission: 1929 (Inner Temple, aged 42)

Bar Exams: Roman Law (1931)<sup>515</sup>

Miriam Blanche Pease was the daughter of Joseph Albert [Jack] Pease (Baron Gainford and Member of Parliament) and Mary Fox.<sup>516</sup> She was 42 years old when she was admitted to Inner Temple in 1929, and it appears that she did not intend to become a barrister. She worked in the Civil Service before she was admitted to Inner Temple and then continued in this sector, undertaking roles such as Inspector of Factories and councillor.<sup>517</sup>

### **Gwendolen MacAndrews Fixsen**

Admission: 1923 (Inner Temple, aged 37)

Bar Exams: Roman Law exam (1924)<sup>518</sup>

Gwendolen MacAndrews Fixsen was the fifth child (out of seven) of Reverend John Frederick Fixsen. She was admitted to Inner Temple in 1923 at the age of 37 but it appears that she became

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<sup>513</sup> 'Admission Papers of Susan Margaret Ranken Hayes' (Provided by the archivist on 13 June 2023), London, Middle Temple.

<sup>514</sup> Ibid.

<sup>515</sup> *Hartlepool Northern Daily Mail*, 'Lord Gainford's Daughter', 14 January 1931, p.5.

<sup>516</sup> Cameron Hazlehurst, 'Pease, Joseph Albert [Jack], First Baron Gainford (1860–1943)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 3 January 2008, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/35446>.

<sup>517</sup> For example, she was an inspector of factories in 1916 and 1920 and 1935. *Evening Mail*, 'Minister's Daughter as Factory Inspector', 16 February 1916, p.8; *Nottingham Journal*, 'Factory Act Offences', 19 February 1920, p.8; *Evening Despatch*, 'Mantle of Dust', 12 July 1935, p.11.

<sup>518</sup> 'More Women Barristers', 27 June 1924; 'More Women Barristers', 18 January 1924.

a Clerk at the Home Office and did not pursue a profession as a barrister.<sup>519</sup> It is possible that she had an occupation before she joined Inner Temple, but evidence to support this has not been found. The 1939 Census lists her occupation as private means.<sup>520</sup> When she died in 1956, she was listed as a spinster.<sup>521</sup>

### **Alix Hester Marie Kilroy, later Maynell**

Admission: 1925 (Lincoln's Inn, aged 22)

Bar Exams: Constitutional Law and Legal History (1927)<sup>522</sup>

Roman Law (January 1928)<sup>523</sup>

Criminal Law and Procedure (November 1928)<sup>524</sup>

Real Property and Conveyancing (1930)<sup>525</sup>

Bar Final, Class III (1931)<sup>526</sup>

Alix Hester Marie Kilroy joined Lincoln's Inn in 1927. She was educated at Malvern Girls College and she then studied Philosophy, Politics and Economics at Somerville College, Oxford from 1922 to 1925.<sup>527</sup> Here she befriended Evelyn Sharp, who was at Oxford reading Modern History.<sup>528</sup> It had originally been intended that she would join the family law firm in Nottingham, but she wanted to become a barrister; however, she needed to support herself financially until she qualified.<sup>529</sup> Consequently, she took the entry exam for the Administrative Class of the Home Civil Service in 1925. Despite passing all of the Bar Examinations, Alix Kilroy did not proceed to Call. Her Bar Final card states that she had kept 11 terms (not the required 12) so perhaps this is the

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<sup>519</sup> Polden, 'Index to Women: Portia's Progress Women at the Bar in England 1919 - 1939'.

<sup>520</sup> Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., '1939 England and Wales Register'.

<sup>521</sup> 'England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1858-1995 [database on-Line]'.

<sup>522</sup> *The Vote*, 'The Bar Examinations - Women's Successes', 24 June 1927, p.198.

<sup>523</sup> *The Vote*, 'Bar Examinations', 20 January 1928, p.19.

<sup>524</sup> *Ibid.*; *The Vote*, 'Bar Examinations', 9 November 1928, p.359.

<sup>525</sup> *The Vote*, 'Women's Law Successes', 27 June 1930, p.202.

<sup>526</sup> 'Women's Law Successes', 23 January 1931.

<sup>527</sup> Green, 'Meynell [née Kilroy], Dame Alix Hester Marie, Lady Meynell'.

<sup>528</sup> 'Alix Kilroy (Dame Alix Meynell)'.

<sup>529</sup> Green, 'Meynell [née Kilroy], Dame Alix Hester Marie, Lady Meynell'.

reason she did not proceed to call.<sup>530</sup> Instead, she pursued a career in the Civil Service, initially joining the Board of Trade; she later became under-secretary in 1946 and held official responsibility for price control and food rationing.<sup>531</sup>

### **Enid Russell-Smith**

Admission: 1926 (Lincoln's Inn, aged 23)

Bar Exams: Roman Law (January 1927)<sup>532</sup>

Criminal Law and Procedure (June 1927)<sup>533</sup>

Constitutional Law and Legal History (May 1927)<sup>534</sup>

Real Property and Conveyancing (1928)<sup>535</sup>

Enid Russell-Smith was one of the first three women to enter the British Civil Service in 1925.<sup>536</sup> She sat a number of Bar examinations between 1927 and 1928, but did not proceed to the Bar Final.<sup>537</sup> She was good friends with Evelyn Sharp (see below) and both seem to have been encouraged by the opening up of higher Civil Service posts to women.<sup>538</sup> After her admission to the Bar, Enid Russell-Smith joined the Ministry of Health and was later promoted to Private Secretary to the Permanent Secretary (1930-34), Principal secretary (1934-39) and Assistant Secretary (from 1939).<sup>539</sup> During the Second World War (1939-1945), she helped evacuate children from Britain's major cities to the countryside to escape the Blitz and later participated in the establishment of the UK's National Health Service.<sup>540</sup>

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<sup>530</sup> Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, London, England, UK, The Law Society: Examination Records 1836-, and Reference: CLE 11/, 'UK and Commonwealth, Law Examination Records, 1836-1948'.

<sup>531</sup> Green, 'Meynell [née Kilroy], Dame Alix Hester Marie, Lady Meynell', 23 September 2004.

<sup>532</sup> *The Vote*, 'Women's Success in Bar Examinations', 21 January 1927, p.19.

<sup>533</sup> 'The Bar Examinations - Women's Successes'.

<sup>534</sup> *The Vote*, 'Successful Women Law Students', 6 May 1927, p.3.

<sup>535</sup> 'Bar Examinations', 20 January 1928.

<sup>536</sup> Martin Stanley, 'Enid Russell-Smith', Civil Servant.org.uk, accessed 21 August 2023, [https://www.civilservant.org.uk/women-enid\\_russell-smith.html](https://www.civilservant.org.uk/women-enid_russell-smith.html).

<sup>537</sup> 'Successful Women Law Students'; 'Women's Success in Bar Examinations'; *The Vote*, 'Bar Examinations: Women's Successes in Trinity Term Results', 7 June 1929, p.182. 'Bar Examinations', 20 January 1928.

<sup>538</sup> Polden, *Portia's Progress: Women at the Bar in England, 1919-1939*.

<sup>539</sup> Martin Stanley, 'Enid Russell-Smith'.

<sup>540</sup> Martin Ibid.

### **Evelyn Adelaide Sharp**

Admission: 1927 (Inner Temple, aged 23)

Bar Exams: Constitutional Law and Legal History (1928)<sup>541</sup>

Criminal Law and Procedure (1929)<sup>542</sup>

Real Property and Conveyancing (1929)<sup>543</sup>

Evelyn Adelaide Sharp was admitted to Inner Temple in 1927 when she was 23 years old. She later joined the Civil Service and was the first woman to hold the position of Permanent Secretary, the most senior civil servant in a Ministry, at the Ministry of Housing and Local Government from 1955 to her retirement in 1966.<sup>544</sup>

### **Aline Mackinnon**

Admission: 1926 (Inner Temple, aged 26)

Bar Exams: No record found

Aline Mackinnon was dedicated to her political career and wanted to further the rights of women. It has not been possible to find any evidence that she sat any of the Bar examinations. In 1930, she featured on the front page of *The Vote* setting out what she would do if she became an MP, including being a representative of women's points of view.<sup>545</sup> She served as the Honorary Parliamentary Secretary to the Women's Liberal Federation and contested as the Liberal candidate for Holderness, securing second place. A colleague from the Women's Liberal Federation, Frances Josephy, praised her as 'a highly knowledgeable and eloquent speaker, complemented by a charming wit'.<sup>546</sup> Between 1941 and 1947, she worked as a civil servant.

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<sup>541</sup> *The Vote*, 'Women's Law Success', 30 November 1928, p.6.

<sup>542</sup> 'Bar Examinations - Women'.

<sup>543</sup> *The Vote*, 'Women's Successes at the Bar Examinations', 8 November 1929, p.6.

<sup>544</sup> 'Evelyn Sharp', accessed 29 February 2024, [https://www.civilservant.org.uk/women-evelyn\\_sharp.html](https://www.civilservant.org.uk/women-evelyn_sharp.html).

<sup>545</sup> *The Vote*, 'Miss Aline Mackinnon Prospective Liberal Candidate for Holderness', 9 May 1930, p.1.

<sup>546</sup> Wikipedia contributors, 'Aline Mackinnon', Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 1 July 2021, [https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Aline\\_Mackinnon&oldid=1031322584](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Aline_Mackinnon&oldid=1031322584).

There are several commonalities between these women: just under 70% had had a career in the Civil Service before admission, perhaps suggesting that they did not intend to practise as a barrister. Nevertheless, most of them (all but one) undertook at least one of the Bar Exams, and some took three or four. It is puzzling why they would undertake exams if they did not intend to proceed to call. Those women who had a career in the Civil Service prior to admission, were all mature women in their 30s or above, with the oldest being 42 years old. Just under 40% of these women were admitted to Middle Temple in 1920 between April to November, which suggests that there may have been some kind of political motivation.

#### *Careers in Medicine*

Four women pursued a medical career, and all had either qualified or were undertaking qualifications to become a medical doctor before admission. It therefore appears that, like the women in the Civil Service, they did not have an intention to practise as barristers. All these women were in their 30s or above.

#### **Mary Selina Share Jones**

Admission: 1920 (Gray's Inn, aged 46)

Bar Exams: Real Property and Conveyancing (1922)<sup>547</sup>

According to *The Liverpool Post*, Mary Selina Share Jones was the first woman in England to obtain a first class honours in the Bachelor of Law degree from Liverpool University.<sup>548</sup> Based on the records provided by the archivist, she graduated with a Class 1 degree in Law on 4 July 1914; this would make her (not Rose Heilbron) the first woman to graduate with a First Class degree from the University of Liverpool.<sup>549</sup> By the time she had joined Gray's Inn in 1920, she was already

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<sup>547</sup> *The Women's Leader*, 'Women and the Bar', 23 June 1922, p.162.

<sup>548</sup> *Liverpool Daily Post*, 'Day To Day in Liverpool', 27 May 1940, p.3.

<sup>549</sup> There is some misinformation that Rose Heilbron was the first woman to graduate from the University of Liverpool with a First-Class Law degree; for example: 'International Women's Day 2021: Dame Rose Heilbron DBE,' Manuscripts and More, March 8, 2021, <https://manuscriptsandmore.liverpool.ac.uk/?p=7021>. The Archivist at the University of Liverpool confirmed that Mrs Mary Selina Share Jones graduated with a Class 1 in Law on 4 July 1914: 'Email to



married to Professor John Share Jones, a distinguished veterinarian who also studied at Liverpool University.<sup>550</sup> By April 1921, she had qualified as a medical doctor.<sup>551</sup> As recounted in Robina Stevens diary, extract printed in *Graya*, Mrs Mary Selina Jones tried for the Constitutional Law exam 'but came out without having done anything'. Robina Stevens was not surprised because 'she had only worked for three weeks'.<sup>552</sup> It is through this connection that it was possible to trace Mary Selina Share Jones' examination in Real Property and Conveyancing in June 1922.<sup>553</sup> The fact that she continued to live in North Wales, near Liverpool, after she applied to the Inns of Court<sup>554</sup> may have been one of the reasons why it was challenging for her to complete the Bar exams. In the 1939 Census, she listed her profession as 'Dr of medicine and Bachelor of Law'.<sup>555</sup>

### **Mary Martin**

Admission: 1924 (Inner Temple, aged 39)

Bar Exams: Roman Law (June 1930)<sup>556</sup>

Criminal Law and Procedure (June 1930)<sup>557</sup>

Real Property and Conveyancing (November 1930)<sup>558</sup>

Constitutional Law (November 1930)<sup>559</sup>

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Charlotte Coleman from Thomas Chisholm, Special Collections Archivist at University of Liverpool Archives', 6 July 2023.

<sup>550</sup> 'Women Admitted', Gray's Inn, 3 September 2014, <https://www.graysinn.org.uk/timeline/women-admitted/>.

<sup>551</sup> Mary Selina Share Jones was a doctor on 8 April 1921 see 'UK and Ireland, Medical Registers, 1859-1943', Ancestry.co.uk, accessed 2 June 2023, [https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/2767458:62268?tid=&pid=&queryId=fe38c8fc6cdb9a7843f360f67d1af2f1&\\_phsrc=785-1914593&\\_phstart=successSource](https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/2767458:62268?tid=&pid=&queryId=fe38c8fc6cdb9a7843f360f67d1af2f1&_phsrc=785-1914593&_phstart=successSource). The University of Liverpool Archivist confirmed that she was awarded the M.B., ChB. on 18 March 1920: 'Email to Charlotte Coleman from Thomas Chisholm, Special Collections Archivist at University of Liverpool Archives'.

<sup>552</sup> Robinson, *Ladies Can't Climb Ladders: The Pioneering Adventures of the First Professional Women*.

<sup>553</sup> 'Women and the Bar', 23 June 1922.

<sup>554</sup> Mrs Mary Selina Share Jones' address is listed at Trefynant Hall, Acrefair, N. Wales in the 1922 Medical Register; later, in 1927, her address was Pentre Bychan Hall, Wrexham. See: 'UK and Ireland, Medical Registers, 1859-1943'.

<sup>555</sup> Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2018., '1939 England and Wales Register'.

<sup>556</sup> 'Women's Law Success', 27 June 1930.

<sup>557</sup> Ibid.

<sup>558</sup> *The Vote*, 'Women's Law Successes', 7 November 1930, p.362.

<sup>559</sup> Ibid.

## Bar Final (1933)<sup>560</sup>

Mary Martin, later Dr Mary Turton, was born in Alice, Cape Colony, South Africa. She graduated from Edinburgh University with an MB, ChB in 1915, and then with an MD in 1930.<sup>561</sup> She entered the Colonial Medical Service and went to Uganda as an assistant bacteriologist; she served within the Service from 1921 to 1936. During this time, she married Mr Turton.<sup>562</sup> She was admitted to the Inner Temple in 1924, and passed the Bar Final in 1933 and, according to her Bar Final report, had kept the necessary 12 terms.<sup>563</sup> Her obituary states that she was 'called to the Bar' in 1933.<sup>564</sup> This claim is puzzling because there is no evidence of her call at Inner Temple as confirmed by Celia Pilkington, the archivist at Inner Temple.<sup>565</sup> At the outbreak of the Second World War, she held temporary government appointments at Essex County Council and, later, in the Ministry of Pensions. She returned to South Africa after the war and died there in 1958.<sup>566</sup>

### Sybil Gertrude Overton

Admission: 1927 (Gray's Inn, aged 32)

Bar Exams: Roman Law (1928)<sup>567</sup>

Criminal Law and Procedure (1928)<sup>568</sup>

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<sup>560</sup> *The Vote*, 'Women's Law Success', 23 June 1933, p.194; *The Vote*, 'Women's Law Successes', 3 November 1933, p.349.

<sup>561</sup> MB ChB were the first professional qualifications for medicine and surgery respectively, whilst an MD was a postgraduate qualification making her a full Doctor of Medicine.

<sup>562</sup> *The Times*, 'Obituary: Dr Mary Turton', 14 October 1958, p.13; 'Mary Martin, University of Edinburgh Student Card, Sent to Charlotte Coleman by Edinburgh Library Assistant', 21 January 2020.

<sup>563</sup> 'Women's Law Success', 23 June 1933; 'Women's Law Successes', 3 November 1933; Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, London, England, UK, The Law Society: Examination Records 1836-, and Reference: CLE 11/, 'UK and Commonwealth, Law Examination Records, 1836-1948'.

<sup>564</sup> 'Obituary: Dr Mary Turton'.

<sup>565</sup> Pilkington, Celia. Email to Charlotte Coleman. 1 February 2024.

<sup>566</sup> Ibid.; 'Mary Martin, University of Edinburgh Student Card, Sent to Charlotte Coleman by Edinburgh Library Assistant'.

<sup>567</sup> 'Bar Examinations', 20 January 1928.

<sup>568</sup> 'Bar Examinations', 9 November 1928.

Before she was admitted to Gray's Inn, Sybil Gertrude Overton qualified as a doctor and surgeon from the St Mary's London School of Medicine, and Oxford University.<sup>569</sup> She continued with her medical career after her admission to the Inns, working in hospitals and becoming a HM Medical Inspector of Factories.<sup>570</sup> In 1931 she married Captain Bernard Stuart Horner, who was in the British Army and Indian Political Service 1921-30.<sup>571</sup> Marriage did not halt her career as she became a HM Medical Inspector of Factories.<sup>572</sup>

### **Christabel Sybil Eyre**

Admission: 1929 (Lincoln's Inn, aged 38)

Bar Exams: Roman Law (1931)<sup>573</sup>

Criminal Law and Procedure (November 1931)<sup>574</sup>

Christabel Sybil Eyre (later Nicholson) studied surgery and medicine at Charing Cross Hospital<sup>575</sup> and was a qualified medical doctor when she was admitted to Lincoln's Inn in 1929. She does not appear to have continued with her application to the Bar beyond 1931, when she took two

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<sup>569</sup> She obtained her BA and MB from the University of London and undertook the Diploma in Public Health at Oxford; this was open to all registered medical practitioners and comprised the study of preventative medicine and public health. 'UK & Ireland, Medical Directories, 1845-1942', Ancestry.co.uk, accessed 2 June 2023, [https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/1162391:61053?tid=&pid=&queryId=24a593259c80fcac7f578e2f7ecbf570&\\_phsrc=7851124901&\\_phstart=successSource](https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/1162391:61053?tid=&pid=&queryId=24a593259c80fcac7f578e2f7ecbf570&_phsrc=7851124901&_phstart=successSource).

<sup>570</sup> Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 'UK & Ireland, Medical Directories, 1845-1942 [database on-Line]', Ancestry.com, 2016, <https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/309049:61053?ssrc=pt&tid=47016436&pid=222085557695>.

<sup>571</sup> Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 'London, England, Church of England Marriages and Banns, 1754-1938 [database Online]', Ancestry.com, 2010, [https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/918115062:1623?tid=&pid=&queryId=c6d103ecdc43a96579824bacc398a42a&\\_phsrc=dd621240&\\_phstart=successSource](https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/918115062:1623?tid=&pid=&queryId=c6d103ecdc43a96579824bacc398a42a&_phsrc=dd621240&_phstart=successSource).

<sup>572</sup> Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., '1939 England and Wales Register'.

<sup>573</sup> *The Vote*, 'Women's Bar Success', 12 June 1931, p.6.

<sup>574</sup> *The Vote*, 'Women's Law Success (November)', 6 November 1931, p.360.

<sup>575</sup> *Bradford Observer*, 'Admiral's Wife Acquitted of Secrets Charge', 8 May 1941, p.3; Andrew Scott Thomson, 'Dr Christabel Sybil Caroline Nicholson', *geni\_family\_tree*, accessed 2 June 2023, <https://www.geni.com/people/Dr-Christabel-Nicholson/6000000175363423623>. <https://www.geni.com/people/Dr-Christabel-Nicholson/6000000175363423623> 'Admiral's Wife Acquitted of Secrets Charge'; Thomson, 'Dr Christabel Sybil Caroline Nicholson'; *Sussex Agricultural Express*, 'Framfield', 8 May 1925, p.7.

exams, but she did continue her medical work.<sup>576</sup> She married Admiral Wilmot Nicholson in 1934.<sup>577</sup>

Although she continued to be a physician and got married, both plausible reasons why she did not pursue her career at the Bar, she also had a number of brushes with the law. Some of these were fairly minor, including a motor accident in 1933 where she refused to give her name and address,<sup>578</sup> and another charge in 1935 relating to a motoring offence.<sup>579</sup> The most significant brush with the law was in 1940 when she was detained in Holloway Prison for one year under Defence Regulation 18B, a regulation that allowed the government to intern individuals suspected of being Nazi sympathisers.<sup>580</sup> Dr Christabel Nicholson was tried for offences under the Official Secrets Act and was interned; however, she was subsequently found not guilty and was released. In 1940, she was arrested in possession of a copy of a secret paper obtained illegally from the American Embassy by Tyler Kent.<sup>581</sup> She was an associate of Anna Wolkoff<sup>582</sup> and an admirer of the Nazi regime; she took part in activities of the Right Club.<sup>583</sup> While the above factors

<sup>576</sup> Christabel Sybil Eyre is listed in the Medical Directories: and later as Dr Christabel Sybil Nicholson: 'UK & Ireland, Medical Directories, 1845-1942'. [https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/1162391:61053?tid=&pid=&queryId=24a593259c80fcac7f578e2f7ecbf570&\\_phsrc=7851124901&\\_phstart=succesSourceId](https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/1162391:61053?tid=&pid=&queryId=24a593259c80fcac7f578e2f7ecbf570&_phsrc=7851124901&_phstart=succesSourceId). 'UK and Ireland, Medical Registers, 1859-1943'.

<sup>577</sup> *Daily Mirror*, 'Admiral to Marry', 25 October 1934, p.28.

<sup>578</sup> *Westminster & Pimlico News*, 'Lady Doctor Summoned: Sequel to an Accident', 1 September 1933, p.8.

<sup>579</sup> This involved exceeding the speed limit and failing to produce documents: *Bucks Herald*, 'Lady Doctor and Patrol Police', 29 November 1935, p.10.

<sup>580</sup> Defence Regulation 18B was a subsection of the Emergency Powers (Defence) Act 1939 passed by the Houses of Parliament prior to the outbreak of the Second World War. 18B allowed the Government to intern individuals suspected of being Nazi sympathisers, suspending their right to habeas corpus.

<sup>1</sup> 'Defence Regulation 18B Detainee: Sir Oswald Mosley, 1943-1945', British Online Archives, accessed 2 June 2023, [https://microform.digital/boa/collections/9/volumes/58/defence-regulation-18b-detainee-sir-oswald-mosley-1943-1945?filters\[query\]=&filters\[modelType\]=document&orderBy=](https://microform.digital/boa/collections/9/volumes/58/defence-regulation-18b-detainee-sir-oswald-mosley-1943-1945?filters[query]=&filters[modelType]=document&orderBy=).

<sup>581</sup> Tyler Kent was accused of helping white Russians to smuggle various Imperial Russian treasures into the United States. It was later revealed that he was also passing on documents to Nazi intelligence while in Moscow. 'Tyler Kent', Spartacus Educational, Accessed 2 June 2023, <https://spartacus-educational.com/SSkentT.htm>.

<sup>582</sup> Anna Wolkoff, the daughter of Admiral Nikolai Wolkoff, was born in Russia in 1902. Anna Wolkoff visited Nazi Germany several times in the 1930s. In 1935, MI5 began to monitor her actions. Anna and her father held extreme right-wing views and were both members of a secret society called the Right Club. 'Anna Wolkoff', Spartacus Educational, Accessed 2 June 2023, <https://spartacus-educational.com/SSwolkoff.htm>.

<sup>583</sup> The Right Club: In May 1939 Archibald Ramsay, the Tory MP for Peebles and Southern Midlothian, founded a secret society called the Right Club. This was an attempt to unify all the different right-wing groups in Britain. 'The Right Club', Spartacus Educational, accessed 2 June 2023, <https://spartacus-educational.com/2WWrightclub.htm>. The National Archives, 'NICHOLSON, Mrs Christabel Sybil Caroline'.

are unlikely to explain why she was not called, we can see that Dr Christabel Nicholson led a very colourful life after she was admitted to the Bar.

As with the women in the Civil Service, those in the medical profession were also mature women in their 30s with the oldest applicant 46-years-old. All these women undertook at least one Bar exam suggesting that their entry to the Inns of Court was not just a token gesture. Yet at the same time, they did not want to undertake a career change. In this sense, perhaps some of them felt that having a knowledge of the law would be beneficial in their career. Only two of these women continued with their career in medicine (Mary Selina Share Jones and Mary Martin). Sybil Gertrude Overton changed her career to the Civil Service upon marriage and Christabel Sybil Eyre appears to have taken a more eccentric path getting involved with Nazi sympathisers.

#### *Careers in Education*

Six women were not called to the Bar because they worked in the education field as either a teacher or lecturer. Four out of the six were 26 or under, with the youngest applicant being 19; two were in their 40s. Two of the six women already had a career in lecturing before admission.

#### **Marjorie Powell**

Admission: 1920 (Lincoln's Inn, aged 26)

Bar Exams: No record found

Marjorie Powell was admitted in 1920 and was the first woman to gain admission to Lincoln's Inn.<sup>584</sup> It has not been possible to trace whether she sat any of the Bar examinations. She had undertaken work as a lecturer before her admission. In 1912 she attended Newham College, Cambridge, where she gained first-class honours in the Economics tripos. She subsequently pursued a teaching career and lectured in Economics at Queen's University, Belfast between

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KV2/904 (19 Nov. 1941 -15 Jan 1944), ONLINE, The Security Service: Personal (PF Series) Files, <https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C11090351>.

<sup>584</sup> 'Marjorie Powell', Inner Temple, 10 December 2019, <https://www.innertemple.org.uk/women-in-law/pioneering-women-in-law/marjorie-powell/>.

1916-1917. In 1918, she returned to England and took up a post as an assistant lecturer in Political Economy at Victoria University, Manchester (now the University of Manchester). In July 1920, shortly after her admission, she married the distinguished physicist and lecturer Harold Robinson. Marjorie and Harold Robinson were parents to two children: Anne (born 1922) and Andrew (born 1924).<sup>585</sup> She was never called to the Bar to practise law as she continued her academic life teaching and writing on Economics.

### **Jessie Elliot Alderson**

Admission: 1924 (Lincoln's Inn, aged 40)

Bar Exams: Roman Law (1924)<sup>586</sup>

Constitutional Law and Legal History (1925)<sup>587</sup>

Jessie Elliot Alderson nee Murdoch was the first woman to be awarded a Ferguson Scholarship for Philosophy (1904).<sup>588</sup> She married Alan Alderson, a solicitor, in 1911 and was a lecturer in Logic and Psychology at Provincial Training College, Aberdeen from 1907 to 1911. She was admitted to Lincoln's Inn in March 1924, when she was 40 years old, and sat two Bar exams. She did not subsequently proceed to call because she continued her career in lecturing throughout and beyond her time at Lincoln's Inn; she lectured in Philosophy at Armstrong College, Newcastle from 1919 to 1931, and was a temporary lecturer in Philosophy at King's College, Newcastle from 1941 to 1944. In 1936, she became a Justice of the Peace for Northumberland County. Her feminist links include Vice-chairman of Northumberland Federation of Women's Institutes; Member of the National Executive Committee of the National Council of Women.<sup>589</sup>

### **Alice Lorraine Campbell Holt-Kentwell**

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<sup>585</sup> Ibid.

<sup>586</sup> 'Women's Bar Success', 7 November 1924.

<sup>587</sup> 'Women's Bar Successes', 1 May 1925.

<sup>588</sup> John Ferguson, a Scottish businessman and philanthropist, was the founder of the Ferguson Bequest Fund, making The Ferguson Scholarship possible. Upon his death in 1856, he left a significant legacy of £50,000 for Ferguson Scholarships in connection with Scottish Universities. In 1897, women were allowed to compete for the Ferguson Scholarship. Douglas, *The Ferguson Scholars, 1861-1955*.

<sup>589</sup> Ibid., p.219.

Admission: 1924 (Inner Temple, aged 22)

Bar Exams: Roman Law (January 1925)<sup>590</sup>  
Constitutional Law and Legal History (January 1925)<sup>591</sup>  
Criminal Law and Procedure (1927)<sup>592</sup>

Alice Lorraine Campbell Holt-Kentwell was born in Hawaii; her family story is explored further in Chapter 4, which relates to the international women at the Inns of Court. Between 1927 and 1929 she worked as a senior mistress, assisting the principal at Beaumont House School, Oxford, which was a high-class boarding school for girls.<sup>593</sup> By 1939, she was the Organising Secretary of the Oxford Federation of Girls.<sup>594</sup> She attended the Voluntary Youth Service conference in 1940 as a representative of the Oxford Federation of Girls' Clubs.<sup>595</sup> She died in Basingstoke in 1985.<sup>596</sup>

### **Vida Mary Sturge Crichton**

Admission: 1924 (Lincoln's Inn, aged 22)

Bar Exams: Constitutional Law and Legal History (1926)<sup>597</sup>  
Real Property and Conveyancing (1928)<sup>598</sup>  
Criminal Law and Procedure (1931)<sup>599</sup>  
Bar Final (1931)<sup>600</sup>

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<sup>590</sup> *The Vote*, 'Women's Bar Successes', 23 January 1925, p.26.

<sup>591</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>592</sup> 'Successful Women Law Students'.

<sup>593</sup> *North Wilts Herald*, 'Beaumont House School, Oxford', 29 April 1927, p.2. *Oxford Chronicle and Reading Gazette*, 'Beaumont College for Girls', 3 May 1929, p.2.

<sup>594</sup> Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2018., '1939 England and Wales Register'.

<sup>595</sup> *North Wilts Herald*, 'Voluntary Youth Services', 26 April 1940, p.5.

<sup>596</sup> Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010., 'Alice Lorraine Campbell Holt Kentwell England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1858-1995', Ancestry.co.uk, accessed 26 June 2023, <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/22482234:1904?ssrc=pt&tid=174222331&pid=172340581734>.

<sup>597</sup> 'More Women Barristers', 23 April 1926.

<sup>598</sup> 'Bar Examinations - Women'.

<sup>599</sup> *The Vote*, 'Bar Examinations', 17 January 1930, p.22.

<sup>600</sup> 'Women's Law Successes', 23 January 1931.

Vida Mary Sturge Crichton was admitted to Lincoln's Inn in October 1924 and passed the Final Examination in 1931, achieving a Class III.<sup>601</sup> As published at the time, she would have been eligible for call had she also satisfied the other conditions such as dining in the hall.<sup>602</sup> She did not pursue a career as a barrister and, between 1925 and 1927, she appears to have worked as a lecturer in Modern History at Bedford College and then Armstrong College.<sup>603</sup> She married Clement Heighman in 1931, and they had three children.<sup>604</sup> Later, during the Second World War, Vida Mary Heighman appears to have joined the war effort as she is listed on the UK Navy lists from 1940 to 1944; in 1943, she was an Acting Chief Officer.<sup>605</sup>

### **Nora Burke-Bloor**

Admission: 1927 (Gray's Inn, aged 19)

Bar Exams: Roman Law exam (January 1928)<sup>606</sup>  
Constitutional Law and Legal History (June 1928)<sup>607</sup>

The youngest applicant in this group was Nora Burke-Bloor, who was admitted to Gray's Inn in 1927 when she was just 19. She sat two Bar exams in 1928, but after this the only trace of Nora Burke-Bloor is her death announcement in October 1994 which mentions that donations should be made to the school at which she taught.<sup>608</sup> It therefore appears that she became a school teacher rather than continuing her application at the Bar.

### **Caroline Frances Kirby**

Admission: 1928 (Inner Temple, aged 41)

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<sup>601</sup> Ibid.

<sup>602</sup> *Lancashire Evening Post*, 'Nine Women Succeeded in Bar Final Examination', 14 January 1931, p.2.

<sup>603</sup> Polden, 'Index to Women: Portia's Progress Women at the Bar in England 1919 - 1939'.

<sup>604</sup> Sturge, Peter Marshall, 'Vida Mary Sturge CRICHTON', accessed 24 May 2023, <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/family-tree/person/tree/115609903/person/190169228504/facts>.

<sup>605</sup> Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 'UK, Navy Lists, 1888-1970 [database on-Line]', Ancestry.co.uk, 2011, [https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/9986886:2406?tid=&pid=&queryId=cb554ad732bebcc9c1cd8574c6652fe7&\\_phsrc=785-1044451&\\_phstart=successSource](https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/9986886:2406?tid=&pid=&queryId=cb554ad732bebcc9c1cd8574c6652fe7&_phsrc=785-1044451&_phstart=successSource).

<sup>606</sup> *The Vote*, 'Bar Examinations', 20 January 1928, p.19.

<sup>607</sup> *The Vote*, 'Bar Examinations - Women's Successes', 15 June 1928, p.186.

<sup>608</sup> *Leicester Daily Mercury*, 'BURKE-BLOOR Nora', 13 October 1994, p.42.



Bar Exams: Roman Law (1929) - failed twice<sup>609</sup>  
Constitutional Law and Legal History (1932) - failed<sup>610</sup>

The oldest applicant in the group was Caroline Frances Kirby, who was the daughter of a vicar. She matriculated from the Society for Oxford Home Students on 23 October 1920 and graduated as BA on 1 December 1921.<sup>611</sup> It is possible that she knew Auvergne Doherty and Olive Clapham as they were also at Oxford University at the same time, although she read a different degree to them. The Undergraduate Progress Register goes on to record that Kirby was granted an “Aegrotat” meaning she was too unwell to take the exam in her final examinations in Theology in Trinity Term 1921.<sup>612</sup> Initially, therefore, she was awarded a degree without classification. She was admitted to the Inner Temple in 1928 and attempted the Roman Law examinations in 1929 but failed this twice. Later, in 1932 she attempted the Constitutional Law and Legal History but again failed. It appears that she gave up with the Bar exams after this date and became a teacher. The 1939 Census lists her profession as ‘teacher’,<sup>613</sup> and in 1940 she passed examinations at Oxford.<sup>614</sup> There are some photographs and letters she transcribed at the National Archive, but it has so far not been possible to review these.<sup>615</sup> She does not appear to have married and died in Sussex in 1965.<sup>616</sup>

Overall, the women who went into careers in education were young: just under 70% of them were 26 or under, with the youngest applicant being 19 years old. On the one hand it is puzzling

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<sup>609</sup> Institute of Advanced Legal Studies; London, England, UK; The Law Society: Examination Records 1836-1984.

<sup>610</sup> Institute of Advanced Legal Studies; London, England, UK; The Law Society: Examination Records 1836-1984.

<sup>611</sup> Archive Reference No. OUA/UR 2/1/, ‘Email to Charlotte Coleman from Faye McLeod Keeper of the University Archives Bodleian Library’, 12 July 2023.

<sup>612</sup> This essentially means that she was too unwell to sit her final examinations, as so was awarded a degree without classification.

<sup>613</sup> ‘1939 England and Wales Register [database on-Line]’.

<sup>614</sup> Archive Reference No. OUA/UR 2/1/, ‘Email to Charlotte Coleman from Faye McLeod Keeper of the University Archives Bodleian Library’.

<sup>615</sup> ‘Further Records of the Baker and Kirby Families of Mayfield and the Thompson Family of Frant and Fareham, Hants’, The National Archives, accessed 14 March 2024, <https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/d5947d2a-a039-4f12-be01-ee61303e5b46>.

<sup>616</sup> cider, ‘Caroline Frances Meme Kirby’, Ancestry.co.uk, accessed 12 July 2023, <https://www.ancestry.com/family-tree/person/tree/2845200/person/222483847168/facts>.

why Marjorie Powell and Jessie Elliot Alderson chose to undertake legal training as they already had careers as lecturers, perhaps they wanted a challenge or thought this would add to their knowledge and perhaps benefit their career somehow. It appears that the other four women tried their hand at law but perhaps found careers in teaching a more practical, welcoming and lucrative option. It can also be seen that the Bar exams were a barrier to some women such as Caroline Kirby who failed Roman Law twice and the Constitutional Law; after this she appears to have given up.

#### *Other Careers*

The subsequent occupations of two other women are also known and they undertook this work in their mid-20s, a few years after this admission.

#### **Dorothy Laura Muriel Stacpole**

Admission: 1921 (Inner Temple, aged 24)

Bar Exams: Roman Law (1922) - Failed<sup>617</sup>

Dorothy Laura Muriel Stacpole was admitted to Inner Temple in 1921. She attempted the Roman Law exam in 1922 but failed this; Venetia Stephenson was also among those who failed.<sup>618</sup> She appears to have taken an alternative career path, as perhaps she found the legal training too challenging. Polden notes that she was a 'domestic economy instructress',<sup>619</sup> but her profession is listed as 'ARP telephonist' in the 1939 Census<sup>620</sup> and a news article in 1944 states that she was 'Fuel Overseer for the Sturminster Rural District' in that year.<sup>621</sup> In 1950, there was a local gathering to say goodbye to Dorothy Laura Muriel Stacpole in Hinton St Mary, Dorset; she was

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<sup>617</sup> Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, London, England, UK, The Law Society: Examination Records 1836-, and Reference: CLE 11/, 'UK and Commonwealth, Law Examination Records, 1836-1948'.

<sup>618</sup> Ibid.

<sup>619</sup> A domestic economy instructress appears to be someone who informed the 'housewife' on a woman's role within the domestic sphere: how to be domestically capable, make a comfortable home and live within one's means. Polden, *Portia's Progress: Women at the Bar in England, 1919-1939*; 'Guides for Domestic Economy', Museums of History NSW, accessed 12 March 2024, <https://mhnsnsw.au/stories/general/guides-domestic-economy/>.

<sup>620</sup> '1939 England and Wales Register [database on-Line]'.

<sup>621</sup> *Western Gazette*, 'Public Notices: Sturminster Rural District Council', 22 December 1944, p.1.

leaving to move to New Zealand where she married Rev. George Moreton,<sup>622</sup> a prison chaplain who unfortunately died six years after their marriage.<sup>623</sup> She eventually returned to England; it appears that she died here in 1977.<sup>624</sup>

### **Anna Karenia Warliker**

Admission: 1929 (Middle Temple, aged 26)

Bar Exams: Criminal Law and Procedure (January 1931)<sup>625</sup>

Constitutional Law (June 1931)<sup>626</sup>

Anna Karenia Warliker was admitted to Middle Temple in 1929 and took two exams in 1931. In the following years, 1932 and 1933, she advertised her services as a 'pianoforte and singing' teacher. She later appeared to go by another name, Anne Carroll, and was listed as a musician under that name in the 1939 Census.<sup>627</sup>

### *Careers in the Legal Profession: Solicitor*

Two of the women who did not proceed to call pursued a legal career by becoming solicitors.

### **Marion Graham Billson**

Admission: 1922 (Inner Temple, aged 20)

Bar Exams: Roman Law (November 1924)<sup>628</sup>

Constitutional Law and Legal History (November 1924)<sup>629</sup>

Bar Final (1925)<sup>630</sup>

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<sup>622</sup> *Western Gazette*, 'Local & District News', 23 June 1950, p.3. *Western Gazette*, 'Hinton, St Mary - Presentation to Stacpole', 23 June 1950, p.2.

<sup>623</sup> 'Dorothy Laura Muriel Stacpole', AJT01, accessed 7 July 2023, [https://www.ancestry.com/family-tree/person/tree/70543637/person/392007790326/facts?\\_gl=1\\*1v2gbm8\\*\\_ga\\*MzExMjM0OTM0LjE2ODg3MTAwNTI.\\*\\_up\\*MQ..](https://www.ancestry.com/family-tree/person/tree/70543637/person/392007790326/facts?_gl=1*1v2gbm8*_ga*MzExMjM0OTM0LjE2ODg3MTAwNTI.*_up*MQ..)

<sup>624</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>625</sup> *The Vote*, 'Women's Law Success', 23 January 1931, p.3.

<sup>626</sup> 'Women's Bar Success', 12 June 1931.

<sup>627</sup> '1939 England and Wales Register [database on-Line]'.

<sup>628</sup> *The Vote*, 'Women's Bar Successes', 7 November 1924, p.354.

<sup>629</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>630</sup> 'Women's Bar Successes', 23 January 1925.

Marion Graham Billson was 20 years old when she was admitted to Inner Temple. She sat two of the Bar exams in close succession in November 1924,<sup>631</sup> and passed the Bar Final Examination in 1925; however, she only kept seven terms.<sup>632</sup> Unless she was entitled to some exemptions, she would not have been eligible to be called to the Bar because she had only kept seven terms at the Inn when 12 were required.<sup>633</sup> Instead, she was articled to a solicitor, Miss Edith Berthen, from 1925 until 1928.<sup>634</sup> Edith Berthen later entered into a partnership with Beatrice Honour Davy, who was called to the Bar in 1922 but later retrained as a solicitor.<sup>635</sup> Marion Billson passed her Final Law Society Examinations and became a solicitor.<sup>636</sup> An article published in 1952 lists that she handled 300 to 500 matrimonial cases per year; this suggests she had a thriving career as a solicitor.<sup>637</sup>

### **Margaret Jones-Bateman**

Admission: 1926 (Gray's Inn, aged 26)

Bar Exams: Criminal Law and Procedure (November 1928)<sup>638</sup>

Real Property and Conveyancing (November 1928)<sup>639</sup>

Constitutional Law and Legal History (1929)<sup>640</sup>

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<sup>631</sup> 'Women's Bar Success', 7 November 1924.

<sup>632</sup> 'Women's Bar Successes', 1 May 1925; Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, London, England, UK, The Law Society: Examination Records 1836-, and Reference: CLE 11/, 'UK and Commonwealth, Law Examination Records, 1836-1948'.

<sup>633</sup> Bar Final Examination Record: Institute of Advanced Legal Studies; London, England, UK; The Law Society: Examination Records 1836-1984; Reference: CLE 11/13.

<sup>634</sup> 'Institute of Advanced Legal Studies; London, England, UK; The Law Society: Examination Records 1836-1984; Reference: LSOC 09/50', UK and Commonwealth, Law Examination Records, 1836-1948 - Ancestry.co.uk, accessed 24 July 2024, [https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/217992:62335?tid=&pid=&queryId=8e7d73a9-0118-458e-b39b-1c35a43bd1df&\\_phsrc=iCe1132&\\_phstart=successSource](https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/217992:62335?tid=&pid=&queryId=8e7d73a9-0118-458e-b39b-1c35a43bd1df&_phsrc=iCe1132&_phstart=successSource).

<sup>635</sup> Edith Annie Jones Berthen, 'Edith Annie Jones Berthen', *First 100 Years*, 23 May 2017, <https://first100years.org.uk/edith-annie-jones-berthen/>.

<sup>636</sup> 'Women's Law Success', 30 November 1928; Polden, 'Index to Women: Portia's Progress Women at the Bar in England 1919 - 1939'.

<sup>637</sup> *Daily News (London)*, 'Women Wants Permit to Get Engaged', 12 June 1952, p.4.

<sup>638</sup> 'Bar Examinations', 9 November 1928.

<sup>639</sup> Ibid.

<sup>640</sup> 'Women's Successes at the Bar Examinations'.

Margaret Jones-Bateman came from quite a wealthy family who were familiar with the legal field. Her great-grandfather was admitted to Lincoln's Inn but became a solicitor instead, eventually becoming the senior partner in the solicitor's practice of Jones, Bateman, Bennett and Field.<sup>641</sup> Her father, Herbert Burleton Jones Bateman, worked for the Indian Civil Service and was a judge there.<sup>642</sup> Jones-Bateman was admitted to the University of Oxford on 14 October 1925 as a member of the Society of Oxford Home Students.<sup>643</sup> She was awarded the Winter Williams Scholarship to study law,<sup>644</sup> and passed her Jurisprudence at Oxford exam with a Class 2 in 1928. In 1929, she was awarded the degree of Bachelor of Civil Law with a Class 2.<sup>645</sup> She was admitted to Gray's Inn in 1926 and sat her Bar exams while studying at Oxford.

### *Analysis*

From the above, three main findings can be identified. Firstly, when the applicant had a career prior to admission, they typically returned to that career after admission. It therefore appears that women who already had a career did not intend to practise as a barrister. In the case of those five applicants in the 1920s, the admission may even have been a political motivation and a seal of approval for the opening of the profession to women. The most dominant career for those who were not called was the Civil Service. Typically, women who were more mature, in their 30s, already had a career in the Civil Service and returned to that career. Only four of the 12 (25%) who went into the Civil Service were in their 20s. The younger women who were admitted, those in their teens and 20s, tended to go into administrative, teaching or 'other' jobs, except for Marion Graham Billson and Margaret Jones-Bateman who became solicitors. Marion Billson was mentored by a woman solicitor who later partnered with Beatrice Davy. It is likely

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<sup>641</sup> Kingsley, Nick, 'Jones, Later Jones-Bateman, of Pentre Mawr', Landed families of Britain and Ireland, 11 February 2021, <https://landedfamilies.blogspot.com/2021/02/446-jones-later-jones-bateman-of-pentre.html>.

<sup>642</sup> Ibid.

<sup>643</sup> Millea, 'Email to Charlotte Coleman from Assistant Keeper of the University Archives at Oxford'.

<sup>644</sup> Margaret Jones-Bateman and Joan B. Alexander (St Hilda's) were both awarded the Winter Williams Scholarship. 'Oxford - Appointments'. Millea, 'Email to Charlotte Coleman from Assistant Keeper of the University Archives at Oxford'.

<sup>645</sup> Millea, 'Email to Charlotte Coleman from Assistant Keeper of the University Archives at Oxford'.

that these women took a different career path because of the challenges they faced at the Bar and/or other opportunities that appeared.

Secondly, 24 out of 29 (82.8%) women who undertook a different career, completed at least one Bar Exam and four women completed their Bar Finals: Dr Mary Martin (later Turton), Alix Kilroy, Marion Graham Billson and Vida Mary Struge Crichton. It does seem a bit puzzling why Mary Turton and Vida Mary Struge Crichton did not proceed to call when they had completed all the necessary exams and kept the required 12 terms. In the cases of Alix Kilroy and Marion Billson, they passed the required exams but did not keep enough terms. For the others who undertook exams, perhaps their legal knowledge would have benefited their careers; or perhaps some of them did intend to become a barrister but, for whatever reason, did not achieve their goal. In any case, it certainly looks like these women did give it a try at the Inns of Court; perhaps circumstances at the time held them back.

Thirdly, in the 1920s there was a flurry of admissions to the Inns of Court by women in the Civil Service: Katherine Andrew, Anne Hasting, Fanny Taylor, Alice Troup and Edith Pratt were all admitted to Middle Temple in 1920 and were all in their 30s and worked at the Civil Service. In fact, when looking at the admissions in the 1920s, at least four additional women admitted to Middle Temple (and one to Gray's Inn) had also been employed by the Civil Service, but later went on to be called.<sup>646</sup> Certainly, it seems that some of these women, notably those in the civil service, may have applied to the Bar as a political motivation or because they believed it to be a triumph for women.

## **Marriage**

This research has classified marriage as the reason that 16 women did not proceed to call (25.4%). *Table 3.3* below identifies these women, their marriage year, and the duration (in years) between admission and marriage. Of these, 16 women, 11 married within four years of admission at the

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<sup>646</sup> Sybil Campbell, Margaret Alice Wailes, Ida Mary Southwell Keely, Edith Jane Douglas Morrison.

Inns. Five women did not marry within four years of admission. Of these five women, one was already married and did not proceed to call because she had her third child. The other four women had a gap of between six to eight years between admission and marriage. However, they took longer to do their Bar exams suggesting that they were still undertaking legal training before they married. Therefore, it is likely that marriage was one of the reasons they did not continue with their application.

Inn	Name	Admitted	Age at Admission	Marriage year	Difference (years)
Lincoln's Inn	Halcyon Salden Wing	13-Oct-1920	21	1921	1
Lincoln's Inn	Violet Mary Hume [nee Hope] later lady McCallum	21-Sep-1921	34	1925 (2nd)	3
Gray's Inn	Winifred Packard Shyvers	11-Jan-1922	18	1928	6
Inner Temple	Leila Mabel Thomas	20-Jan-1922	25	1925	3
Inner Temple	Edna Ellen McKeown	11-Nov-1922	21	1926	4
Inner Temple	Elizabeth Alice Schuster	19-Nov-1923	20	1925	3
Lincoln's Inn	Dorothy Mary Last	19-Jan-1924	35	1925	1
Gray's Inn	Ann Arnfield James	17-Apr-1924	23	1928	4
Inner Temple	Ella Violet Hoahing	17-Oct-1924	18	1926	2
Inner Temple	Dorothy Alice North Lewis	3-Mar-1925	19	1927	2
Lincoln's Inn	Candida Dhunbar Saklatvala	4-Nov-1926	17	1934	8
Inner Temple	Isabella Crawshaw [nee Burnett]	9-Nov-1926	27	1926	0
Lincoln's Inn	Alice Grace Jenny Bragg [nee Hopkins]	17-May-1927	27	3rd child 1931	4

Lincoln's Inn	Ruth Daiches [Seres]	31-Oct-1927	19	1935	8
Middle Temple	Ivy Gwendolene Pollecoff	17-Nov-1927	32	1935	8
Gray's Inn	Dorothy Nina Neal	5-Nov-1929	24	1932	3

Table 3.3: Women who did not Proceed to Call due to Marriage

### Halcyon Salden Wing

Admission: 1920 (Lincoln's Inn, aged 21)

Bar Exams: Roman Law (Easter, 1921)<sup>647</sup>

Criminal Law and Procedure exam (June 1921)<sup>648</sup>

Halcyon Salden Wing's father, John Salden Wing, was a solicitor and was born in England; her mother was born in India but was a British subject by parentage.<sup>649</sup> Salden Wing was admitted to Lincoln's Inn in 1920 and passed the Roman Law and Criminal Law and Procedure exam in 1921. In December 1921, just over a year after admission, she married Thomas Nottidge who was a solicitor in her father's firm. She had four sons and one daughter; her youngest son became a lawyer for the United Nations.<sup>650</sup> Marriage and having her children were the likely reasons she did not proceed with her call to the Bar. The 1939 Census lists her occupation as 'unpaid domestic duties'.<sup>651</sup>

### Violet Mary Hume

Admission: 1921 (Lincoln's Inn, aged 34)

Bar Exams: Criminal Law and Procedure exam (1921)<sup>652</sup>

<sup>647</sup> Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, London, England, UK, The Law Society: Examination Records 1836-, and Reference: CLE 11/, 'UK and Commonwealth, Law Examination Records, 1836-1948'.

<sup>648</sup> 'Examination Results', *The Vote*, 3 June 1921, 1.

<sup>649</sup> Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., '1911 England Census [database on-Line]'.

<sup>650</sup> 'The First Women Admitted as Members of Lincoln's Inn'.<https://www.lincolnsinn.org.uk/news/the-first-women-admitted-as-members-of-lincolns-inn/>; Ibid. Halcyon Salden Wing's Ancestry.co.uk profile only lists three children: ValH, 'Halcyon Sladen Wing', Ancestry.co.uk, accessed 7 July 2023, <https://www.ancestry.com/family-tree/person/tree/71663004/person/242098582062/facts>.

<sup>651</sup> '1939 England and Wales Register [database on-Line]'.

<sup>652</sup> 'Women and the Bar', 23 June 1922.



## Real Property and Conveyancing exam (1924)<sup>653</sup>

Violet Mary Hume (nee Hope) married her first husband in 1912; Captain Edward Archibald Hume was a practising barrister at Lincoln's Inn and the prospective Unionist candidate for Banffshire.<sup>654</sup> It is possible that Violet Hume applied to Lincoln's Inn because of her husband's connection there. Captain Hume unfortunately died during the war, in 1915, after being wounded in the spine by a spent bullet.<sup>655</sup> In 1925, Violet Hume married Major Sir Duncan McCallum, Conservative MP.<sup>656</sup> As reported in *The Times*, the couple went on an expedition in June 1927 with Sir McCallum's regiment, The East Yorkshire, to various countries in the far East such as China, Bangkok and Calcutta. They returned in May 1928 and the journey was recounted in *China to Chelsea*.<sup>657</sup> Her marriage to Sir Duncan McCallum and their expedition would likely have interrupted her studies at the Bar, and she did not pursue her application to be called.

### Winifred Packard Shyvers

Admission: 1922 (Gray's Inn, aged 18)

Bar Exams: Constitutional Law and History (1924)<sup>658</sup>  
Real Property and Conveyancing (1925)<sup>659</sup>  
Criminal Law and Procedure (1926)<sup>660</sup>  
Bar Final (Class II, 1926).<sup>661</sup>

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<sup>653</sup> *The Vote*, 'Women's Bar Success', 7 November 1924, p.2.

<sup>654</sup> 'Person Page: Violet Mary Hope', The Peerage, accessed 27 June 2023, <https://www.thepeerage.com/p5512.htm>.

<sup>655</sup> 'Hume, Edward Archibald', Winchester college, accessed 27 June 2023, [https://www.winchestercollegeatwar.com/RollofHonour.aspx?RecID=262&TableName=ta\\_wwifactfile](https://www.winchestercollegeatwar.com/RollofHonour.aspx?RecID=262&TableName=ta_wwifactfile).

<sup>656</sup> *The Times*, 'Obituary: Sir Duncan McCallum', 12 May 1958, p.15.

<sup>657</sup> Ibid.

<sup>658</sup> 'More Women Barristers', 27 June 1924.

<sup>659</sup> Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, London, England, UK, The Law Society: Examination Records 1836-, and Reference: CLE 11/, 'UK and Commonwealth, Law Examination Records, 1836-1948'.

<sup>660</sup> Ibid.

<sup>661</sup> *Gloucester Journal*, 'Women and the Bar', 30 October 1926, p.11.

Winifred Packard Shyvers studied at Oxford. She passed the Bar Final and kept 12 terms,<sup>662</sup> so presumably she was eligible for call. Instead, she married Edward Tyrell in 1928; she helped him with his cases and with his books on the Law of Running Down Cases.<sup>663</sup> Edward Tyrell was called to the Bar at Gray's Inn in 1924, so presumably the couple met there.<sup>664</sup> They had a small flat in Middle Temple Lane and they later had a son.<sup>665</sup> According to Martin Tyrell, Winifred's grandson, she recalled that she was one of the first women barristers and was 'quite proud of this'; however, in those days it was assumed that married women would give up work and have a family, which is what they did. By 1939, her occupation was listed as unpaid domestic duties.<sup>666</sup>

Winifred Shyver's sister, Rosita Alberta Shyvers, married Lord Hartley William Shawcross, KC in 1924. Unfortunately, Rosita Shyvers Shawcross took her own life in 1944. According to the *Manchester Evening News* her mind was 'unbalanced owing to a long and depressing illness'.<sup>667</sup> It transpired that this illness was multiple sclerosis and Hartley Shawcross noted that 'She sacrificed her own life for my future...part of me died with her'.<sup>668</sup>

### **Leila Mabel Thomas**

Admission: 1922 (Inner Temple, aged 25)

Bar Exams: No record found

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<sup>662</sup> Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, London, England, UK, The Law Society: Examination Records 1836-, and Reference: CLE 11/, 'UK and Commonwealth, Law Examination Records, 1836-1948'.

<sup>663</sup> Terrell, Martin, 'Message to Charlotte Coleman from Martin Terrell (Winifred's Grandson) via Ancestry.co.uk', 20 June 2023, <https://www.ancestry.co.uk>. Running-down cases are linked to traffic incidents. Edward Terrell, *The Law of Running-down Cases* (London: Butterworth, 1936).

<sup>664</sup> 'Mr E. Turrell and Miss W. P. Shyvers', *Chelmsford Chronicle*, 3 August 1928, p 4; 'Balean.Net - Terrell Family Name', accessed 16 May 2023, <http://www.balean.net/terrell.html>.

<sup>665</sup> Terrell, Martin, 'Winifred P Shyvers', Ancestry.co.uk, accessed 21 June 2023, <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/family-tree/person/tree/168739785/person/392190250132/facts>. Terrell, 'Message to Charlotte Coleman from Martin Terrell (Winifred's Grandson) via Ancestry.co.uk'.

<sup>666</sup> Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2018., '1939 England and Wales Register'.

<sup>667</sup> 'Many Happy Years of Married Life', *Manchester Evening News*, 3 January 1944, p.4.

<sup>668</sup> Our People, 'Lord Shawcross QC - Liverpool Law School', University of Liverpool, accessed 24 July 2024, <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/law/130-year-anniversary/our-history/liverpool-law-school-luminaries/hartley-shawcross/>.

Leila Mabel Thomas was from Australia and had read History and English at Sydney University.<sup>669</sup> She arrived in England, from Sydney, on 7 October 1919.<sup>670</sup> There is evidence that she lectured for the Women's Educational Association in History, English and Economics.<sup>671</sup> In her early 20s, she had a breakdown after spending time at the LSE; she spent some time at a sanatorium owned by the Barclay family.<sup>672</sup> It was not possible to find a record of her sitting any Bar exams, perhaps they would have been too much given the circumstances of a breakdown. In 1925, she married Mr John L King Gifford; he was educated at Glasgow University, and was appointed lecturer in economics at Brisbane University.<sup>673</sup> According to their wedding article, they planned to stay in Brisbane after their honeymoon.<sup>674</sup> The couple had a son in 1932.<sup>675</sup> It therefore appears that Leila Thomas did not continue with her application because she got married and then returned to Australia. However, it was noted that she suffered from mental illness and developed paranoid schizophrenia. Consequently, her living relatives had no idea she was admitted to Inner Temple.<sup>676</sup>

### **Edna Ellen McKeown**

Admission: 1922 (Inner Temple, aged 21)

Bar Exams: Criminal Law and Procedure exam (1924)<sup>677</sup>

Constitutional Law and Legal History (Easter, 1925) - failed<sup>678</sup>

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<sup>669</sup> *Western Champion* (Parkes, NSW: 1898 - 1934). 'Molong'. 10 May 1917., p.18.

<sup>670</sup> 'UK and Ireland, Incoming Passenger Lists, 1878-1960', Ancestry.co.uk, Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2008, accessed 12 May 2023, [https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/24999093:1518?tid=&pid=&queryId=a3cc15f6528a61119310327615aedb01&\\_phsrc=785-1622371&\\_phstart=successSource](https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/24999093:1518?tid=&pid=&queryId=a3cc15f6528a61119310327615aedb01&_phsrc=785-1622371&_phstart=successSource).

<sup>671</sup> *Sunday News* (Sydney, NSW: 1919) 'Miss Leila Thomas', 1 June 1919, p.11.

<sup>672</sup> Thomas, Judy, Message to Charlotte Coleman via Ancestry and WhatsApp regarding Leila Mabel Thomas, 9 July 2024.

<sup>673</sup> *The Sun* (Sydney, NSW: 1910 - 1954), 'Weddings', 23 August 1925, p.24.

<sup>674</sup> Ibid.

<sup>675</sup> Morris, Gina, 'Leila Mabel Thomas', Ancestry.co.uk, accessed 6 July 2023, [https://www.ancestry.com/family-tree/person/tree/1776013/person/332247501537/facts?\\_gl=1\\*zthieq\\*\\_ga\\*Mzl1MjUyNDk4LjE2ODg1NTQ3OTI.\\*\\_up\\*MQ..](https://www.ancestry.com/family-tree/person/tree/1776013/person/332247501537/facts?_gl=1*zthieq*_ga*Mzl1MjUyNDk4LjE2ODg1NTQ3OTI.*_up*MQ..)

<sup>676</sup> Thomas, Judy, Message to Charlotte Coleman via Ancestry and WhatsApp regarding Leila Mabel Thomas, 9 July 2024.

<sup>677</sup> 'Women's Bar Success', 7 November 1924.

<sup>678</sup> Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, London, England, UK, The Law Society: Examination Records 1836-, and Reference: CLE 11/, 'UK and Commonwealth, Law Examination Records, 1836-1948'.

Edna Ellen McKeown was the daughter of Robert John McKeown, who was parliament secretary for education and commerce in the Ulster Parliament. Between 1922 and 1924 she attended Newham College, Cambridge.<sup>679</sup> Edna Ellen McKeown was assistant to the editor of *The Queen* from 1925 until 1926,<sup>680</sup> when she married Angus Whiteford Acworth, a financier; they had two children. There is evidence that she did some other paid work in 1925, but it is unlikely that this was a different career choice; rather, it was a means of making money or perhaps simply an opportunity that came up. The 1939 Census records her occupation as 'unpaid domestic duties'.<sup>681</sup> It is likely that she did not continue with her call to the Bar due to her marriage in 1926. Similarly, this may also be the reason that she ceased her role as an assistant at *The Queen*.

### **Elizabeth Alice Schuster**

Admission: 1923 (Inner Temple, aged 20)

Bar Exams: Roman Law (1924)<sup>682</sup>

Real Property and Conveyancing exam (1925)<sup>683</sup>

Elizabeth Alice Schuster was the daughter of Sir Claud Schuster, secretary to the Lord Chancellor's Office and barrister (Inner Temple).<sup>684</sup> She married Theodore Francis Turner QC in December 1925<sup>685</sup> and gave birth to a son in 1931;<sup>686</sup> her marriage is likely to be the reason why she did not continue with her career at the Bar.

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<sup>679</sup> Polden, 'Index to Women: Portia's Progress Women at the Bar in England 1919 - 1939'.

<sup>680</sup> *The Queen* was an illustrated weekly society magazine founded in 1861 by the English publisher and journalist Samuel Beeton, [a] with an emphasis on the proceedings of high society and the British aristocracy.[2] But the magazine also published some fictional material, including H. G. Wells's short story "Miss Winchelsea's Heart", [3] the theme of which is consistent with the publication's focus on society and its fashions. 'The Queen (magazine)' (Engole, 17 October 2022), <https://engole.info/the-queen-magazine/>.

<sup>681</sup> '1939 England and Wales Register [database on-Line]'.

<sup>682</sup> Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, London, England, UK, The Law Society: Examination Records 1836-, and Reference: CLE 11/, 'UK and Commonwealth, Law Examination Records, 1836-1948'.

<sup>683</sup> 'Women's Bar Successes', 1 May 1925.

<sup>684</sup> Polden, *Portia's Progress: Women at the Bar in England, 1919–1939*.

<sup>685</sup> *Nottingham and Midland Catholic News*, 'The Marriage of Mr Theodore Turner', 31 October 1925, p.5.

<sup>686</sup> It was not possible to find evidence for Michael John Turner's link with Elizabeth Alice Schuster aside from the Ancestry.com profile: Madeleine Turner, 'Elizabeth Alice Schuster', accessed 16 May 2023, <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/family-tree/person/tree/174210037/person/312257029691/facts>.

### **Dorothy May Last**

Admission: 1924 (Lincoln's Inn, aged 35)

Bar Exams: No record found

Dorothy Mary Last attended Southport Physical Training College, where 'educated women trained as teachers'.<sup>687</sup> She was admitted to Lincoln's Inn in January 1924, but it has not been possible to find evidence of any Bar exams being sat. In November 1925 she married John Oscar Thomas, a physician.<sup>688</sup> It has also been difficult to ascertain what, exactly, she did after her marriage. The couple had a child, Ursula JM Thomas, and we know John Oscar Thomas sadly drowned while bathing in September 1944.<sup>689</sup> The death notice mentions that he was 'beloved husband of 'Dodo' and 'dear-Daddy of Ursula'. It is likely that Dorothy Mary Last did not continue to call because she married and had a child.

### **Ann Arnfield James**

Admission: 1924 (Gray's Inn, aged 23)

Bar Exams: No record found

Ann Arnfield James' father was a 'grocer and confectioner'; they were not the typical legal family and perhaps of a lower social status than some of the other women.<sup>690</sup> She attended Manchester University between 1919 and 1922, graduating in history; she had originally enrolled for the teacher's diploma as well, but withdrew from the diploma in 1919.<sup>691</sup> She was admitted to Gray's Inn in 1924, but there is no record of her completing any of the Bar exams.<sup>692</sup> It has not been

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<sup>687</sup> See advert for Southport Physical Training College in 'Southport Physical Training College'.

<sup>688</sup> Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 'London, England, Church of England Marriages and Banns, 1754-1938 [database Online]'. See advert.

<sup>689</sup> *The Times* 'Deaths (continued): Thomas', 29 September 1944, Vol: 49,965/2.

<sup>690</sup> Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., '1911 England Census [database on-Line]'; *Ibid.* James Peters, Manchester University Archivist to Charlotte Coleman, 28 June 2023.

<sup>691</sup> Mussell, 'Women Admitted to Gray's Inn'. James Peters, Manchester University Archivist to Coleman, 28 June 2023.

<sup>692</sup> A search of the British Newspaper Archive was conducted for the years of 1920 to 1930 covering various names, in case of misspelling, but there were no positive results.

possible to trace her career path after her admission. She married David Henry Heap, an electrical engineer, in 1928 and they had a son in 1932.<sup>693</sup> In the 1939 Census, her profession was listed as 'unpaid domestic duties'.<sup>694</sup>

### **Ella Violet Hoahing**

Admission: 1924 (Inner Temple, aged 18)

Bar Exams: Constitutional Law and Legal History (Easter, 1925) - failed<sup>695</sup>

Criminal Law and Procedure (May 1925)<sup>696</sup>

Constitutional Law and Legal History (Michaelmas, 1925) - failed<sup>697</sup>

Constitutional Law and Legal History (Hilary, 1926) - failed<sup>698</sup>

Ella Violet Hoahing was born in British Guiana (modern day Guyana) and arrived in England in 1919. She was admitted to Inner Temple in 1924, when she was just 18, and took the Criminal Law and Procedure exam in 1925. After three failed attempts to pass the Constitutional Law and Legal History exam, she appears to have given up with the Bar exams. She married Dr George Davis McLean in April 1926, and the first of her four children was born in 1928.<sup>699</sup> George McLean was Chinese but was born in Trinidad and Tobago. It is not known exactly when they moved but the family eventually ended up in St Kitts; this is where their second child was born, and where Ella Violet Hoahing died.<sup>700</sup> We can therefore see that Ella Violet Hoahing married and had a family rather than pursuing a career at the Bar. This is confirmed by a news article commenting

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<sup>693</sup> Isabelle Bradbury, 'Ann Arnfield James', Ancestry.co.uk, accessed 28 June 2023, <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/family-tree/person/tree/168655877/person/432213836066/facts>.

<sup>694</sup> Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2018., '1939 England and Wales Register'.

<sup>695</sup> Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, London, England, UK, The Law Society: Examination Records 1836-, and Reference: CLE 11/, 'UK and Commonwealth, Law Examination Records, 1836-1948'.

<sup>696</sup> 'Women's Bar Success', *The Vote*, 1 May 1925, 3.

<sup>697</sup> Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, London, England, UK, The Law Society: Examination Records 1836-, and Reference: CLE 11/, 'UK and Commonwealth, Law Examination Records, 1836-1948'.

<sup>698</sup> Ibid.

<sup>699</sup> Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc, 'England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1916-2005',. A child of Ella and George is listed but it is not possible to see the entry because he is still living. Andrew Lue-Shue, 'Ella Violet Ho-A-Hing', Ancestry.co.uk, accessed 12 June 2023, <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/family-tree/person/tree/114580112/person/202164925990/facts>.

<sup>700</sup> Robert Lee, 'Ella Violet Ho-a-Hing', Ancestry.co.uk, 2021, <https://www.ancestry.com/family-tree/person/tree/120086044/person/260201804954/facts>.

on her sister Kathleen Hoahing, the first Chinese woman solicitor, which noted that 'Her younger sister studied as a barrister but was married before she was called'.<sup>701</sup>

### **Dorothy Alice North Lewis**

Admission: 1925 (Inner Temple, aged 19)

Bar Exams: Roman Law (1925)

Criminal Law and Procedure exam (January 1926)<sup>702</sup>

Constitutional Law and Legal History (November 1926)<sup>703</sup>

Real Property and Conveyancing (January 1927)<sup>704</sup>

Dorothy Alice North Lewis was the daughter of Henry North Lewis, a solicitor.<sup>705</sup> She was admitted to Inner Temple in 1925, and took four Bar exams before marrying Mr Cyril Miller, a barrister, in April 1927.<sup>706</sup> Mr Cyril Miller, of Inner Temple, passed his Bar final exam in 1924. One news article explains that the wedding was of unusual interest as the bridegroom was a barrister-at-law and the bride was a law student.<sup>707</sup> In the 1939 Census, she listed her profession as 'unpaid domestic duties', while Cyril Miller was listed as a 'barrister-at-law'.<sup>708</sup> From the Census, it appears that they had children and that there were two domestic servants living with them. Dorothy North Lewis therefore appears to have decided not to continue with her call to the Bar following her marriage.

### **Candida Dhunbar Saklatvala**

Admission: 1926 (Lincoln's Inn, aged 17)

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<sup>701</sup> *Western Gazette*, 'First Chinese Woman To Become a British Solicitor', 26 November 1926, p.12. *Malaya Tribune*, 'WOULD PRACTICE HERE', 31 December 1926, p.3.

<sup>702</sup> *The Vote*, 'More Women Barristers', 15 January 1926, p.18.

<sup>703</sup> *The Vote*, 'Women's Bar Success', 5 November 1926, p.346.

<sup>704</sup> 'Women's Success in Bar Examinations'.

<sup>705</sup> Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 'Surrey, England, Church of England Baptisms, 1813-1921', Ancestry.com, 2013, [https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/2271237:4772?tid=&pid=&queryId=dc787237fa1a5ddacdc768b6a4b3a726&\\_phsrc=dd6-212078&\\_phstart=successSource](https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/2271237:4772?tid=&pid=&queryId=dc787237fa1a5ddacdc768b6a4b3a726&_phsrc=dd6-212078&_phstart=successSource).

<sup>706</sup> *Western Mail*, 'Marriage of Miss North Lewis', 11 April 1927, p.14.

<sup>707</sup> *Western Mail*, 'Wedding of the Law', 7 April 1927, p.12.

<sup>708</sup> '1939 England and Wales Register [database on-Line]'.

Bar Exams: Roman Law exam (1932)<sup>709</sup>  
Contracts and the Law of Tort (1933) - third attempt<sup>710</sup>  
Criminal Law and Procedure (1933) - second attempt<sup>711</sup>  
Bar Final - Failed<sup>712</sup>

Candida Dhunbar Saklatvala was the daughter of Shapurji Saklatvala, MP; Elected in November 1922, he was the third Indian to enter the House of Commons.<sup>713</sup> It is possible that Candida Saklatvala was related to Mithan Tata through her father. Shapurji Saklatvala was the nephew of Jamsetji Tata; Mithan Tata's father, Ardeshir Bejonji Tata, was part of the extended family of Jamsetji Tata.<sup>714</sup> Candida Saklatvala undertook bar examinations in 1932, 1933 and 1934; this evidence shows that she was pursuing her legal training and perhaps intended to be called. In 1932, she passed Roman Law and Constitutional Law and Legal History in the Trinity term.<sup>715</sup> In 1933, she initially failed Criminal Law and Procedure but passed this on the second attempt; she failed Contract and Tort Law twice but passed this on the third attempt.<sup>716</sup> In 1934 she attempted the Bar Final but failed; there is no evidence of another attempt at the Bar Final again. She would have been eligible for call if she passed the Bar Final because she had kept her 12 terms.<sup>717</sup> Candida Saklatvala married Erick Carl Albert Backhaus, Civil Servant in 1934 and later had a child.<sup>718</sup> It is likely that she did not continue with her call because of her marriage. She continued to live in England until her death in 1971, a few months after her husband.<sup>719</sup>

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<sup>709</sup> *The Vote*, 'Women's Bar Success', 3 June 1932, p.178.

<sup>710</sup> Institute of Advanced Legal Studies; London, England, UK; The Law Society: Examination Records 1836-1984.

<sup>711</sup> 'Women's Law Successes', 3 November 1933; 'Women's Law Success', 23 June 1933.

<sup>712</sup> Institute of Advanced Legal Studies; London, England, UK; The Law Society: Examination Records 1836-1984.

<sup>713</sup> UCL, 'Shapurji Saklatvala'.

<sup>714</sup> Mukherjee, 'Tata [*married Name* Lam], Mithan Ardeshir [Mithibai]'; UCL, 'Shapurji Saklatvala'.

<sup>715</sup> Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, London, England, UK, The Law Society: Examination Records 1836-, and Reference: CLE 11/, 'UK and Commonwealth, Law Examination Records, 1836-1948'.

<sup>716</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>717</sup> It was stated on her Bar Final record that she had kept 12 terms: *Ibid.*

<sup>718</sup> Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc, 'England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1916-2005', 'The Candida Dhunbar Saklatvala Backhaus profile on Ancestry.com suggests the couple had a child but the date is not revealed because they are still living.

<sup>719</sup> 'England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1858-1995 [database on-Line]'.



### **Isabelle Crawshaw**

Admission: 1926 (Inner Temple, aged 27)

Bar Exams: Roman Law exam (1927)<sup>720</sup>

Isabelle Crawshaw was a Research Worker for the Industrial Fatigue Research Board (1922 - 1926)<sup>721</sup> before she was admitted to Inner Temple in 1926. In the same year, she married Frank Mackenzie Crawshaw, who was a barrister of Hare Court, Temple, London and a doctor.<sup>722</sup> Their daughter was born July 1928,<sup>723</sup> and they later had a son. It also appears that Isabelle Crawshaw took up art after her marriage. In 1939, it was published that her miniatures were submitted and accepted at the Royal Academy.<sup>724</sup>

### **Alice Grace Jenny Bragg**

Admission: 1927 (Lincoln's Inn, aged 27)

Bar Exams: Criminal Law and Procedure examination (1928)  
Constitutional Law and Legal History (1929)<sup>725</sup>

Alice Grace Jenny Bragg married Sir William Bragg, an Australian physicist and Nobel Prize winner, in 1921; this was some years before she was admitted to Lincoln's Inn in 1927, and the couple had four children between 1921 and 1935.<sup>726</sup> She does not appear to have continued with her application beyond 1929, when she took her last exam. This could have been due to family

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<sup>720</sup> 'Successful Women Law Students'.

<sup>721</sup> The Industrial Fatigue Research Board was appointed in 1918 by the Medical Research Council and the Department of Scientific Industrial Research; they wanted to investigate the industrial conditions of industrial workers and research fundamental principles of industrial work. See: D. R. Wilson, 'THE WORK OF THE INDUSTRIAL FATIGUE RESEARCH BOARD AND ITS APPLICATIONS TO INDUSTRY', *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts* 70, no. 3600 (1921): 3–20.; Polden, 'Index to Women: Portia's Progress Women at the Bar in England 1919 - 1939'.

<sup>722</sup> 'To Be Married in His Own Abbey'.

<sup>723</sup> *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 'Births', 18 July 1928, p.6.

<sup>724</sup> *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 'Miniature of Actress', 22 April 1939, p.12.

<sup>725</sup> 'Bar Examinations', 20 January 1928; 'Bar Examinations: Women's Successes in Trinity Term Results'.

<sup>726</sup> Her first child, Stephen, was born in 1921; David in 1926; Margaret Alice in 1931; and Patience Mary in 1935. Glazer and Thomson, *Crystal Clear: The Autobiographies of Sir Lawrence and Lady Bragg*.

commitments because her third child was born in 1931. She was active in several public bodies and was a Justice of the Peace for some time.<sup>727</sup>

### **Ruth Daiches**

Admission: 1927 (Lincoln's Inn, aged 19)

Bar Exams: Roman Law (1928)<sup>728</sup>

Constitutional Law (1930)<sup>729</sup>

Criminal Law and Procedure (1933)<sup>730</sup>

Ruth Daiches was the daughter of Dr Samuel Daiches, a Rabi and also a barrister who was admitted to Lincoln's Inn.<sup>731</sup> Between 1928 and 1933 she sat three Bar examinations and it was during this period, in January 1931, that her engagement to Dr Maurice Sorsby was announced.<sup>732</sup> However, in the end, Daiches married Harry Seres in 1935; their first daughter was born in 1936, and their second in 1939.<sup>733</sup> The 1939 Census lists her profession as 'unpaid domestic duties'.<sup>734</sup> It is therefore likely that her marriage and the birth of her first child were the reasons that she did not pursue a career at the Bar.

### **Ivy Gwendoline Pollecoff**

Admission: 1927 (Middle Temple, aged 32)

Bar Exams: Roman Law (1930)<sup>735</sup>

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<sup>727</sup> Ibid.

<sup>728</sup> 'Bar Examinations', 9 November 1928.

<sup>729</sup> 'Women's Law Successes', 7 November 1930.

<sup>730</sup> *The Vote*, 'Women's Law Successes', 23 June 1933, p.194.

<sup>731</sup> Dr Samuel Daiches was allegedly the first Rabbi to become an English barrister and published a book on divorce in Jewish Law. 'JCR-UK: Rabbinical Profiles of Orthodox Ministers Whose Surnames Begin with D or E', accessed 25 May 2023, [https://www.jewishgen.org/jcr-uk/Profiles/minister\\_profiles\\_orthodox\\_D-E.htm](https://www.jewishgen.org/jcr-uk/Profiles/minister_profiles_orthodox_D-E.htm).

<sup>732</sup> *Hampstead News*, 'Engagements', 22 January 1931, p.3.

<sup>733</sup> It is possible they had another two children, but these are not shown on the Ancestry profile. 'Ruth Daiches', accessed 25 May 2023, <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/family-tree/person/tree/69572070/person/30314460391/facts>.

<sup>734</sup> Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., '1939 England and Wales Register'.

<sup>735</sup> Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, London, England, UK, The Law Society: Examination Records 1836-, and Reference: CLE 11/, 'UK and Commonwealth, Law Examination Records, 1836-1948'.

Constitutional Law and Legal History (1932)<sup>736</sup>

Criminal Law and Procedure (1934)<sup>737</sup>

Ivy Gwendoline Pollecoff was the daughter of Solomon and Esther Pollecoff and appears to be the fifth of nine children.<sup>738</sup> Her parents were born in Russia and came to the UK to escape persecution.<sup>739</sup> Along with his brother, Solomon Pollecoff set up a shop on Market Street in Holyhead, Wales. Further stores were opened in Bangor, Blaenau, Ffestiniog, Caernarfon, and Pwllheli; the shop in Pwllheli still bears their name.<sup>740</sup> Ivy Pollecoff was admitted to Middle Temple in 1927. She married Henry Lenin in 1935, and their son was born in 1936. This is likely to be the reason why she did not pursue her application at the Bar.<sup>741</sup>

### **Dorothy Nina Neal**

Admission: 1929 (Gray's Inn, aged 24)

Bar Exams: Roman Law exam (1930)<sup>742</sup>

Real Property and Conveyancing (1931) - fail<sup>743</sup>

Dorothy Nina Neal married Arthur Herbert Cheetham, a chartered accountant, in 1932.<sup>744</sup> The 1939 Census lists her profession as 'Private Secretary to Regional Commissioners'.<sup>745</sup> She therefore appears to continue to work as a secretary after her admission to the Inn of Court. In

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<sup>736</sup> *The Vote*, 'Women's Bar Success', 15 January 1932, p.2.

<sup>737</sup> Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, London, England, UK, The Law Society: Examination Records 1836-, and Reference: CLE 11/, 'UK and Commonwealth, Law Examination Records, 1836-1948'.

<sup>738</sup> Joseph Holder, 'Ivy Gwendolyn Pollecoff', Accessed 21 August 2023, <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/family-tree/person/tree/173382436/person/242248135380/facts>.

<sup>739</sup> Nathan Abrams, 'The Pollecoffs of Holyhead', Ports, Past and Present, accessed 21 August 2023, <https://portspastpresent.eu/items/show/720>.

<sup>740</sup> Ibid.

<sup>741</sup> Holder, 'Ivy Gwendolyn Pollecoff'.

<sup>742</sup> 'Women's Law Success', 27 June 1930.

<sup>743</sup> Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, London, England, UK, The Law Society: Examination Records 1836-, and Reference: CLE 11/, 'UK and Commonwealth, Law Examination Records, 1836-1948'.

<sup>744</sup> Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 'Westminster, London, England, Church of England Marriages and Banns, 1754-1935 [database on-Line]', Ancestry.co.uk, 2020, [https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/91857190:61867?tid=&pid=&queryId=7f9a1e3dbc7a5acd61cc432c67887d5b&\\_phsrc=785203252&\\_phstart=successSource](https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/91857190:61867?tid=&pid=&queryId=7f9a1e3dbc7a5acd61cc432c67887d5b&_phsrc=785203252&_phstart=successSource).

<sup>745</sup> Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2018., '1939 England and Wales Register'.

1956, Dorothy Nina Cheetham (née Neal) married Lieutenant Colonel Cecil L'Estrange Malone, Liberal MP.<sup>746</sup> It is not known why she divorced Arthur Herbert Cheetham.

### *Analysis*

From the above, we can identify that the age demographic of those who married is younger than the women who undertook other careers. For example, there are five women in their teens, eight women in their 20s and only three women in their 30s. This suggests that for younger women, marriage was more likely to be a reason not to be called. Five of the women married barristers (Violet Hume, Elizabeth Schuster, Dorothy Lewis, Isabelle Crawshaw and Winifred Shyvers), and one married a solicitor (Halcyon Wing).

As with the women who undertook a different career path, we can see that the vast majority, 13 out of 16 (81.3%) completed at least one Bar Exam. Only one woman, Winifred Packard Shyvers, undertook the Bar Final. There is again confusion over whether she was called or not: it certainly appears that she completed the necessary exams and kept the required terms. Her grandson recalls that she told him she was one of the first women to be called to the Bar and that she was 'quite proud of this'; yet there is no evidence that she was called. Instead, we see that the social conventions of the time, ceasing work upon marriage to have a family, decided her career path.

These social expectations and conventions were a barrier to call for many of the women in this group. It was assumed that women would cease work upon marriage and focus on the family. Perhaps, for some, this expectation was welcome. For example, a few women struggled with the Bar Exams: Ella Hoahing could not pass the Constitutional Law and Legal History exam, despite three attempts; Edna McKeown also struggled. Dorothy Nina Neal and Caroline Kirby gave up after failing the exams. Yet, we see that life did not stop after marriage. Although there was

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<sup>746</sup> Cecil L'Estrange Malone's first wife died suddenly of a heart attack in 1951, see: 'Death of Mrs L'Estrange Malone', *Chelsea News and General Advertiser*, 14 September 1951, 10; Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 'England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1916-2005 [database on-Line]', Ancestry.co.uk, 2010, <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/29929762:8753>.

effectively an unofficial marriage bar, based on the social expectation that women ceased work after marriage, life could still be fulfilling either professionally, socially or both. For example, Winifred Shyvers, retained her interest in the law, helping her husband; Alice Bragg became a Justice of the Peace; and Isabelle Crawshaw's art was exhibited at the Royal Academy. It was the case, and indeed still is today, that not all women want a professional, fairly demanding career. For some women, marriage and motherhood is very rewarding. Therefore, although these women were uncalled, that does not mean they were unfilled.

### Native Country

Seven women returned to their native country before being called to the Bar. These women's stories are explored further in Chapter 4, international women students. As seen below, six out of the seven women were admitted in 1929. It is possible that the 1930s depression played a part in their decision to return home. *Table 3.4* identifies the women who returned home without being called.

Inn	Name	Admitted	Age at Admission	Native country	Year returned
Middle Temple	Lala Smit	1-Nov-1927	17	South Africa	1929
Inner Temple	Agnes Swaroop Kumari Gour	1-Jan-1929	22	India	-
Lincoln's Inn	Beng Sim Wong	16-Apr-1929	17	Malaysia	1930
Middle Temple	Nur Jehan Mohammad Yusuf	11-Jul-1929	26	India	1930
Middle Temple	Helen Winifred Marguerite Rodrigo	13-Nov-1929	22	Ceylon	1931
Middle Temple	Chaturlaxmi Balkrishna Joshi	20-Nov-1929	23	India	1932
Inner Temple	Joan Urey McIlrath	31-Dec-1929	21	Australia	1933

Table 3.4: Women who Returned to their Native Country before Call

## **Lala Smit**

Admission: 1927 (Middle Temple, aged 17)

Bar Exams: Criminal Law & Procedure (Michaelmas, 1928)<sup>747</sup>

Roman Law (Trinity, 1928)<sup>748</sup>

Lala Smit was the daughter of Jacobus Stephanus, High Commissioner of South Africa and barrister. As a debutante.<sup>749</sup> She was presented at Court in 1928 along with her sister.<sup>750</sup> Having read law, she intended to qualify as a barrister and wished to dine at the Inn in 1927.<sup>751</sup> The *Sunday Sun* noted that her 'call was virtually certain' given that she had read law so assiduously; however, she did not intend to stay in England: 'her heart is set on practising in her native South Africa'.<sup>752</sup> It is interesting that the article refers to her being 'assiduous' in her legal studies. Perhaps this is because she completed two of the Bar exams in quick succession; she achieved a Cass III for both, however, illustrating that they were challenging. She did not continue her studies and instead returned to South Africa in December 1928, to practise as a solicitor.<sup>753</sup> It may have been the case that she found the Bar Examinations more challenging than expected, as some other international students did. It has not been possible to trace what happened to her after this.

## **Agnes Swaroop Kumari Gour**

Admission: 1929 (Inner Temple, aged 22)

Bar Exams: Constitutional Law and Legal History (1930)<sup>754</sup>

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<sup>747</sup> Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, London, England, UK, The Law Society: Examination Records 1836-, and Reference: CLE 11/, 'UK and Commonwealth, Law Examination Records, 1836-1948'.

<sup>748</sup> Ibid.

<sup>749</sup> A debutante is an upper-class young woman making her first appearance in fashionable society.

<sup>750</sup> 'Presenting at Court' was a chance to meet royalty and a way for young women of marriageable age to be presented to suitable bachelors and their families, see: Evangeline Holland, 'The Court Presentation', Edwardian Promenade, 7 December 2007, <https://www.edwardianpromenade.com/etiquette/the-court-presentation/>; 'The Court: English, Dominion and American Presentations', *The Sketch*, 20 June 1928.

<sup>751</sup> *Dundee Courier*, 'Women Barristers-to-Be', 4 November 1927, p.12; 'Lala Smit'.

<sup>752</sup> 'Lala Smit'.

<sup>753</sup> *Newcastle Evening Chronicle*, 'A Portia', 10 December 1928, p.1.

<sup>754</sup> Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, London, England, UK, The Law Society: Examination Records 1836-, and Reference: CLE 11/, 'UK and Commonwealth, Law Examination Records, 1836-1948'.

Criminal Law and Procedure (Michaelmas, 1930) - second attempt<sup>755</sup>

Roman Dutch Law (June 1930)<sup>756</sup>

Roman Law (November 1930) - second attempt<sup>757</sup>

Hindu and Mohammedan Law (Trinity, 1930)<sup>758</sup>

Bar Final (1931 and 1932) - failed<sup>759</sup>

Agnes Swaroop Kumari Gour was admitted to Inner Temple in January 1929. She took several Bar Examinations and appeared to struggle with Criminal Law and Procedure and Roman Law. Nevertheless, she persisted with them and managed to pass. However, she was not so lucky with the Bar Final. She had three attempts at the Bar Final in the Michaelmas and Trinity terms of 1931 and then in Hilary 1932; she had sat the necessary terms and would therefore have been eligible for call if she passed this exam.<sup>760</sup> It certainly appears that she wanted to proceed, and she had many attempts at the exams. In the end, it appears that she gave up with the Bar Final and returned home.

Agnes Gour married William Broome on 8 November 1937. William Broome went to India as an officer of the Indian Civil Service (ICS); he was the last British judge to remain in judicial service in India, and the only one to have been appointed to a High Court after independence.<sup>761</sup> It is likely that she returned to India with her husband and thus did not pursue her application at the Bar. The pair travelled to England for a holiday in 1947<sup>762</sup> with their four children, a couple of

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<sup>755</sup> Ibid.

<sup>756</sup> 'Women's Law Success', 27 June 1930; 'Women's Law Successes', 7 November 1930.

<sup>757</sup> 'Women's Law Successes', 7 November 1930.

<sup>758</sup> Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, London, England, UK, The Law Society: Examination Records 1836-, and Reference: CLE 11/, 'UK and Commonwealth, Law Examination Records, 1836-1948'.

<sup>759</sup> Ibid.

<sup>760</sup> Ibid.

<sup>761</sup> Broome remained in India after independence, marrying an Indian woman, raising his children as Hindus and taking Indian citizenship in 1958. As a judge of the Allahabad High Court, Broome adopted an expansive interpretation of fundamental rights under the Constitution of India and played a pivotal role in the case of *Raj Narain v. Indira Gandhi*. See Douglas McDonald, 'Becoming Indian: William Broome and Colonial Continuity in Post-Independence India', *The Indian Historical Review* 42, no. 2 (1 December 2015): 303–31.

<sup>762</sup> The UK & Ireland Incoming Passenger List states that four children were travelling with Swaroop and William Broome (Maya, Ashok, Indira and Lakshmi Broome) and that all were staying at the same address. It is certain that Lakshmi and Indira Broome were their daughters as they are mentioned in

years before her father died. In the passenger list document, Swaroop Kumari Broome's profession was listed as 'housewife'.

### **Beng Sim Wong**

Admission: 1929 (Lincoln's Inn, aged 17)

Bar Exams: Criminal Law and Procedure (1929) - failed<sup>763</sup>

Roman Law (1930) - failed (two attempts)<sup>764</sup>

Beng Sim Wong was the daughter of a mine and plantation owner in Perak, Malaysia,<sup>765</sup> and was educated at Redland Collegiate School, Bristol. According to Chen Li, who has researched the first Malayan Chinese women barristers, her family was well-connected: her father's school-mate Khong Kit Seng, was a barrister of Lincoln's Inn and a prominent Chinese barrister in Perak; Seng wrote a letter for admission for Beng Sim Wong.<sup>766</sup> She was admitted to Lincoln's Inn in 1929 when she was seventeen, and took the Roman Law exam in 1930.<sup>767</sup> However, unlike her predecessors from Penang, she did not enrol in the law programme at the University of London in preparation for her Bar Examination. As a result, she struggled to study and complete the required exams and, after experiencing failures in her exams, gave up her studies and sailed home on 11 July 1930.<sup>768</sup>

### **Nur Jehan Mohammad Yusuf**

Admission: 1929 (Middle Temple, aged 26)

Bar Exams: Roman Law exam (1930)<sup>769</sup>

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McDonald's research paper; the others are not mentioned but it is likely they were also their children. 'UK and Ireland, Incoming Passenger Lists, 1878-1960'.

<sup>763</sup> Institute of Advanced Legal Studies; London, England, UK; The Law Society: Examination Records 1836-1984; Reference: CLE 11/15.

<sup>764</sup> 'Women's Law Success', 27 June 1930.

<sup>765</sup> Chen, 'The First Malayan Chinese Women Barristers and Their Pursuit of Legal Education in Britain, 1923-1934'.

<sup>766</sup> Ibid.

<sup>767</sup> 'Women's Law Success', 27 June 1930.

<sup>768</sup> Chen, 'The First Malayan Chinese Women Barristers and Their Pursuit of Legal Education in Britain, 1923-1934'.

<sup>769</sup> *The Vote*, 'Bar Examinations: Women Successes', 17 January 1930, p.6.



Constitutional Law & Legal History (1930)<sup>770</sup>

Criminal Law and Procedure (1930) - second attempt<sup>771</sup>

Hindu and Mohammedan Law (1931)<sup>772</sup>

Nur Jehan Mohammad Yusuf was recorded as Nur Telian Yusuf on the Middle Temple register. She completed many of the Bar Exams in quick succession and did well overall, only having to repeat Criminal Law and Procedure. There is no evidence that she sat the Final exam. Outside of the Bar she attended a meeting in 1930 against imperialism (repression against India)<sup>773</sup> and returned to India in the same year.<sup>774</sup> It appears that she must have undertaken an additional degree and/or that she became a lecturer as later, in 1948, she took part in the Islamia College for Women, Lahore strike in her capacity as college principal.<sup>775</sup>

### **Helen Winifred Marguerite Rodrigo**

Admission: 1929 (Middle Temple, aged 22)

Bar Exams: Roman Law (Trinity, 1930) - failed<sup>776</sup>

Criminal Law and Procedure (Trinity, 1930) - failed<sup>777</sup>

Helen Winifred Marguerite Rodrigo was an Oxford student and was admitted to Middle Temple in 1929. She attempted the Roman Law and Criminal Law and Procedure Bar Exams but failed these. It appears that she did not attempt any additional examinations and subsequently

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<sup>770</sup> Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, London, England, UK, The Law Society: Examination Records 1836-, and Reference: CLE 11/, 'UK and Commonwealth, Law Examination Records, 1836-1948'.

<sup>771</sup> Ibid.

<sup>772</sup> 'Women's Law Success', 23 January 1931.

<sup>773</sup> *Daily Herald*, 'Meetings', 2 June 1930, p.12.

<sup>774</sup> See Polden's Index from Polden, *Portia's Progress: Women at the Bar in England, 1919-1939*.

<sup>775</sup> *Civil & Military Gazette (Lahore)*, 'Islamia College Strike', 19 October 1948, p.6.

<sup>776</sup> Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, London, England, UK, The Law Society: Examination Records 1836-, and Reference: CLE 11/, 'UK and Commonwealth, Law Examination Records, 1836-1948'.

<sup>777</sup> Ibid.

returned to Ceylon in 1931.<sup>778</sup> She later married Mr C.B.E. Wickramasinghe<sup>779</sup> in Colombo, Ceylon in May 1935.<sup>780</sup> Mr Wickramasinghe was apparently a lawyer by profession, having been educated at Trinity College Cambridge; it is likely that the pair met in England. They had three children:<sup>781</sup> the first daughter, born in 1936, went to St. Hugh's College Oxford but unfortunately, she passed away at a young age.<sup>782</sup> The third daughter, Damini Basnayake (nee Wickramasinghe) is a fairly prominent figure in Sri Lanka. She married Arthur Basnayake, a foreign diplomat who was twice ambassador to Japan and also to Myanmar (Burma) and India.<sup>783</sup> Helen Wickramasinghe did not work because women at that time were not expected to gain employment. This would explain why her profession was listed as 'housewife' in 1956.<sup>784</sup>

### **Chaturlaxmi Balkrishna Joshi**

Admission: 1929 (Middle Temple, aged 23)

Bar Exams: No record found

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<sup>778</sup> 'Helen Rodrigo', BT27 Board of Trade: Commercial and Statistical Department and Successors: Outwards Passenger Lists, 1878-1960, Kew, Surrey, England, The National Archives, Reference Number: Series BT27-145517.

<sup>779</sup> Mr C.B.E. Wickramasinghe's grandfather, Francis Amarasiri Wickramasinghe Muhandiram, was the founder of Sangamiththa College in 1919, the first Buddhist Girls' School in Galle, South Sri Lanka (then Ceylon). 'History', Sanghamitta Balika Vidyalaya Galle, accessed 27 December 2023, <https://www.sanghamittavidyalaya.lk/school-profile/history>.

<sup>780</sup> 'St Hugh's College, Oxford - Chronicle 1935-1936, p.21 and 23', Issuu, 8 September 2015, [https://issuu.com/sthughscollegeoxford/docs/chronicle\\_1935-1936](https://issuu.com/sthughscollegeoxford/docs/chronicle_1935-1936). [https://issuu.com/sthughscollegeoxford/docs/chronicle\\_1935-1936](https://issuu.com/sthughscollegeoxford/docs/chronicle_1935-1936) Ibid. F. A. Wickramasinghe was the founder of Sangamiththa College, Galle see Dharshana Shammi Wijethilaka, 'Being close to Aung San Suu Kyi', *Daily News, Sri Lanka's National Newspaper*, 2011, <https://archives.dailynews.lk/2011/12/22/fea22.asp>.

<sup>781</sup> 'St Hugh's College, Oxford - Chronicle 1935-1936, p.21 and 23'; *Daily News Sri Lanka's National Newspaper*, 'She Knew Aung San and Her Lingo Too!', 25 May 2013.

<sup>782</sup> 'St Hugh's College, Oxford - Chronicle 1935-1936, p.21 and 23'; 'She Knew Aung San and Her Lingo Too!'

<sup>783</sup> Wijethilaka, 'Being close to Aung San Suu Kyi'.

<sup>784</sup> BT27 Board of Trade: Commercial and Statistical Department and Successors. Accessed via Ancestry.co.uk: 'Helen Rodrigo'. BT27 Board of Trade: Commercial and Statistical Department and Successors: Outwards Passenger Lists, 1878-1960, Kew, Surrey, England. The National Archives. Reference Number: Series BT27-145517.

Chaturlaxmi Balkrishna Joshi was the daughter of B. B. Joshi, who was a barrister.<sup>785</sup> After matriculating from the Tutorial High School, Bombay, she attended Bedford College in 1929 on a Government of India Scholarship to study English Literature.<sup>786</sup> Around a year later, she transferred to St Hilda's College, Oxford, hoping to benefit from the residence of a women's college.<sup>787</sup> It has not been possible to trace her success, if any, in the Bar examinations. In August 1932, she was listed as a passenger accompanied by her father Mr B. B. Joshi.<sup>788</sup> It therefore appears that she returned to her native country.

### **Joan Urey McIlrath**

Admission: 1929 (Inner Temple, aged 21)

Bar Exams: No record found

Joan Urey McIlrath was born in 1908 in New South Wales, Australia and was educated at Abbotsleigh, an independent Anglican boarding school for girls in Wahroonga.<sup>789</sup> She was the daughter of Sir Martin McIlrath, a merchant and philanthropist whose stores eventually developed into a state-wide grocery and provisions business.<sup>790</sup> Between 1928 and 1932 she attended St Hilda's College, Oxford, where she read Jurisprudence.<sup>791</sup> It has not been possible to find any evidence of her sitting any of the Bar examinations, and we know from the Electoral Registers that she was back in New South Wales by 1933.<sup>792</sup> It therefore appears that she left England after she completed her degree at Oxford. She married Dr Alexander Hugh MacDonald

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<sup>785</sup> Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc, 'London, England, Royal Holloway and Bedford College Student Registers, 1849-1931 [database Online]', Ancestry.com, 2020, [https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/3444:61821?tid=&pid=&queryId=978316d198ebcdffa1f6636caf0bcfe1&\\_phsrc=dd61211638&\\_phstart=successSource](https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/3444:61821?tid=&pid=&queryId=978316d198ebcdffa1f6636caf0bcfe1&_phsrc=dd61211638&_phstart=successSource).

<sup>786</sup> Ibid.

<sup>787</sup> Ibid.

<sup>788</sup> *Civil & Military Gazette (Lahore)*, 'Outward Bound: Passengers by the Cathay', 19 August 1932, p.11.

<sup>789</sup> See entry for Joan Urey McIlrath in Polden, 'Index to Women: Portia's Progress Women at the Bar in England 1919 - 1939'.

<sup>790</sup> Walsh, G., 'Sir Martin McIlrath (1874–1952)', Australian dictionary of biography, 1 January 1986, <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/mcilarth-sir-martin-7369>.

<sup>791</sup> McLeod, Faye, 'Email from Oxford University Archivist to Charlotte Coleman Regarding Joan Urey McIlrath; Oxford Ref: OUA/UR 21/7/171', 24 July 2023.

<sup>792</sup> Ancestry.com, 'Australia, Electoral Rolls, 1903-1980' (2010), Provo, UT, USA, Ancestry.com Operations Inc.

in 1941 and held a number of roles as a secretary and librarian throughout her life. She died in 1984, when she was 76.<sup>793</sup>

### *Analysis*

From the research above two interesting findings immediately come to light. Firstly, all these women who returned to their native country were very young, in their teens and 20s. A lack of legal study experience may have affected their performance in the Bar Exams and may have been exacerbated further by the language barrier. For some of the international women, the Bar Exams were indeed a struggle. One unfortunate case was Agnes Swaroop Kumari Gour who persevered with all the other exams and tried three times to pass the Bar Final but could not manage it. This demonstrates that she did really want to be called but the formal exam barrier halted her progress. She was not the only international or native student to struggle with these exams; Ella Hoahing (in the Marriage section) was also unable to pass the Constitutional Law and Legal History exam, as was Helen Winifred Marguerite Rodrigo. It is important to note that it was not only international students who struggled with the Bar Exams. Venetia Stephenson initially failed Roman Law in 1922; she also failed the Real Property and Conveyancing exam twice in 1922 and 1923, and Constitutional Law and Legal History in 1923.<sup>794</sup> She also did not appear for the Bar Final in 1924 and thus was deemed to have failed.<sup>795</sup> From this we can understand that the Bar exams could have been a barrier to call and required a good deal of perseverance, study and knowledge. It is not surprising that only 3.9% achieved a Class I in their Bar Final and the most common result of a Class II (as explained in Chapter 1) is respectable.

Secondly, most women who returned to their native country and did not proceed to call were born in British India and returned to India (they were of Asian ethnicity). While this is not surprising, given that most international women students were born in India, a significant

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<sup>793</sup> roberttierney\_, 'Joan Urey McIlrath', Ancestry.com, accessed 22 July 2023, <https://www.ancestry.com/family-tree/person/tree/63259175/person/430001551026/facts>.

<sup>794</sup> Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, London, England, UK, The Law Society: Examination Records 1836-, and Reference: CLE 11/, 'UK and Commonwealth, Law Examination Records, 1836-1948'.

<sup>795</sup> Ibid.

number of these were admitted in 1929. Chapter 1 found that Middle Temple saw a decline in call rates in 1929, when only 54.5% of women admitted were called (5 out of 11); this is compared with a call rate of 70% of men in the same year. It is possible that the New York stock market crash of the 1930s<sup>796</sup> meant that financial circumstances worsened for some, and therefore they had to return home. These circumstances were seen in respect of Auvergne Doherty.<sup>797</sup>

### III-health or death

Three women who were admitted but not called sadly died; one was unwell with Hodgkin's disease. Table 3.5 below details these women. The story of Gwyneth Bebb is well known, although tragic. The other three women, Mary Ewart, Doris Green and Noel Stevens are not so well known, and it is more tragic that they were so young when they died and that they were not able to fulfil their ambitions.

Inn	Name	Admitted	Age at Admission	Marriage year	Death date
Lincoln's Inn	Gwyneth Marjory Thomson [nee Bebb]	27-Jan-1920	29	Died	1921
Middle Temple	Mary Elanor Ewart	23-Jan-1923	18	Died	1929
Gray's Inn	Noel Anna Brennan Stevens	16-Oct-1928	18	Psychiatric hospital	1945
Inner Temple	Doris May Salkeld Green	17-Nov-1928	19	Died	1929

Table 3.5: Women Admitted to the Inns of Court who Died or were in Ill Health

#### Gwyneth Marjory Thompson

Admission: 1920 (Lincoln's Inn, aged 29)

Bar Exams: No record found

<sup>796</sup> The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, 'Stock Market Crash of 1929', in *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 17 June 2024, <https://www.britannica.com/event/stock-market-crash-of-1929>.

<sup>797</sup> Coleman, 'Thwarted Ambitions: The Biography of Auvergne Doherty, an Aspiring Female Barrister'.

Gwyneth Marjory Thompson (nee Bebb) was admitted to Lincoln's Inn in 1920 and was one of the first women to be awarded a degree in law at Oxford. After studying at Oxford, Bebb applied to the Law Society to undertake examinations. Her application was rejected as women were banned from sitting the examinations at that time; they were therefore unable to practise. In 1914, Bebb and three other women took the Law Society to court, arguing that women should qualify as 'persons' under the Solicitors' Act 1843. Although they lost the appeal, their struggle became the subject of a large amount of publicity and debate and drew attention to the cause.<sup>798</sup> Gwyneth Thompson died on 19 October 1921 when she was 32 years old, due to complications after the birth of her second daughter.<sup>799</sup>

### **Mary Eleanor Ewart**

Admission: 1923 (Middle Temple, aged 18)

Bar Exams: Roman Law exam (1924) - second attempt<sup>800</sup>  
Constitutional Law and Legal History (1925) - failed<sup>801</sup>

Mary Eleanor Ewart attended Wycombe Abbey between 1918 and 1921<sup>802</sup> and was admitted to Middle Temple in 1923 when she was 18 years old. Unfortunately, in 1929, she died of Hodgkin's disease and cardiac failure at the age of 24.<sup>803</sup> It is likely that she was unwell for some time, so this would have affected her application to become a barrister. Her death certificate states that she was a 'student of law'.<sup>804</sup> It is therefore very apt that she can appear on the historical record and be remembered for that achievement.

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<sup>798</sup> Research support, 'Alumna: Gwyneth Bebb', University of Oxford, accessed 15 May 2023, <https://www.law.ox.ac.uk/content/alumna-gwyneth-bebb>.

<sup>799</sup> Auchmuty, 'Bebb [married Name Thomson], Gwyneth Marjory'.

<sup>800</sup> *The Vote*, 'More Women Barristers', 27 June 1924, p.206.

<sup>801</sup> Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, London, England, UK, The Law Society: Examination Records 1836-, and Reference: CLE 11/, 'UK and Commonwealth, Law Examination Records, 1836-1948'.

<sup>802</sup> Rogers, Hannah, Wycombe Abbey staff, 'Email: Mary Ewart', 9 June 2023.

<sup>803</sup> Hutchby, Martyn, and Coppock, William, of Gower Consultants Ltd, 'Mary Eleanor Ewart', Burial records, cremation records, grave maps, genealogy and ancestry at Deceased Online, accessed 29 May 2023, <https://www.deceasedonline.com/servlet/GSDOSearch>.

<sup>804</sup> General Register Office, 'Mary Eleanor Ewart, Death Certificate, 10 February 1929', 26 June 2023.

### **Doris May Salkeld Green**

Admission: 1928 (Inner Temple, aged 19)

Bar Exams: Constitutional Law and Legal History (1929)

Criminal Law and Procedure exams (1929)<sup>805</sup>

Doris May Salkeld Green was admitted to Inner Temple in 1928 when she was 19 years old.<sup>806</sup> Sadly she died in June 1929, just under a year after her admission and a few months after her first exams. According to a private source, she died whilst on holiday in France of a 'bug' she picked up while bathing and, in those days, there was nothing one could do to save her life.<sup>807</sup> It was therefore an unexpected death. Given that she sat the exams so soon it is very possible that she would have continued with her application and perhaps proceeded to call; the circumstances did not allow this.

### **Noel Anna Brennan Stevens**

Admission: 1928 (Gray's Inn, aged 18)

Bar Exams: Roman Law (1929)<sup>808</sup>

Constitutional Law and Legal History (1930)<sup>809</sup>

Noel Anna Brennan Stevens was admitted to Gray's Inn in 1928, when was 18 years old. According to a private source, she appears to have been unwell and to have been admitted to a psychiatric hospital.<sup>810</sup> She died in Barnwood House, Gloucestershire, in April 1945; this was a hospital for

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<sup>805</sup> 'Bar Examinations - Women'.

<sup>806</sup> 'Doris May Salkeld Green'.

<sup>807</sup> Rupert Andrews, 'Email Message to Author', 25 April 2023.

<sup>808</sup> *The Vote*, 'Bar Examinations', 7 June 1929, p.6.

<sup>809</sup> 'Bar Examinations: Women Successes'.

<sup>810</sup> 'Email to Charlotte Coleman from Anne Cooper (Robina Steven's Granddaughter)', 21 February 2020.

the care and treatment of the mentally ill.<sup>811</sup> She was the younger sister of Robina Mary Stevens, later Bowles, who was admitted to Gray's Inn in 1920 and called in 1924.<sup>812</sup>

### **Struck Off**

Dr Averyl Harcourt, admitted to Middle Temple in 1920, was the only woman to be struck off the Roll of Members by Middle Temple.

### **Averyl Harcourt**

Admission: 1920 (Middle Temple, aged 40)

Bar Exams: Constitutional Law and Legal History (1920)<sup>813</sup>

Criminal Law and Procedure (1920)<sup>814</sup>

Constitutional Law and Legal History (1921)<sup>815</sup>

Real Property and Conveyancing (1921)<sup>816</sup>

Roman Law (1922)<sup>817</sup>

Bar Final (1922)<sup>818</sup>

Dr Averyl Harcourt was a medical practitioner and schools' medical officer, having qualified from Edinburgh University.<sup>819</sup> She was 40 years old by the time she was admitted to the Bar. It was

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<sup>811</sup> 'England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1858-1995 [database on-Line]'; 'The History of the Trust', Barnwood Trust, 8 May 2017, <https://www.barnwoodtrust.org/about-us/our-history/>.

<sup>812</sup> 'England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1858-1995 [database on-Line]'. lists Gertrude Matilda Sarah Stevens and Mary Robina Bowles (nee Stevens) on the probate records; they were Noel's sisters. The Ancestry.com profile of Noel Anna Brennan Stevens also lists Mary Robina Bowles as her sister. See: Anne Cooper Family Tree, 'Noel Anna Brennan Stevens', accessed 10 May 2023, <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/family-tree/person/tree/160538759/person/172099937389/facts..> Private email also confirms that they were related: Anne Cooper to Charlotte Coleman, Email to Charlotte Coleman Regarding Mary Robina Stevens [Bowles] and Family, 21 February 2022..

<sup>813</sup> 'Women Barristers', 15 April 1921.

<sup>814</sup> Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, London, England, UK, The Law Society: Examination Records 1836-, and Reference: CLE 11/, 'UK and Commonwealth, Law Examination Records, 1836-1948'.

<sup>815</sup> Ibid.

<sup>816</sup> Ibid.

<sup>817</sup> Ibid.

<sup>818</sup> Ibid.

<sup>819</sup> Wright, Ros, 'The Press Reaction to the First Women Barristers', Middle Templar Magazine, accessed 7 June 2023, <https://middletemplar.org.uk/the-press-reaction-to-the-first-women->



noted by Dr Blake Odgers KC that her behaviour at the Bar had been excellent.<sup>820</sup> Indeed, she worked through the Bar Exams at a rapid pace, passing them at the first attempt. At that rate, she was set to be among the first women called. However, she was struck off the Roll of Members by Middle Temple on 25 November 1922 after several civil litigations and police court appearances, involving assaults on the police and obstruction of a sanitary inspector.<sup>821</sup> The periodical *John Bull*, which was known for its conservatism and populist views, wrote a rather derogatory article drawing attention to Averyl Harcourt's heritage and temperament (Eurasian Termagant). It described her rather harshly as: '*A brazen woman with the temper of a tigress who uses terrorism*'.<sup>822</sup> The article explains that she was threatening and violent towards her tenants, even assaulting and biting one.

Averyl Harcourt was certified insane and was sent to the insane ward of the St. Marylebone workhouse. Despite some parliamentary reforms regarding psychiatric hospitals or 'lunatic asylums' as they were then called, it appears that workhouses still acted as asylums for poor or 'pauper lunatics'.<sup>823</sup> It appears that this is what happened to Averyl Harcourt. She died in 1929 when she was 54 years old; her address at time of death was Colney Hatch Mental Hospital in Friern Barnet.<sup>824</sup>

From the above, we can start to understand that a few of these women suffered from mental illness or other health conditions including Charlotte Bruce (see below), Noel Stevens, Leila

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barristers/<https://middletemple.org.uk/the-press-reaction-to-the-first-women-barristers/>; 'A Former Merthyr Doctor: Struck Off the Middle Temple Roll', *Western Mail*, 25 November 1922, p. 10.

<sup>820</sup> *The Pall Mall and Globe*, 'Woman Doctor Fined', 23 November 1921, p.7.

<sup>821</sup> This arose from a visit she made to the Hampstead Picture Playhouse, where she sat near a Mr and Mrs Preston, watching a 'humorous film'. When Mrs Preston laughed out loud, Dr Harcourt shouted at her to 'stop that screeching!' When Mr Preston intervened, she told him to 'Get out, you scum! I know your breed', shaking her fist at him and threatening to have him arrested. The police were called, but it was Dr Harcourt who was carted off to the police station 'as if I were an elephant', she commented. See Ibid. Wright, 'The Press Reaction to the First Women Barristers'.

<sup>822</sup> *John Bull*, 'A Virago's Tantrums: Eurasian Termagant and Her Tenants', 9 December 1922, p.8.

<sup>823</sup> During the 19th century there were parliamentary reforms demanding that all counties in the United Kingdom provide a 'mental asylum' or specialist care unit, not simply locking them away in a workhouse, see: Gagen, Elizabeth, 'What Life Was like in Mental Hospitals in the Early 20th Century', *The Conversation*, 25 November 2019, <http://theconversation.com/what-life-was-like-in-mental-hospitals-in-the-early-20th-century-119949>.

<sup>824</sup> Gayton to Coleman, 7 June 2023.

Thomas and Averyl Harcourt; Caroline Kirby also was unwell, but it is not known why. Mental illness was not well understood at the time, so many of them would not have got the care and treatment they needed. Their treatment would also have been dependent on their financial status. For example, Averyl Harcourt ended up in the workhouse for a time, but Noel Stevens was in a psychiatric hospital and Leila Thomas at a sanatorium. There were more positive steps later in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but these were few and far between.<sup>825</sup> Certainly, it can be seen from newspaper articles that society shunned these people, often deeming them of unsound mind.

### Unknown/Other

It has not been possible to identify why three women did not proceed to call. Some biographical details have been collected below but these are scant. Margaret Weir married in 1936, but this was fourteen years after she was admitted. Mary Macnaghten did not want to be a barrister. *Table 3.6* below identifies these women.

Inn	Name	Admitted	Age at Admission	Classification
Middle Temple	Charlotte Gwendoline Bruce	5-Jan-1920	30	Unknown
Middle Temple	Doris Evans Pickering	13-Dec-1920	25	Unknown
Middle Temple	Margaret Maclaren Weir	6-Jan-1922	18	Other
Inner Temple	Elizabeth Margaret Crosthwaite	17-Jul-1922	20	Unknown
Lincoln's Inn	Mary Frances Macnaghten	23-Apr-1923	20	Other

Table 3.6: Unknown/Other Women who were not Called to the Bar

### Charlotte Gwendolyn Bruce

Admission: 1920 (Middle Temple, aged 30)

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<sup>825</sup> Gagen, 'What Life Was like in Mental Hospitals in the Early 20th Century'.

Bar Exams: Criminal Law (1920)<sup>826</sup>

Charlotte Gwendolyn Bruce suffered ill health while at Oxford University. She was awarded an aegrotat, graduating on 14 October 1920, the day after officially being admitted to Oxford as a matriculated student.<sup>827</sup> The family appears to have gone by the surname 'Bruce Cuvilje', as stated in the 1911 Census; Cuvilje was the mother's name (Margaret Cuvilje).<sup>828</sup> Sadly, in 1895, Charlotte Bruce's sister, Margaret Edna, died.<sup>829</sup> Charlotte Bruce would have been around 12-years-old, so this would likely have affected her very much. In the 1939 Census her profession is listed as 'unpaid domestic duties'; she lived in Bognor Regis, where her mother and father lived.<sup>830</sup> It is not known why she did not continue with her application to the Bar. Perhaps she was unwell, or perhaps she did not wish to continue.

### **Doris Evans Pickering**

Admission: 1920 (Middle Temple, aged 25)

Bar Exams: Roman Law exam (1923, First Class)<sup>831</sup>

Doris Evans Pickering attended Bedford College<sup>832</sup> and was admitted to Middle Temple in 1920. Her father, Atkinson Pickering, was a solicitor.<sup>833</sup> It is not clear what she did after she took the Roman Law exam. However, a distant relative believes that Doris Pickering's path in life would have been changed by the tragic story of her brother Geoffrey Evans Pickering, who was sent to prison for nine months because he was found guilty of gross indecency; he was found not guilty

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<sup>826</sup> *Evening Mail*, 'Women and the Law: Bar Examination Results', 14 April 1920, p.5. *Common Cause*, 'Women and the Bar', 16 April 1920, p.239.

<sup>827</sup> 'Alumna: Gwendoline Bruce', University of Oxford, accessed 3 May 2023, <https://www.law.ox.ac.uk/about-us/100-years-women-law-oxford/alumna-gwendoline-bruce>.

<sup>828</sup> Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., '1911 England Census [database on-Line]'.  
<sup>829</sup> *South Wales Daily News*, 'Births, Marriages, Death', 5 October 1895, p.4.

<sup>830</sup> '1939 England and Wales Register [database on-Line]'.  
<sup>831</sup> *The Vote*, 'More Women Barristers', 9 November 1923, p.3.

<sup>832</sup> Doris began studying BA honours Classics from 1914 at Bedford College; however, she left the College in December 1914, so it appears she did not complete her studies. This may have been due to the outbreak of the First World War and a change of circumstances. Anne-Marie Purcell, Archives and Special Collections Curator, 'Doris Evans Pickering Student Index Card', 31 July 2023.

<sup>833</sup> Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., '1911 England Census [database on-Line]'.  
  
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of 'sodomy'.<sup>834</sup> As a result of this, he was struck off the Roll of Solicitors. The 1939 Census lists that Doris Evans Pickering was still living with her father, and her occupation is listed as 'private means'.<sup>835</sup>

### **Margaret McLaren Weir**

Admission: 1922 (Middle Temple, aged 18)

Bar Exams: Constitutional Law and Legal History exam (1926)<sup>836</sup>

Margaret McLaren Weir was admitted to Middle Temple in 1922 when she was 18 years old. It is not known whether she attended a university. In April 1926, just a few months after she sat the Constitutional Law and Legal History exam, she was listed as a passenger on the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company travelling from Buenos Aires to Southampton; she left the occupation section blank.<sup>837</sup> She married Henry Winterborne in 1936 when she was 32, and they appear to have had three children.<sup>838</sup> In 1939, she was mentioned as playing the piano at a concert in Hurst Green, and her husband is also mentioned as singing.<sup>839</sup> In the 1939 Census, she lists her occupation as unpaid domestic duties and first aid Battle RDC (Rother District Council).<sup>840</sup> Margaret Weir was very young when she was admitted. The fact that there was a four-year gap between admission and her first exam in 1926 indicates that perhaps she was not resolute about becoming a barrister. Her marriage is unlikely to be the sole reason that she did not proceed to call; it appears that she did not really want to be a barrister.

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<sup>834</sup> Jean, 'Message to Charlotte Coleman from Jean Regarding Doris Evans Pickering via Ancestry.com', 3 May 2023; *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 'Sentence on Solicitor', 27 November 1917, p.7; *Hull Daily Mail*, 'Hull Solicitor Struck off Roll', 25 July 1918, p.3; *The London Gazette*, 'Max Atkinson', 6 August 1918, p.9306.

<sup>835</sup> Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., '1939 England and Wales Register'.

<sup>836</sup> 'More Women Barristers', 23 April 1926; 'More Women Barristers', 15 January 1926.

<sup>837</sup> Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 'UK and Ireland, Incoming Passenger Lists, 1878-1960 [database on-Line]', Ancestry.com, 2008, <https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/6822392:1518>.

<sup>838</sup> Three children are listed against Margaret Weir's husband, Henry Winterbourne. These children are 'private' because they are still living; their parents are Margaret Weir and Henry Winterbourne. See: Margaret Irene Twinn, 'Margaret McLaren Weir', accessed 15 May 2023, <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/family-tree/person/tree/87714146/person/382228025516/facts>.

<sup>839</sup> *Kent & Sussex Courier*, 'Hurst Green: A Concert', 26 May 1939, p.18.

<sup>840</sup> Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., '1939 England and Wales Register'.

### **Elizabeth Margaret Crosthwaite**

Admission: 1922 (Inner Temple, aged 20)

Bar Exams: Constitutional Law and Legal History (1924)<sup>841</sup>

Elizabeth Margaret Crosthwaite's degree from Oxford University was conferred in February 1924,<sup>842</sup> but it has been difficult to trace more information about her. When she was admitted to Inner Temple, her secondary address was Hertfordshire (Oxford, her university, was her first). In 1924, a Miss E. M. Crosthwaite was listed in the *Bed and Herts Pictorial* as being succeeded by another candidate as the Liberal agent for the Hemel Hempstead division.<sup>843</sup> Given the family's connection with Hertfordshire, it is possible that this is Elizabeth Margaret Crosthwaite. Moreover, there is also an Elizabeth Margaret Crosthwaite who married Wilfred L J Nicholas in 1925 in Hertfordshire.<sup>844</sup> However, it has not been possible to confirm if this is the correct Elizabeth Crosthwaite.

### **Mary Frances Macnaghten**

Admission: 1923 (Lincoln's Inn, aged 20)

Bar Exams: Roman Law exam (1923)<sup>845</sup>

Mary Frances Macnaghten's father, Sir Malcolm Macnaghten, was a barrister at Lincoln's Inn, a High Court judge and MP for Londonderry. Her mother was Antonia Mary Booth.<sup>846</sup> She was one of four children, and the eldest of the three daughters (there was one older brother). Mary Macnaghten was homeschooled; she took the Cambridge exam and passed but instead of taking

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<sup>841</sup> *The Vote*, 'More Women Barristers', 18 January 1924, p.18.

<sup>842</sup> *Oxford Chronicle and Reading Gazette*, 'Conferment of Degrees', 22 February 1924, p.15.

<sup>843</sup> *Beds and Herts Pictorial*, 'Hemel Hempstead Division: Rival Candidates Adopted', 14 October 1924, p.11.

<sup>844</sup> Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc, 'England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1916-2005'.

<sup>845</sup> 'More Women Barristers', 9 November 1923.

<sup>846</sup> Jean Macintyre, 'Mary Macnaghten's Letters from America', Antonia and Mary, 27 March 2016, <https://wordpresstodaydotme.wordpress.com/2016/03/27/mary-macnaghtens-letters-from-america/?blogsub=confirming>.

up her place, she travelled to America.<sup>847</sup> She later travelled to Europe where she met her husband, a Hungarian Jewish Sculptor called Peter Peri, in 1928. They married in 1932 and had three children; the first child was born in 1932.<sup>848</sup> In 1933, she was arrested because she had old Communist literature which she was taking to friends in the allotments to burn; she was released the next day and decided to leave the country.<sup>849</sup> One of the reasons why Mary Macnaghten did not proceed to call, or continue with her legal education, was because it was 'not for her and she found the formality of it all very suffocating.'<sup>850</sup>

## Conclusion

From the above, it has been identified that age was a notable factor as to whether a woman was called or not. Typically, the more mature women tended to have a career before they were admitted and continued with this rather than becoming a barrister. Careers in the Civil Service were dominant among these women. In the 1920s, there was a flurry of admissions of Civil Service women to Middle Temple, suggesting that this was intentional. Most younger women in their 20s did not continue to call because they got married or returned to their native country. It was very unfortunate to learn that there were two additional deaths among the younger women. At least three of these women suffered from mental illness (potentially five); one woman was the sister of the successful Robina Stevens. These stories provide a glimpse of the lack of understanding of mental health and psychological illnesses at that time.

Two barriers to call have been identified: the Bar exams and social expectations at the time. A significant number of women who completed Bar Exams, some completing as many as three, did not proceed to call. Some tried to complete their exams but failed and gave up after some failed

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<sup>847</sup> 'Telephone Conversation with Jean Macintyre (Mary Frances Macnaghten's Granddaughter) and the Author'.

<sup>848</sup> Mary Peri, 'Between The Wars', Laszlo Peri, accessed 21 July 2023, <https://www.peterlaszloperi.org.uk/peter-laszlo-peri-between-the-wars>; 'Telephone Conversation with Jean Macintyre (Mary Frances Macnaghten's Granddaughter) and the Author'.

<sup>849</sup> Peri, 'Between the Wars'.

<sup>850</sup> 'Telephone Conversation with Jean Macintyre (Mary Frances Macnaghten's Granddaughter) and the Author'.

attempts. In terms of social expectations, it was assumed that women ceased work upon marriage and focused on the family. Perhaps for some this expectation was welcome and some of these women may have been fulfilled by having a family. Other women who did not proceed to call had jobs to do in other areas; some returned to their native country, perhaps because they found the Bar exams challenging.

Most importantly, the historical record about the first women barristers is significantly extended and enlightened as the identity of these women is now known and it has been possible to understand a little more about these previously unknown women. Some wanted to practise, while others simply wanted their names to be there among the 'firsts'. Others actively chose a different path or faced circumstances that dictated their choices. The term 'Uncalled' could have negative interpretations but, as can be seen from the above, uncalled does not mean unfulfilled. Some of these uncalled women went on to have successful careers and families. Of course, this was not the case for all the women; some could not overcome the examination barrier and thus could not fulfil their ambitions, while others saw their life cut short.

## Chapter 4 : International Women at the Inns of Court

*'Originally only English students were admitted [to the Inns of Court], even Scotchmen and Irishmen were barred. But later, American and foreigners of all nationalities were eligible and after some centuries had elapsed even women students were allowed.'*<sup>851</sup>

Chapter 3 focused on collective biographies, revealing some of the untold stories of the Uncalled women admitted to the Inns of Court between 1919 and 1929. This chapter also makes use of collective biographies, this time to document the stories of the first international women at the Inns of Court, and to identify lesser-known women who were born overseas. Initially, the country of birth of the 236 women admitted to the Inns of Court is identified. This chapter then compares admissions and call rates at the individual Inns. The social background and the age of the women is considered, and some individual examples are given. The stories of these women are then documented on a country-by-country basis to understand the reasons why international women students may have come to England seeking admission to the Bar of England and Wales. The ethnicity of the international women admitted to the Inns of Court is analysed and is also compared with more recent statistical data on diversity in the legal profession.

### Country of Birth

It has been possible to identify the country of birth for all 236 women admitted to the Inns of Court. These women were born in 23 different countries (including England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland) and 174 women (73.7%) were later called to the Bar. 11 of the 23 countries were part of the British Empire.<sup>852</sup> For the purposes of this research, country of birth has been classified into 10 groups:

1. Africa including Nigeria and Mauritius.
2. Asia including China, Singapore, Malaysia (known then as Malaya) and the Philippines.

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<sup>851</sup> *South London Observer - Saturday*, S. E. A. Bedwell, 'The Inns of Court', 27 April 1935, p.2.

<sup>852</sup> Australia, British Guiana, Burma, Canada, India, Jamaica, Malaysia, New Zealand, Nigeria, Singapore, South Africa.



3. Australasia including Australia and New Zealand.
4. British India including the Indian states, Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) and Burma (now Myanmar).<sup>853</sup>
5. British West Indies including British Guiana (now known as Guyana) and Jamaica.
6. Europe including Russia, Belgium, France and Jersey.
7. Irish Free State.<sup>854</sup>
8. North America including Canada.
9. South Africa.
10. United Kingdom (UK) including England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

	No. Admitted				
Region	Total	Called	Uncalled	% Called	% of admissions
Africa	3	2	1	66.6	1.3
Asia	7	6	1	85.7	3.0
Australasia	7	5	2	71.4	3.0
British India	24	19	5	79.2	10.2
British West Indies	5	4	1	80	2.1
Europe	4	4	0	100	1.7
Irish Free State	6	6	0	100	2.5
North America	5	4	1	80	2.1
South Africa	4	2	2	50	1.7

<sup>853</sup> Throughout the 19th century, the extent of territory under British control expanded from the initial colonial outposts in Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay. Over time, British control extended across the entire Indian subcontinent, reaching eastwards to Burma and southwards, encompassing Ceylon within its dominion. Burma is now considered part of Asia.

<sup>854</sup> It is acknowledged that Northern Ireland was part of the United Kingdom during 1919 and 1929, and still is today. The Irish Free State was created following the Anglo-Irish Treaty, signed on 6 December 1921, making it a self-governing dominion within the community of nations known as the British Empire. See: Liz Goldthorpe, 'First Woman to Practise as a Barrister in Ireland and the (then) United Kingdom, Averil Deverell, 1921', in *Women's Legal Landmarks*, ed. Rackley, Erika and Auchmuty, Rosemary (Hart, 2019), p.175–81.

United Kingdom	171	122	49	71.3	72.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 4.1: Region of birth of Women Admitted to the Bar between 1919 and 1929

As can be seen, the majority (171, or 72.5%) of women admitted between 1919 and 1929 were from the UK. To break this down further, 153 women came from England; eight were from Wales, nine women were born in Scotland, and one was born in Northern Ireland. 65 of the women admitted (27.5%) were born overseas. Previous research by Polden found that overseas students made up 20% of all women admissions between 1919 and 1939 (91 women in total).<sup>855</sup> This thesis therefore finds a slightly higher percentage of international admissions during this ten-year period. The women born overseas came from similar countries as the men who were admitted over the same period.<sup>856</sup> In accordance with previous findings, the largest contingent came from British India and Asia, which were part of the British Empire at the time.<sup>857</sup> In fact, 47 of the 65 women born overseas (72.3%) were born in British Empire dominions.

## Individual Inns

Table 4.2, below, details the admission of international women at the individual Inns. To put this into perspective, it also includes the total number of women admitted to each Inn during the same period.

	Middle Temple Admissions		Inner Temple Admissions		Gray's Inn Admissions		Lincoln's Inn Admissions	
Region	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Africa	1	1.1	1	1.7	1	2.1	0	0.0
Asia	2	2.2	4	6.7	0	0.0	1	2.6
Australasia	4	4.4	3	5.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
British India	8	8.9	8	13.3	3	6.4	5	12.8

<sup>855</sup> Polden, *Portia's Progress: Women at the Bar in England, 1919–1939*.

<sup>856</sup> Abel, *The Legal Profession in England and Wales*.

<sup>857</sup> Polden, *Portia's Progress: Women at the Bar in England, 1919–1939*.

British West Indies	1	1.1	3	5.0	0	0.0	1	2.6
Europe	1	1.1	0	0.0	2	4.3	1	2.6
Ireland	2	2.2	0	0.0	2	4.3	2	5.1
North America	3	3.3	2	3.3	0	0.0	0	0.0
South Africa	3	3.3	1	1.7	0	0.0	0	0.0
<b>Total (international)</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>27.8</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>36.7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>17.0</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>25.6</b>
<b>Total women admitted (all countries)</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 4.2: Region of birth of Women Admitted to the Bar between 1919 and 1929 by Individual Inn

We can see that Middle Temple admitted the most international women students: 25 out of 90 (27.8%). Inner Temple admitted 22 out of 60 international women students (36.7%). Gray's Inn saw 8 out of 47 international women admitted (17%). At Lincoln's Inn, 10 out of 39 of the women were international (25.6%). Although Middle Temple admitted the most international women applicants, Inner Temple saw the greatest percentage of women admitted: 36.7%. This broadly correlates with Abel's research, where he finds that applications to the Bar from international both male and female students were relatively high, ranging from 28 to 71%.<sup>858</sup>

What we can see from the above is that there was a flow of international women students gaining admission to the Inns of Courts between 1919 and 1929. As identified in Chapter 1, Middle Temple saw the most admissions overall for international students. This means that Middle Temple was popular with both international and UK students (25 international and 65 UK). Gray's Inn was not a popular choice with international students with most applicants being UK students. The size and location may not have been attractive to them, or it may not have had the same facilities or prestige as the two Temples.

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<sup>858</sup> Abel, *The Legal Profession in England and Wales*.

## Calls to the Bar

The table below analyses calls to the Bar for UK and international women. A further breakdown of calls can also be seen in Table 4.1 above. The international women applicants saw a higher call rate than the UK women applicants. Some possible reasons for this higher call rate may include the financial status of the family (they could afford training at the Bar); the circumstances required to study at the English Bar both in terms of getting to England and perhaps the lack of career options in their native country.

Country of birth	Admitted	Called	%
United Kingdom	171	122	71.3
International	65	52	80.0

Table 4.3: Number of Women Admitted and Called to the Bar between 1919 and 1929

71.3% of women who were born in the UK were called, whereas 80% of international women were called. From Table 4.1, it is understood that women born in Europe and the Irish Free State saw a 100% call rate; Asia, British West Indies and North America saw call rates in the 80% range; British India was also nearly 80%. Only South Africa and Africa saw a call rate below 70%. Often, international women came from affluent backgrounds. Chen Li, for example, notes that the first Burmese and Chinese woman barristers were from affluent families with high social standing.<sup>859</sup> This was also the case for some of the Indian women. For example: Mithan Ardeshir Tata (called to Lincoln's Inn in 1923) was the daughter of Herabai Tata, a prominent figure in social reform. In 1923, Mithan Tata was the first Indian woman to be called to the Bar. She was also the first woman to be enrolled in the Bombay High Court, where she was the first woman barrister.<sup>860</sup> She was the daughter of Ardeshir Bejonji Tata, an industrialist affiliated with the Tata group of companies; the Tata group still stands as one of India's largest multinational conglomerates. Deena Kooka (called to Lincoln's Inn in 1932) came from a very accomplished family. She was the

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<sup>859</sup> Chen and Li, 'Seeking "A Fair Field" for Women in the Legal Profession: Pioneering Women Lawyers from Burma of 1924-1935'; Chen, 'The First Malayan Chinese Women Barristers and Their Pursuit of Legal Education in Britain, 1923-1934'.

<sup>860</sup> Mukherjee, Sumita, 'Mithan Tata', Inner Temple, 4 December 2019, <https://www.innertemple.org.uk/women-in-law/pioneering-women-in-law/mithan-tata/>; Mukherjee, 'Tata [married Name Lam], Mithan Ardeshir [Mithibai]'.

daughter of Kaskhashroo Kooka of Calcutta, a cinema owner.<sup>861</sup> Dilnavaz Byramji Prestonji (called to the Bar at Inner Temple in 1931) was the daughter of Khan Bahadur Byranji of Nagpur, a contractor and honorary magistrate; was bestowed the title of Khan Bahadur.<sup>862</sup> He died in 1923.<sup>863</sup> The Byramji family were a highly respectable and leading family; the Byramji town, Nagpur was named after the family and was known for the affluent families living there.<sup>864</sup>

While many of the international women came from an affluent background, this is not the case for all of them. Several women came from more modest or financially unstable backgrounds and raising the financial resources necessary to support their studies was a challenge for some. For example: Auvergne Doherty (called to the Bar at Middle Temple in 1923) the first woman from Western Australia admitted (1920) and called (1923) to Middle Temple, had to return to Australia to take over the family business because it was on the brink of bankruptcy.<sup>865</sup> Ida Duncan (called to Middle Temple in 1923), the first woman to be admitted from the Irish Free State, took some years out after her graduation from Trinity College Dublin in 1915; she worked as a governess in France in order to build up the financial resources necessary to continue her studies.<sup>866</sup> Nora Gipson (called to Middle Temple in 1931), was the second South African woman called to the Bar in 1931 during this 10-year period. She undertook coaching in her second year because she was determined not to ask her father for extra money to pay for private tuition. (Private tuition was commonplace among the English students.)<sup>867</sup>

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<sup>861</sup> 'COMMISSIONER OF INCOME TAX Vs. GLOBE THEATRES PVT LIMITED', Regent Computronics Pvt.Ltd., 12 July 1978, <https://www.the-laws.com/Encyclopedia/Browse/Case?CaseId=318791561000>.

<sup>862</sup> 'Byramji, Dilnavaz', The Inner Temple, accessed 27 December 2023, <https://archives.innertemple.org.uk/names/b2d4919d-3347-47e7-99e0-746420d1d450>.<https://archives.innertemple.org.uk/names/b2d4919d-3347-47e7-99e0-746420d1d450> Ibid. Khan Bahadur was a formal title of respect and honour, which was conferred exclusively on Muslim and other non-Hindu natives of British India. 'KHAN BAHADUR', *Civil & Military Gazette (Lahore)*, 2 January 1915, p.4.

<sup>863</sup> *The Civil & Military Gazette*, 'Public Notices', 25 March 1923, p.15.

<sup>864</sup> It was noted that a stone plinth was discovered in one of the bungalows with the name BP Byramji and his sister Kamalrukh with the date 29-01-1921 Times Of India, 'Last Byramji Signs off from Byramji Town', Times Of India, 6 May 2016, <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/nagpur/last-byramji-signs-off-from-byramji-town/articleshow/52137323.cms>.

<sup>865</sup> Coleman, 'Thwarted Ambitions: The Biography of Auvergne Doherty, an Aspiring Female Barrister'.

<sup>866</sup> 'Ida Coffin Duncan'.

<sup>867</sup> Gipson, 'Nora Myfanwy Gipson's Memoirs', p.79.

There would certainly have been more effort involved for an international student to be admitted to the Bar. Not only did they have to make a long journey from their native country; there was also more administration involved. All applicants to the Bar had to provide certificates of character from two responsible persons. However, international applicants had to provide additional documents. Natives of India had to provide a certificate from the collector or deputy commissioner of the district where the family resided. Natives of other countries had to obtain a certificate from a judge, magistrate or other person of a similar position in the place or district in which the applicant was a resident. The certificate testified personal knowledge of the applicant.<sup>868</sup> This process may come at a cost for referees or reflect their social status as they would need to 'personally' know them.

For some of the overseas applicants, the Bar in their native country may not have permitted women to enter at all; for others, admission to the Bar of England and Wales may have been a prerequisite for admission to their native Bar. For example, in the Cape, Transvaal and the Orange Free State (South Africa), it was expected that those wanting to become barristers would have already been admitted to the Bar of England and Wales, Ireland or Scotland.<sup>869</sup> Consequently, if someone wanted to practise in their home country, they had to proceed to call in England, Ireland or Scotland first.

## Age

The average age of the international women students was 24.3 years, whereas the average age of the UK woman entrants was 26.2 years. The international women were therefore slightly younger on average but there is not a significant difference.

From the above, it can be understood that international students made up 27.5% of the Inns of Court over this 10-year period. Most of them were admitted to Middle Temple and Inner Temple, and a high percentage were called (80%). Overall, they were young, in their 20s; this is like the

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<sup>868</sup> Bedwell, 'Conditions of Admission to the Legal Profession throughout the British Empire'.

<sup>869</sup> Ibid.

average age of their UK peers. This chapter will now consider the 65 international women on a country-by-country basis to understand more about their circumstances.

## Country of Birth

### Africa

Three women were born in 'Africa' including 'Mauritius and Nigeria'; only one of these women, Stella Jane Thomas, was ethnically Black; the other two were of British nationality, a likely White ethnicity based on their parentage. *Table 4.4*, below, lists these women.

Inn	Admitted	Called	Age at Admission	Name	Country of Birth	Ethnicity
Inner Temple	15-Nov-1921	Not Called	24	Dorothy Laura Muriel Stacpole	Africa: Mauritius	White
Gray's Inn	7-Oct-1927	2-Jul-1930	35	Josemee Marguerite Bernal Greenwood	Africa: Mauritius	White
Middle Temple	2-Dec-1929	10-May-1933	23	Stella Jane Thomas [Marke]	Africa: Nigeria	Black - African

Table 4.4: Women Admitted to the Inns of Court who were born in 'Africa'

### Mauritius

To qualify as a barrister in Mauritius you had to, and indeed still must today, go through one of the four Inns of Court in London. This is because Mauritius was, and remains, part of the Commonwealth. Dorothy Laura Muriel Stacpole<sup>870</sup> and Josemee Marguerite Bernal Greenwood<sup>871</sup> were British subjects born in Mauritius; they were the daughters of military officers, so this is likely the reason why they were born here.<sup>872</sup> This means that they were not

<sup>870</sup> The 1911 Census states Stacpole's birth country as Mauritius and notes that she is a British subject by parentage. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., '1911 England Census [database on-Line]'.  
<sup>871</sup> The 1901 Census lists Greenwood's birth country as Mauritius. Ancestry.com, '1901 England Census'.  
<sup>872</sup> 'Stacpole, Dorothy Laura Muriel', Inner Temple Admissions Register, accessed 7 November 2023, <https://archives.innertemple.org.uk/names/5f977ddc-5102-4179-8010-ec437bebeb9a>; Michael And Catherine Robson-Smith, 'Joseph J Greenwood', Ancestry.co.uk, accessed 7 November 2023, [https://www.ancestry.co.uk/family-tree/person/tree/192285135/person/152500753317/facts?\\_phsrc=ac9-575835&\\_phstart=successSource](https://www.ancestry.co.uk/family-tree/person/tree/192285135/person/152500753317/facts?_phsrc=ac9-575835&_phstart=successSource).

the first women from Mauritius admitted to the Inns of Court and the Bar of England and Wales would be the obvious choice for them if they wanted to become barristers.

### **Dorothy Laura Muriel Stacpole (admitted to Inner Temple 1921, not called)**

Dorothy Laura Muriel Stacpole was admitted to Inner Temple in 1921, but she did not proceed to call; a brief account of her life story has been told in Chapter 3.

### **Josemee Marguerite Bernal Greenwood, MBE (called to the Bar at Gray's Inn in 1930)**

Josemee Marguerite Bernal Greenwood was born in 1892 in Mauritius.<sup>873</sup> By 1901, she was in England with her family.<sup>874</sup> Her father was a military officer born in Durham; her mother was Irish and was born in Limerick.<sup>875</sup> After attending Leeds University to study Modern Languages.<sup>876</sup> She was admitted to Gray's Inn in 1927 and was called in 1930. Although it has not been possible to find any evidence of the work she conducted, she does appear to have practised and to have been attached to Chambers. In 1941 she was at 11 King's Bench Walk, part of South East circuit, Middlesex and North London Session and the Central Criminal Court.<sup>877</sup>

## *Nigeria*

Nigeria was part of the British Empire from 1901 to 1960. From 1886 to 1962, Nigerian lawyers received training abroad and, on completion of their studies, were called to the English Bar.<sup>878</sup> Therefore, it was necessary for women and men wanting to become barristers to come to

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<sup>873</sup> Michael And Catherine Robson-Smith, 'Josemee Marguerite Greenwood', Ancestry.co.uk, accessed 16 November 2023, <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/family-tree/person/tree/192285135/person/152500753331/facts>.

<sup>874</sup> She is listed in the 1901 census as being born in Mauritius but British by parentage. Ancestry.com, '1901 England Census'.

<sup>875</sup> Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., '1911 England Census [database on-Line]'.

<sup>876</sup> 'Another Bunch of Portias', *The Devon and Exeter Gazette*, 26 June 1930, p.8.

<sup>877</sup> Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2018., 'Greenwood, Miss Josemee Bernal, London, England, City Directories, 1736-1943'.

<sup>878</sup> Omoniye Adewoye, *The Legal Profession in Nigeria, 1865-1962* (Longman, 1982); David Olayinka Ajayi, 'IBADAN AND THE BEGININGS OF THE NIGERIAN BAR ASSOCIATION', ResearchGate, accessed 7 November 2023, [https://www.researchgate.net/profile/David-Olayinka-Ajayi/publication/336102363\\_IBADAN\\_AND\\_THE\\_BEGININGS\\_OF\\_THE\\_NIGERIAN\\_BAR\\_ASSOCIATION/links/5d8e0255458515202b6d9bea/IBADAN-AND-THE-BEGININGS-OF-THE-NIGERIAN-BAR-ASSOCIATION.pdf](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/David-Olayinka-Ajayi/publication/336102363_IBADAN_AND_THE_BEGININGS_OF_THE_NIGERIAN_BAR_ASSOCIATION/links/5d8e0255458515202b6d9bea/IBADAN-AND-THE-BEGININGS-OF-THE-NIGERIAN-BAR-ASSOCIATION.pdf).



England to complete their legal training. Stella Jane Thompson was the first African woman admitted to the Bar of England and Wales.

### **Stella Jane Thompson (called to Middle Temple in 1933)**

Miss Stella Jane Thompson, a Yoruba Nigerian, was born in Lagos in 1906 and was the daughter of a businessman.<sup>879</sup> In 1929, she travelled to England to pursue a law degree at Oxford. In 1933 she achieved the distinction of being the first African woman to be admitted to the Bar of England and Wales. She briefly practised law in the UK before returning to West Africa, where she gained admission to the Sierra Leonean Bar. In December 1935, she established her own legal practice in Lagos Island. Stella Thomas attained the title of West Africa's first female magistrate in 1943 and held roles in various courts throughout her legal career. In 1944, she married fellow legal practitioner Richard Bright Marke.<sup>880</sup>

### **Asia**

Seven of the international women admitted to the Inns of Court were born overseas in Asia, including Singapore, Malaysia, China and the Philippines; all but one, Beng Sim Wong, were called. Four of the seven women born in Asia were also ethnically Asian; they were Chinese and represented just 1.7% of the 236 women admitted. Table 4.5 details the women admitted from 'Asia' below.

<b>Inn</b>	<b>Admitted</b>	<b>Called</b>	<b>Age at Admission</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Country of Birth</b>	<b>Ethnicity</b>
Middle Temple	6-Apr-1921	28-Jan-1924	19	Rita Reuben	Asia: Singapore	Other
Inner Temple	19-Nov-1923	16-Jun-1926	20	Beng Hong Lim	Asia: Malaysia	Asian: Chinese
Inner	28-May-1924	29-Jun-1927	19	Soon Kim Teo	Asia:	Asian:

<sup>879</sup> 'Stella Thomas', Inner Temple, 23 November 2021, <https://www.innertemple.org.uk/celebrating-diversity-at-the-bar/stella-thomas/>; Henry An and Evarista Af, 'The Emergence and History of the "gentlewomen of the Bar" into the Legal Profession in the South West Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria', *Kosmas: [journal of the Czechoslovak Society of Arts and Sciences]* 08, no. 01 (2017), <https://doi.org/10.4172/2151-6200.1000242>.

<sup>880</sup> 'Stella Thomas'; Henry, A.n, and Evarista A.f., 'The Emergence and History of the "gentlewomen of the Bar" into the Legal Profession in the South West Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria'.

Temple					Singapore	Chinese
Middle Temple	10-Oct-1924	29-Jun-1927	18	Isabel Cogan	Asia: Philippines	White
Inner Temple	20-Oct-1926	27-Jan-1930	18	Lucy See	Asia: Singapore	Asian: Chinese
Inner Temple	9-Jan-1929	10-May-1933	25	Elfreda Margaret Willis	Asia: China	Unidentified
Lincoln's Inn	16-Apr-1929	Not Called	17	Beng Sim Wong	Asia: Malaysia	Asian: Chinese

Table 4.5: Women Admitted to the Inns of Court who were born in 'Asia'

### *Singapore*

Singapore and Malaysia (then Malaya) were part of the British Empire. Consequently, to become a barrister, it was necessary to undertake training in England. Rita Reuben, although born in Singapore, was not a Singapore citizen. She was, therefore, not the first woman from Singapore admitted to the Inns. The first woman from Singapore admitted to the Bar of England and Wales was Beng Hong Lim.

### **Rita Reuben (called to the Bar at Middle Temple in 1924)**

Rita Reuben was born in Singapore, but was a naturalised British citizen.<sup>881</sup> Her father was a Jewish businessman who had lived in Singapore for over 40 years; he was the first Justice of the Peace in Singapore of Jewish descent.<sup>882</sup> Rita Reuben read law at the University of London as an external student and graduated in 1923.<sup>883</sup> She was called to the Bar in 1924 and noted that she 'intended to start work at once'.<sup>884</sup> She is briefly mentioned among the first Jewish women to become lawyers<sup>885</sup> and is noted as representing the defence, opposite Chrystal Macmillan, in a case at the Old Bailey in 1929.<sup>886</sup> Little more had previously been known about her but, through

<sup>881</sup> 'Naturalization Certificate: Rita Reuben', Certificate No. R1/62671, 1964, My Heritage, <https://www.myheritage.com/>.

<sup>882</sup> *The Straits Times*, 'LIVED IN SINGAPORE FOR 40 YEARS', 25 September 1935, p.12.

<sup>883</sup> From Richard Temple, University Archivist, 'Rita Reuben Index Card, University of London', 5 October 2023.

<sup>884</sup> *The Echo*, 'Women Counsel', 29 January 1924, p.6.

<sup>885</sup> Rosalind Wright, 'The Jewish Women Who Were among the First to Seize the Opportunity to Be Lawyers', *The Jewish Chronicle*, 3 January 2020, <https://www.thejc.com/news/news/the-jewish-women-who-were-among-the-first-to-seize-the-opportunity-to-be-lawyers-1.494962>.

<sup>886</sup> Noakes, 'Chrystal MacMillan and Elsie Bowerman: First Women Barristers' Negotiation of Professional and Political Identities'.

searches of the British Newspaper Archives, this research has identified that she practised for at least thirty years, between 1929 and 1959.<sup>887</sup> She regularly defended and prosecuted plaintiffs, and was very much part of the legal community, attending legal dinners such as the Central Criminal Court (CCC) Bar Mess.<sup>888</sup>

The cases she undertook typically involved theft, fraud, divorce and bigamy<sup>889</sup> and it appears that her early work came from dock briefs.<sup>890</sup> In 1934 she observed a fraud case for the barrister Mr Crowther-Beynon, presumably for training purposes.<sup>891</sup> In 1938, she was noted as the 'first woman barrister' to appear in Tonbridge County Court when she defended a lady in a civil case.<sup>892</sup> In 1944 she had a number of cases where she defended bigamy and theft,<sup>893</sup> and in 1945 it was noted that she 'scored a hat trick in court' when she was chosen three times by prisoners at the London Sessions to defend them by dock brief.<sup>894</sup> It was said that there were 24 other barristers to choose from, two of whom were women, but they all chose Rita Reuben.<sup>895</sup> By around 1948 she had, by and large, assumed the role of prosecutor. For example, she was a prosecutor in all the cases she was listed for between 1948 and 1959.<sup>896</sup> She prosecuted two men for burglary in

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<sup>887</sup> A search of the British Newspaper Archive online database was conducted of 'Rita Reuben'. This revealed several published cases where she appeared as the defence or prosecution between 1929 and 1959. There may be other cases she worked on that were not published and indeed some publications may have been missed due to differences in reporting her name; however, from the publications shown, Rita Reuben had a long and substantial legal career.

<sup>888</sup> The interactions and events are explored in Chapter 5.

<sup>889</sup> *Western Daily Press*, 'Sentenced for Bigamy at the Old Bailey', 24 June 1937, p.9.

<sup>890</sup> For example, in 1932 Rita Reuben was given a brief by the Recorder as he believed in his undefended; however, when the case came to court, another male barrister Mr T. J. Kelly claimed he was acting for the defendant. 'Judge's Protest: Treated by Counsel as Puppets', *Gloucester Citizen*, 4 March 1932, p.10.

<sup>891</sup> *Liverpool Echo*, 'In Dock Alone', 12 April 1934, p.12.

<sup>892</sup> *The Courier*, 'Sequel to Fire', 29 April 1938, p.20.

<sup>893</sup> *Fulham Chronicle*, 'Man Behind Thefts', 26 May 1944, p.7. *Marylebone Mercury*, 'Married for a Bet', 21 October 1944, p.4. *Surrey Mirror*, 'Chipstead', 17 November 1944, p.7. *Birmingham Mail*, 'Returned Property He Stole', 7 March 1944, p.1.

<sup>894</sup> *Daily Mirror*, 'She Scored a "Hat Trick" In Court', 11 April 1945, p.8. In 1940 she successfully granted a decree nisi for her client, instructed by Messrs Wannop and Falconer *Hampshire Telegraph*, 'Decree Nisi for Chichester Wife', 2 August 1940, p.6. In May 1943 she defended, what the newspaper dubbed, 'the most criminally minded man in the country' after he had committed theft offences. *Kensington Post*, 'Most Criminally Minded Man in the Country: Deserter Admits 50 Offences', 22 May 1943, p.1.

<sup>895</sup> 'She Scored a "Hat Trick" In Court'.

<sup>896</sup> *Leicester Evening Mail*, 'Three Years of Elmesthorpe Man', 26 June 1959, p.8; *Sydenham, Forest Hill & Penge Gazette*, 'Shocking Raid on Bellingham Shop', 1 February 1957, p.5; *Norwood News*, 'Were Short of Money: Broke into Shop and House', 15 August 1952, p.1.

1952,<sup>897</sup> and in 1957 she undertook several cases in February, March and May.<sup>898</sup> Her last reported case was in 1959.<sup>899</sup> In 1950, she attended the International Bar Association meeting about using lie detectors in legal proceedings.<sup>900</sup>

She was part of the South East Circuit, East and West Kent Sessions, South London Sessions, CCC, and LAS; she held Chambers at 1 Elm Court, 3 Plowden Chase and 3 Middle Temple Lane.<sup>901</sup> Between 1932 and 1937, records show that she attended several annual dinners. These included: the Criminal Court Bar Mess in 1932 and 1937; the South East Circuit celebratory dinner in April 1935 at Inner Temple for Mr Justice Bucknill; and the Surrey Bench and Bar Dinner in July 1935.<sup>902</sup> Until now, Rita Reuben's story has been untold. While some may argue that still undertaking dock briefs 20 years after her call could indicate she did not have a secure practice, she was, nevertheless still undertaking legal work and engaging with the profession.

### **Beng Hong Lim (called to the Bar at Inner Temple in 1926)**

Beng Hong Lim was born in Penang, British Malaya. She was the first woman from Malaysia, and the first ethnically Chinese woman, to be admitted and called to the Bar of England and Wales. She was also the first woman called to the Malayan Bar in 1927 after legislative amendment.<sup>903</sup> Her father was a merchant, and the family was wealthy. Beng Hong Lim's brother was admitted to Inner Temple a few months after her, and the two were called to the English Bar on the very same night in June 1926. A year after her call, Lim Beng Hong returned to Penang to be married to Oon Guan Yong. She joined the firm of Lim and Lim, Advocates and Solicitors and applied to

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<sup>897</sup> 'Were Short of Money: Broke into Shop and House'.

<sup>898</sup> *South Western Star*, 'Housemaid Was Man in Woman's Clothes', 29 March 1957, p.5; *South Western Star*, 'No Money', 10 May 1957, p.2; 'Shocking Raid on Bellingham Shop'.

<sup>899</sup> 'Three Years of Elmesthorpe Man'.

<sup>900</sup> *Northern Whig*, 'Lawyers Discuss', 20 July 1950, p.3.

<sup>901</sup> See Reuben, Rita in Polden, 'Index to Women: Portia's Progress Women at the Bar in England 1919 - 1939'.

<sup>902</sup> 'DINNERS', 14 October 1933. *The Times*, 'Dinners', 8 April 1935, p.17. *The Times*, 'DINNERS', 2 June 1937, p.10; *Surrey Mirror*, 'County Jottings', 26 July 1935, p.6. 'DINNERS', 2 June 1937.

<sup>903</sup> The legislative amendment to Malayan law included: 'the following new sub-section: (2) A person shall not be disqualified by sex from being admitted and enrolled as an advocate and solicitor of the Supreme Court'. Chen, 'The First Malayan Chinese Women Barristers and Their Pursuit of Legal Education in Britain, 1923-1934'.

join the Bar of the Straits Settlements and the Federated Malay States;<sup>904</sup> again, she was called alongside her brother.

### **Teo Soon Kim (called to the Bar at Inner Temple in 1927)**

Teo Soon Kim was born into a wealthy Chinese family in Singapore and was the first woman from Singapore to be admitted and called to the Bar. In addition, she was the first woman called to the Singapore Bar in 1929 and the Hong Kong Bar in 1932.<sup>905</sup> After her call to the English Bar, she returned to Singapore where she built a successful practice. In 1932, she was the first female barrister to appear at the Supreme Court in Singapore; she defended a farmer accused of murdering his cousin and won the case. Teo Soon Kim moved to Hong Kong and was the first woman to be admitted to the Bar there.<sup>906</sup>

### **Lucy See (called to the Bar at Inner Temple in 1930)**

Lucy See, known as See Chye Hong, was born in Singapore in 1908. Her father, See Tiong Wah, was a wealthy and prominent member of the local community. Shortly after her call, in 1930, she returned to Singapore. On 2 August 1930 she married Chen Xu, the son of a Chinese general and returned to Singapore. She joined the Singapore law firm of Messrs. Allen and Gledhill, but only worked there for about six months before moving with her husband to Nanking (now Nanjing), the capital of China at that time. Due to the war and invasion of China by Japan, she faced several forced relocations to ensure the safety of her family. While in China, she joined the Tsingtao Bar and later the Nanking Bar. Later she joined the Hong Kong Bar in 1951, becoming the second

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<sup>904</sup> 'Lim Beng Hong', Inner Temple, 25 November 2019, <https://www.innertemple.org.uk/women-in-law/our-women/lim-beng-hong/>; Chen, 'The First Malayan Chinese Women Barristers and Their Pursuit of Legal Education in Britain, 1923–1934'.

<sup>905</sup> Chen, 'The First Malayan Chinese Women Barristers and Their Pursuit of Legal Education in Britain, 1923–1934'. Duncan Sutherland and National Library Board Singapore, 'Teo Soon Kim', National Library Board, accessed 9 November 2023, <https://www.nlb.gov.sg/main/article-detail?cmsuuid=60592473-d1b3-4456-bcf5-75aa616dae29>.

<sup>906</sup> 'Teo Soon Kim', Inner Temple, 25 November 2019, <https://www.innertemple.org.uk/women-in-law/our-women/teo-soon-kim/>; Chen, 'The First Malayan Chinese Women Barristers and Their Pursuit of Legal Education in Britain, 1923–1934'.

woman to be admitted there. Eventually, she returned to Singapore and resumed her long-interrupted career in the law. She was belatedly called to the Bar in Singapore in 1953.<sup>907</sup>

### **Beng Sim Wong (admitted to Lincoln's Inn in 1929 and not called)**

Beng Sim Wong was from Ipoh, Perak, in the Federated Malay States. She struggled to pass her Bar exams and eventually gave up after experiencing failures. As a result, she was not called to the Bar. Her story is explored in more detail in Chapter 3.

### *Philippines*

The Philippines Bar was opened to women in 1911; the first Filipino lawyer admitted was Maria del Pilar Francisco de Villacerna, but nothing is known of her and whether she practised. Natividad Almeda Lopez is recognised to be the first female practising lawyer; she was admitted to the Philippine Bar in 1914.<sup>908</sup> As Isabel Cogan was born in the Philippines but not Filipino. Given that she was English, she would have been unlikely to choose to be admitted to the Philippines Bar; the Bar of England and Wales would have been an obvious choice.

### **Isabel Cogan (called to the Bar at Middle Temple in 1927)**

Isabel Cogan was born in Manila, Philippines. Her mother was American, although her 'race' was deemed as English.<sup>909</sup> Her father was a British merchant, so this probably explains why they were abroad at the time of her birth. Isabel Cogan read Law at the University of London as a part-time

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<sup>907</sup> 'Lucy See', Inner Temple, 25 November 2019, <https://www.innertemple.org.uk/women-in-law/our-women/lucy-see/>; Chen, 'The First Malayan Chinese Women Barristers and Their Pursuit of Legal Education in Britain, 1923–1934'.

<sup>908</sup> Deinla, Imelda. 'Filipino Women Judges and Their Role in Advancing Judicial Independence in the Philippines'. *Women and the Judiciary in the Asia-Pacific*, (United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press: 2021).

<sup>909</sup> Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2008., 'California, U.S., Arriving Passenger and Crew Lists, 1882-1959', Ancestry.co.uk, accessed 9 November 2023, <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/348821:7949?ssrc=pt&tid=168153567&pid=152440999419>.

day student.<sup>910</sup> She was called to Middle Temple in 1927, but it appears that she did not subsequently practise as a barrister. She married Thomas G Agaston in 1943.<sup>911</sup>

### *China*

Women could not become lawyers in China until the abolition of the *Temporary Act of Lawyers* (limiting the sex of attorneys to men) in 1927. Zheng Yuxiu became the first woman attorney, and later judge, in China.<sup>912</sup> Elfreda Willis, although born in China, was a British national and therefore the Bar of England and Wales would have been a sensible choice for her if she wanted to practise.

### **Elfreda Margaret Willis (called to the Bar at Inner Temple in 1933)**

Elfreda Margaret Willis was born in China but was a British national and was not ethnically Chinese. Her father, Robert Willis was a Consular serving in China, which explains why she was born there.<sup>913</sup> Elfreda Willis attended Tientsin School while in China.<sup>914</sup> When in England, she attended Cambridge University (1924-1927) where she read for the History Tripos, matriculating in 1927.<sup>915</sup>

She was attached to 2 Essex Court Chambers<sup>916</sup> but, to date, no evidence has been found to suggest that she undertook legal work or practised as a barrister. She was elected as a member

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<sup>910</sup> 'Cogan, Isabel Douglas, King's Collections : Calendars : Page 328', Accessed 23 November 2023, <https://kingscollections.org/calendars/collection/1926-1927/page-328>.

<sup>911</sup> Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc, 'England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1916-2005', Ancestry.co.uk, 2010, [https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/47342754:8753?tid=&pid=&queryId=c661f737fb34f54d759fd78e2ab042f2&\\_phsrc=iCe14&\\_phstart=successSource](https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/47342754:8753?tid=&pid=&queryId=c661f737fb34f54d759fd78e2ab042f2&_phsrc=iCe14&_phstart=successSource).

<sup>912</sup> Liu, Xiaonan, 'Gender, Law and Legal Professions in China', in *East Asia's Renewed Respect for the Rule of Law in the 21st Century: The Future of Legal and Judicial Landscapes in East Asia*, ed. Setsuo Miyazawa et al. (Japan: Hotei Publishing, 2015), 193–212.

<sup>913</sup> It is likely Robert Willis could speak Chinese as he is also well known in China for his ability as a linguist. Chris Adams, 'Robert Willis', accessed 9 November 2023, <https://www.chradams.co.uk/willis/robertconsul.html>.

<sup>914</sup> The Tientsin School was founded by the Tientsin School Association in 1905. Its object was 'to promote the education, through the medium of the English language, of those children of Tientsin and the country dependent on Tientsin for whom English is the native language'. By: DBHKer, 'Tientsin Grammar School - Tientsin - 1928', Flickr, accessed 9 November 2023, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/23268776@N03/5223317741/in/photostream/>.

<sup>915</sup> 'Register Entry: Elfreda Margaret Willis', Cambridge University (1924).

<sup>916</sup> Polden, 'Index to Women: Portia's Progress Women at the Bar in England 1919 - 1939'.

of The Grotius Society in 1934<sup>917</sup> and attended various meetings, including International Law Conferences, in 1940, 1942, 1943, 1944.<sup>918</sup> As will be discussed in Chapter 5 other women barristers were also members of the Grotius Society and attended some of the meetings and conferences.<sup>919</sup> She had quite a long career in the civil service, and was a Civil Servant for Foreign Office between 1928 and 1940. She later worked in the Ministry of Home Security between 1940 and 1944 and in the Home Office between 1944 and 1950.

Beyond her civil service career, she was Mayoress of the City of Westminster from 1952 to 1953 and managed Westminster primary schools between 1957 and 1960.<sup>920</sup> She was also a Member of the Council of the Royal Commonwealth Society from 1954 to 1958 and was a member of the Fawcett Society, a charity campaigning for gender equality and women's rights, from 1956 to 1961 and from 1962 to 1972. She married Major Norman Henry Edwards in 1942<sup>921</sup> and later, in 1946, she published a book entitled *The Hub of the House*, which talked about designs and plans in the kitchen.<sup>922</sup> Clearly, she chose to follow a different career path.

### **Australasia**

Six women from Australasia, including Australia and New Zealand, were admitted to the Inns of Court and four were subsequently called; they included three women from Western Australia, two from New South Wales and a British Citizen born in Victoria. Only one woman from New Zealand was admitted and called. These women are listed below in Table 4.6.

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<sup>917</sup> 'Report of the Executive Committee 1934', *Transactions of the Grotius Society* 21 (1935): xxix – xxix.

<sup>918</sup> Viscount Caldecote, 'Public General Meeting Held in the Hall of the Honourable Society of Gray's Inn, April 10 1940, in Commemoration of the Silver Jubilee of the Society', *Transactions of the Grotius Society* 26 (1940): xliii – liv; 'Front Matter', *Transactions of the Grotius Society* 30 (1944): i – 285; 'Annual Meeting', *Transactions of the Grotius Society* 28 (1942): xx – xxi; 'Annual Meeting', *Transactions of the Grotius Society* 29 (1943): xix – xxi.

<sup>919</sup> Elsie Bowerman, Beatrice Honour Davy, Beroe Bicknell, Dorothi Mary Griffith, Elfreda Margaret Willis and Venetia Josephine Mary Stephenson were members of The Grotius Society.

<sup>920</sup> 'Register Entry: Elfreda Margaret Willis'. Polden, 'Index to Women: Portia's Progress Women at the Bar in England 1919 - 1939'.

<sup>921</sup> *The Times*, 'Marriage', 4 September 1942, p.7.

<sup>922</sup> Elfreda Margaret Willis, *The Hub of the House* (United Kingdom: Lund Humphries Publishers Ltd, 1946).



Inn	Admitted	Called	Age at Admission	Name	Country of Birth	Ethnicity
Middle Temple	5-Jan-1920	17-Nov-1922	23	Auvergne Doherty	Australasia	White
Middle Temple	13-Jan-1920	26-Jan-1923	39	Josephine Letitia Fairfield	Australasia	White
Inner Temple	20-Jan-1922	Not Called	25	Leila Mabel Thomas	Australasia	White
Middle Temple	18-Nov-1926	27-Jan-1930	26	Elizabeth Ferguson-Murdoch	Australasia	White
Middle Temple	10-Dec-1926	20-Apr-1932	26	Marguerite Lesley Harris	Australasia	White
Inner Temple	2-May-1927	27-Jan-1930	19	Patricia Hackett	Australasia	White
Inner Temple	31-Dec-1929	Not Called	21	Joan Urey McIlrath	Australasia	White

Table 4.6: Women Admitted to the Inns of Court who were born in 'Australasia'

Australia became part of the British Empire in 1901; it remains part of the Commonwealth and is now a constitutional monarchy with the British monarch as Head of State.<sup>923</sup> There are six states in Australia: New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania, Western Australia, South Australia and Queensland. These states provided legal education and training for its citizens and although many chose to study at the Bar in England and Wales, it was not necessary to do so. In 1905, Victoria became the first state to admit a woman to the legal profession. Other states soon followed the Victoria initiative by amending the Legal Practitioners Act of 1904 (Tasmania) and Legal Practitioners Act of 1905 (Queensland), allowing women to be admitted to the legal profession.<sup>924</sup> It was not until the 1920s that women were formally permitted to enter the legal profession in New South Wales and Western Australia. Taking this into account, those based in New South Wales and Western Australia had no option but to be admitted to the Bar of England and Wales if they wanted to become a barrister.

<sup>923</sup> 'Why Is Australia a Part of the Commonwealth?', accessed 14 November 2023, <https://peo.gov.au/understand-our-parliament/your-questions-on-notice/questions/why-is-australia-a-part-of-the-commonwealth/>.

<sup>924</sup> Kirk, Linda, J., 'Sisters Down Under: Women Lawyers in Australia', *Ga. St. UL Rev.* 12 (1995): 491.

### **Auvergne Doherty (called to the Bar at Middle Temple in 1922)**

Auvergne Doherty was the first woman from Australia to be admitted and called to the Bar of England and Wales. She was born in Perth, Western Australia, and read Jurisprudence at Oxford. She was admitted to Middle Temple on 5 January 1920 and called in 1923, but she did not practise; it appears that her ambition to practise as a barrister was thwarted by her family's declining financial circumstances.<sup>925</sup> She returned to Western Australia in 1930 with her father and sister where, after the death of her father in 1935, she took over the running of the family company with her sister.<sup>926</sup>

### **Josephine Letitia Fairfield CBE (called to the Bar at Middle Temple in 1923)**

Josephine Letitia Fairfield CBE was born in Melbourne in 1885 to a father who was an Anglo-Irish journalist and a mother who was a Scottish musician. She was a British citizen and moved to England when she was around three years old.<sup>927</sup> Fairfield excelled in her medical education at the Edinburgh Medical College for Women and obtained her MD from the University of Edinburgh in 1911. Upon graduation, she began her career as a medical officer for schools at London County Council and became the council's first female senior medical officer in 1929.

Despite her already impressive qualifications in medicine, she decided to apply for admission to the Bar in 1920 at the age of 34; she excelled in her Bar exams.<sup>928</sup> Although she did not practise, she had a deep understanding of legislative and judicial processes; this knowledge would have assisted her greatly as she was an advocate for women's equal pay and for better maternity provisions, especially during her presidency of the Medical Women's Federation from 1930-32.<sup>929</sup> She was also involved with the Medico-Legal Societies and contributed papers on diverse topics

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<sup>925</sup> Coleman, 'Thwarted Ambitions: The Biography of Auvergne Doherty, an Aspiring Female Barrister'.

<sup>926</sup> Ibid.

<sup>927</sup> Elston, M. A. "Fairfield, (Josephine) Letitia Denny (1885–1978), public health physician and campaigner for social reform." Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. 23 Sep. 2004; Accessed 11 Dec. 2024.

<https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-54196>

<sup>928</sup> Alana Harris, 'Letitia Fairfield', Inner Temple, 5 December 2019, <https://www.innertemple.org.uk/women-in-law/pioneering-women-in-law/letitia-fairfield/>.

<sup>929</sup> Ibid.

such as juvenile delinquency, suicide, abortion, reproductive issues, and homosexuality. Even in retirement, she engaged intellectually with criminal law and edited court transcripts for notable trials. She also explored the history of Irish nationalism.<sup>930</sup>

### **Leila Mabel Thomas (admitted to Inner Temple in 1922, but not called)**

Leila Mabel Thomas was from Sydney, Australia. She got married in 1925 and then returned to Australia. Her story is explored further in Chapter 3 as she was not called to the Bar.

### **Elizabeth Ferguson-Murdoch (called to the Bar at Middle Temple in 1930)**

Elizabeth Ferguson-Murdoch was born in 1897 in Malcolm, Western Australia. Her mother was Margaret Gatherer Ferguson and her father was John Murdoch, a hotel proprietor who sadly died in 1900 while his daughter was still very young.<sup>931</sup> Ferguson-Murdoch studied for an Intermediate degree at the University of Sydney and gained an LLB with Honours from the University of London.<sup>932</sup> She was called in 1930, and it appears that she was attached to Chambers at 4 Elm Court. Although she listed herself a 'barrister' in the City Directory, there is no evidence that she undertook any legal work.<sup>933</sup> In 1928, she was the headmistress of St Mary Abbots School, Kensington.<sup>934</sup> In 1933, at the age of 35, she married John C Pirie, a lawyer and an American citizen, in England.<sup>935</sup> They moved to New York City in 1939 and there is no evidence to suggest that Ferguson-Murdoch pursued a legal career in America.

### **Patricia Hackett (called to the Bar at Inner Temple in 1931)**

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<sup>930</sup> Elston, 'Fairfield, (Josephine) Letitia Denny'; Harris, 'Letitia Fairfield'.

<sup>931</sup> *North Coolgardie Herald and Miners Daily News* Menzies, WA : 1899 - 1904, 'Death of a Hotel Keeper', (15 February 1900): 3., p.3.

<sup>932</sup> *The Fort Street Girls' High School Magazine*, 'Personal Notes', June 1925.

<sup>933</sup> In 1934 she is listed in the UK City Directory as barrister at 4 Elm Court, Temple Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 'UK, City and County Directories, 1766 - 1946'.

<sup>934</sup> *The Fort Street Girls' High School Magazine*, 'EDITH PIRIE (nee Ferguson-Murdoch)', July 1948.

<sup>935</sup> John Pirie is mentioned on a passenger list as a 'lawyer' and he is from the USA see: Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 'UK and Ireland, Incoming Passenger Lists, 1878-1960 [database on-Line]'. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc, 'England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1916-2005', 2010.

Patricia Hackett was the third woman from Western Australia to be admitted and called to the Bar between 1919 and 1929. She was born on 25 January 1908 in Perth, and was educated in Australia at The Hermitage School, Victoria and at Woodlands Church of England Girls' Grammar School, Adelaide.<sup>936</sup> Despite passing two subjects towards a law degree at the University of Adelaide, she was unfortunately dismissed for sitting her sister's Latin examination.

In 1927 Hackett went to London, where she passed her final examination in Law in 1929. She was called to the Bar at the Inner Temple in 1930 and was admitted to the South Australian Bar in the same year.<sup>937</sup> She practised in Adelaide. When she appeared in a murder case in 1933, it was noted that she was 'one of Adelaide's prettiest and cleverest girls' and 'the second woman barrister associated in a murder case'.<sup>938</sup> In 1938, she bought her own Pacific Island, M'Bangai in the Solomons. Here, she 'built up a practice', including one case in which she 'successfully defended four natives charged with murder'.<sup>939</sup>

#### **Joan Urey McIlrath (admitted to Inner Temple in 1929, but not called)**

Joan Urey McIlrath was born in 1908 in New South Wales, Australia. She was not called to the Bar, and we know from the Electoral Registers that she was back in New South Wales by 1933.<sup>940</sup> Her story is explored in more detail in Chapter 3.

#### *New Zealand*

In New Zealand, the enactment of suffrage for New Zealand women and the Female Law Practitioners Act 1896 meant that women could become lawyers in this country.<sup>941</sup> It is therefore interesting that Marguerite Harris chose to come to England to undertake legal training.

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<sup>936</sup> Jo Peoples, 'Patricia Hackett (1908–1963)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, 1 January 1996, <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/hackett-patricia-10385>.

<sup>937</sup> *News (Adelaide, SA)*, 'Applicant for Bar', 22 December 1930, p.5.

<sup>938</sup> *Mirror (Perth, WA)*, 'Patricia Hackett's Fine Address In S.A. Murder Trial', 22 July 1933, p.6.

<sup>939</sup> *Daily News (Perth, WA)*, 'Pat Hackett Buys a Pacific Island', 12 October 1938, p.5.

<sup>940</sup> Ancestry.com, 'Australia, Electoral Rolls, 1903-1980'.

<sup>941</sup> Mossman, *The First Women : A Comparative Study of Gender, Law and the Legal Profession*.

### Marguerite Lesley Harris (called to the Bar at Middle Temple in 1932)

Marguerite Lesley Harris was born in Canterbury, New Zealand. She is the only woman from New Zealand to have been admitted and called to the bar between 1919 and 1929.<sup>942</sup> Her father, Leslie Wolfred Harris, was a New Zealand merchant and shipper.<sup>943</sup> The family resided at Egerton Gardens, London but were formerly of Dunedin, New Zealand.<sup>944</sup> A year after she was called, she married Vernon Gattie, Queen's Counsel and a former Metropolitan police magistrate.<sup>945</sup> Their son, Rodney Vernon Warwick Gattie, was born in 1934.<sup>946</sup> It appears that she did not practise as a barrister, likely because she married and had a child. The 1939 Census lists her occupation as 'private means' and living with her son.<sup>947</sup>

### British India

'British India', including Burma and Ceylon, saw 24 women admitted to the Bar of England and Wales between 1919 and 1929. Three women were from Burma and two were born in Ceylon.<sup>948</sup> Of these 24 women, 14 women were ethnically Asian (58.3%); two were of other ethnicities and the rest were likely White. 19 of the 24 women were called. *Table 4.7* identifies the women who were admitted to the Inns of Court who were born in 'British India'.

Inn	Admitted	Called	Age at Admission	Name	Country of Birth	Ethnicity
Middle Temple	16-Jan-1920	17-Nov-1922	30	Sybil Campbell	British India	White

<sup>942</sup> Tim Hawkins, 'Marguerite Lesley Harris', Ancestry.co.uk, accessed 30 November 2023, <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/family-tree/person/tree/11128721/person/210091567659/facts>; Ancestry.com, '1901 England Census'.

<sup>943</sup> 'New Barristers to Be Called', *Dundee Evening Telegraph*, 18 April 1932, p.3.

<sup>944</sup> 'London Personals', *Evening Post* CXIII, ISSUE 116 (18 May 1932): 11.

<sup>945</sup> Before Vernon Gattie married Marguerite Harris, he was married to Dorothy Freshwater; this marriage caused a scandal because Vernon Gattie and Dorothy Freshwater were accused of having an affair before she was divorced from her husband. According to his Ancestry profile, this marriage to Dorothy Freshwater thwarted his career and likely progression to Lord Chancellor. Dorothy Freshwater died in 1930. Tim Hawkins, 'Vernon Rodney Montague Gattie QC C.B.E', Ancestry.co.uk, accessed 30 November 2023, <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/family-tree/person/tree/11128721/person/210091567247/facts>; 'Magistrate's Denial: Mr Vernon Gattie Cited as Co-Respondent', *Reynolds's Newspaper*, 9 December 1928, p.7.

<sup>946</sup> Tim Hawkins, 'Rodney Vernon Warwick Gattie', Ancestry.co.uk, accessed 30 November 2023, <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/family-tree/person/tree/11128721/person/210091567799/facts>.

<sup>947</sup> '1939 England and Wales Register [database on-Line]'.

<sup>948</sup> It is possible more women were from Ceylon, but this has not been possible to trace.

Middle Temple	19-Mar-1920	Not Called	40	Averyl Harcourt	British India	Other
Lincoln's Inn	13-Apr-1920	26-Jan-1923	22	Mithan Ardeshir Tata]	British India	Asian - Indian
Middle Temple	23-Apr-1920	27-Jan-1930	26	Ondan Kunathadathil Meenakshi Devi	British India	Asian - Indian
Gray's Inn	17-Oct-1921	17-Nov-1924	23	Kathleen Maria Margaret Sissmore	British India	White - British
Gray's Inn	24-Jan-1922	6-May-1925	32	Jessie Irene Wall	British India	White
Inner Temple	5-Apr-1922	26-Jan-1925	20	Joan Clarkson	British India	White
Lincoln's Inn	1-May-1922	13-Jun-1923	54	Cornelia Sorabji	British India	Asian - Indian
Lincoln's Inn	21-Nov-1923	26-Jan-1928	22	Seeta Narayan Ajgaonker/Adgaoukar	British India	Asian - Indian
Inner Temple	14-Jan-1924	26-Jan-1928	21	Coomee Rustom Dantra	British India	Mixed
Inner Temple	21-Jan-1924	17-Nov-1926	22	Ma Twa/Daw Phar Hmee	British India	Asian - Bamar
Middle Temple	15-Nov-1924	29-Jun-1927	22	Sarah Dhar	British India	Asian - Indian
Inner Temple	16-Nov-1925	20-Jun-1928	19	Sita Vadivit Devadoss	British India	Asian - Indian
Inner Temple	16-Nov-1927	24-Jun-1936	37	Joan Meredyth Chichele Jullien [nee Plowden]	British India	White
Middle Temple	12-Oct-1928	17-Jun-1931	20	Winifred Hazel Watson	British India	White
Lincoln's Inn	17-Oct-1928	8-Jun-1932	20	Deena Kooka	British India	Asian - Indian
Inner Temple	30-Oct-1928	17-Nov-1931	20	Dilnavaz Byramji	British India	Asian - Indian
Inner Temple	1-Jan-1929	Not Called	22	Agnes Swaroop Kumari Gour	British India	Asian - Indian
Inner Temple	23-Apr-1929	8-Jun-1932	18	Bhicoo Batlivala	British India	Asian - Indian
Middle Temple	11-Jul-1929	Not Called	26	Nur Jehan Mohammad Yusuf	British India	Other
Gray's Inn	10-Sep-1929	17-Nov-1932	21	Mary Ruth Tabor	British India	White
Lincoln's Inn	1-Nov-1929	26-Jan-1933	18	Peroja Jamshed Bahadurji	British India	Asian - Indian
Middle Temple	13-Nov-1929	Not Called	22	Helen Winifred Marguerite Rodrigo	British India	Asian - Indian
Middle	20-Nov-1929	Not Called	23	Chaturlaxmi Balkrishna	British India	Asian -

Temple				Joshi		Indian
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Table 4.7: Women Admitted to the Inns of Court who were born in 'British India'

India is a vast country with a rich history. During the time period concerned, 1919 to 1929, India was under British rule, known as the 'British Raj'.<sup>949</sup> During this time period, Burma was governed first as a province of India, and then as a separate entity, until the country achieved independence in 1948.<sup>950</sup> Ceylon, now known as Sri Lanka, was made a crown colony in 1802 and, by the Treaty of Amiens with France, British possession of maritime Ceylon was confirmed. It became independent in 1948, whilst remaining part of the commonwealth. In 1972, the Ceylon government decided to change the island's name to Sri Lanka; at that time, Queen Elizabeth II ceased to be its political head, and the country became a republic.<sup>951</sup> Taking the above into account, the route to becoming a barrister would have been to enter the Bar of England and Wales and then return to India to practise.

*Called*

#### **Sybil Campbell (called to the Bar at Middle Temple in 1922)**

Sybil Campbell's story is well-known. She was born in British Ceylon; her father was an agent of a tea company, and her maternal grandfather was Sir William Bovill, Chief Justice of the Common Pleas. She was one of ten women called to the bar at Middle Temple on 17 November 1922. She practised as a barrister and later became a judge.<sup>952</sup>

#### **Mithan Ardeshir Tata (called to the Bar at Lincoln's Inn in 1923)**

Mithan Ardeshir Tata is known as the first Indian woman to be called to the Bar and was the first woman to be enrolled in the Bombay High Court, where she was the first woman barrister.<sup>953</sup> She

<sup>949</sup> Wolpert, Stanley, A., 'British Raj', in *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 14 November 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/event/British-raj>.

<sup>950</sup> Kampfner, Constance, 'British Museum's Myanmar Exhibition Explores How Colonial Rule "set Stage for Genocide"', *The Times*, 18 July 2023, <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/british-museums-myanmar-exhibition-explores-how-colonial-rule-set-stage-for-genocide-xfmcx88v>.

<sup>951</sup> Sinnappah Arasaratnam and Gerald Hubert Peiris, 'Sri Lanka', in *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11 December 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Sri-Lanka>.

<sup>952</sup> Polden, Patrick, 'The Lady of Tower Bridge: Sybil Campbell, England's First Woman Judge', *Women's History Review* 8, no. 3 (1999): 505–26.

<sup>953</sup> Mukherjee, 'Mithan Tata'.

was born in 1898 in Maharashtra, western India, and learnt English in a convent in Bombay.<sup>954</sup> She was the daughter of Herabai Tata, a prominent figure in social reform, and Ardeshir Bejonji Tata, an industrialist affiliated with the larger family circle of Jamsetji Tata; Jamsetji Tata was the founder of the Tata group of companies, which stands today as one of India's largest multinational conglomerates.

Mithan Ardeshir Tata studied economics at London University and took her MSc degree in 1922.<sup>955</sup> At the time of her call in 1923, one newspaper noted that she was a 'small, slight lady'. Before she returned to India, she commented that 'there will be great opportunities for women in law in India.'<sup>956</sup> She married Jamshed Sorabsha Lam, a solicitor, in 1933; they had two children.<sup>957</sup>

### **Ondan Kunathadathil Meenakshi Devi (called to the Bar at Middle Temple in 1930)**

Ondan Kunathadathil Meenakshi Devi was born in Malabar, India in 1839 and attended Brennan College, North Malabar from 1914 to 1916. Later, she obtained her BA in Chemistry and Physics in 1917 at Punjab 1919.<sup>958</sup>

She was the first woman from India to be admitted to Middle Temple; she was admitted in 1920 and called in 1930. Her duration of 10 years from admission to call was far longer than the average of 48.8 months (roughly four years).<sup>959</sup> It has been noted that she attended Lady Hardinge Medical College (a medical college for women located in New Delhi, India) until 1933.<sup>960</sup> It is therefore likely that she was completing her medical training while also completing her exams to become a barrister. It was noted in 1930 that she was among the British Empire students admitted to the Bar and that 'nearly all' of those 'sons and daughters of people resident

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<sup>954</sup> *The Londonderry Sentinel*, 'Lady Barrister in England', 30 January 1923, p.4.

<sup>955</sup> Ibid.

<sup>956</sup> Ibid.

<sup>957</sup> Mukherjee, 'Mithan Tata'.

<sup>958</sup> Polden, 'Index to Women: Portia's Progress Women at the Bar in England 1919 - 1939'.

<sup>959</sup> See Duration from Admission to Call: Men and Women in Chapter 1.

<sup>960</sup> Ibid.



abroad... will return to their native lands without attempting to practise in England.’<sup>961</sup> It has not been possible to trace what happened to Ondan Devi after her call.

### **Kathleen Maria Margaret Jane Sissmore (called to the Bar at Gray’s Inn in 1924)**

Kathleen Sissmore was English, but was born in Bengal, India in 1898.<sup>962</sup> Her father was a tea merchant, which is likely why the family were in India.<sup>963</sup> Better known as Jane Sissmore (and then Jane Archer after her marriage in 1939), she was the fifth woman admitted to Gray’s Inn (17 October 1921) and the joint-fourth woman called to the Bar (17 November 1924). She is well-known for becoming the first female officer of MI5, and for her career as an intelligence officer.<sup>964</sup>

### **Jessie Irene Wall (called to the Bar at Gray’s Inn in 1925)**

Jessie Irene Wall (known as Irene) was born on 6 January 1890 in Kolkata, in the Bengal region of India. Her father, Benson Parsick Wall, was an engineer.<sup>965</sup> She spent her early childhood in India, but the family later moved back to England; in 1911, her nationality was noted as ‘British by parentage’.<sup>966</sup> Between 1909 and 1913 she read Medieval and Modern Languages at Newnham College, Cambridge.<sup>967</sup>

During the First World War, she built up a career in the Civil Service inspecting factories for the Ministry of Munitions.<sup>968</sup> She did not marry because she lost the man she loved in the early days of the war. On 24 January 1922, she was admitted to Gray’s Inn and subsequently called on 6 May 1925. In theory this meant she could practise as a barrister, but she does not appear to have done so; however, she clearly retained an interest in the law as she became a magistrate.<sup>969</sup> The

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<sup>961</sup> *The Northern Daily Mail*, ‘Called to the Bar: Five More Women on the List: Empire Students’, 27 January 1930, p.4.

<sup>962</sup> Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., ‘1911 England Census [database on-Line]’.

<sup>963</sup> Ibid.

<sup>964</sup> Gosling, Daniel F., ‘Jane Sissmore (Archer)’, [graysinn.org.uk](https://www.graysinn.org.uk), 20 July 2017, <https://www.graysinn.org.uk/the-inn/history/women-of-the-inn/jane-sissmore-archer/>.

<sup>965</sup> ‘WALL, Jessie Irene’, Register Entry 1909, Newnham College, Cambridge; ‘Jessie Irene WALL (1890-1953)’, The Badsey Society, accessed 14 December 2023, <https://www.badseysociety.uk/sladden-archive/people/626>.

<sup>966</sup> Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., ‘1911 England Census [database on-Line]’.

<sup>967</sup> ‘WALL, Jessie Irene’.

<sup>968</sup> ‘Jessie Irene WALL (1890-1953)’; ‘WALL, Jessie Irene’.

<sup>969</sup> ‘WALL, Jessie Irene’.

1939 Census notes that she was a Civil Servant in the Home Office.<sup>970</sup> She died in Iffley, Oxford on 3 January 1953.

### **Joan Clarkson (called to the Bar at Inner Temple in 1925)**

Joan Clarkson was a British subject, but was born in Sialkot, Bengal, India.<sup>971</sup> She was a daughter of Bertie St John Clarkson, an eminent military man; he was awarded the Companion Order of St. Michael and St. George, which is awarded to persons who have rendered important services to Commonwealth or foreign nations; this probably explains why the family were in India.<sup>972</sup> Clarkson's mother, Constance Mary Gorst, was the daughter of a distinguished barrister and politician, Sir John Eldon Gorst, who was called to the Bar at the Inner Temple in 1865.<sup>973</sup> This may have led her to pursue her own application at Inner Temple.

After being called to Inner Temple in January 1925, Joan Clarkson appears to have practised as a barrister and achieved several distinctions. For example, in December 1926, she was involved in a case before the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, under the pupillage of Sir John Simon of Inner Temple.<sup>974</sup> She was the first woman barrister to be briefed for the Crown, in her wig and gown, before the court. The case was an appeal from New Zealand, which concerned Income Tax,<sup>975</sup> It is possible that this was something to do with her family's connections to New Zealand. The article notes that she had been briefed in a 'similar appeal', so it appears that she was

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<sup>970</sup> '1939 England and Wales Register [database on-Line]'; 'Jessie Irene WALL (1890-1953)'.

<sup>971</sup> Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., '1911 England Census [database on-Line]'; Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 'London, England, Freedom of the City Admission Papers, 1681-1930', Ancestry.co.uk, 2010, <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/150959061:2052?ssrc=pt&tid=62126081&pid=332033369676>.

<sup>972</sup> 'Lt.-Col. Bertie St. John Clarkson', Person Page, accessed 14 December 2023, <https://www.thepeerage.com/p25308.htm>.

<sup>973</sup> Arvidson, Ken, 'John Eldon Gorst, 1835–1916', *Kotare - New Zealand Notes & Queries* 7, no. 2 (7 June 2008), <https://doi.org/10.26686/knznq.v7i2.663>; Clifford, 'Chelsea Volunteer Ambulance Drivers: Joan Clarkson'.

<sup>974</sup> Sir John Simon was called to Inner Temple in 1899; he was a British politician who held senior Cabinet posts from the beginning of the First World War to the end of the Second World War. He is one of only three people to have served as Home Secretary, Foreign Secretary and Chancellor of the Exchequer. 'SIMON, JOHN ALLSEBROOK, 1st VISCOUNT SIMON of Stackpole Elidor (1873 - 1954), Judge and Politician', Mary Auronwy James, accessed 15 December 2023, <https://biography.wales/article/s2-SIMO-ALL-1873>.

<sup>975</sup> *The Vote*, 'Women Lawyers', 10 December 1926, p.386; *The Vote*, 'Woman Barrister's Brief', 24 December 1926, p.402.

undertaking regular legal work and was part of the Midland Circuit.<sup>976</sup> In 1927, she was the first woman to be given the Freedom of the City of London; her address at that time was noted as 4 Harcourt Buildings, and her occupation was Barrister-at-law.<sup>977</sup> In 1930, she successfully represented Lady Ankaret Cecilia Carolyn Jackson (nee Howard) in a Libel case against Good Housekeeping. Lady Jackson was admitted to Inner Temple in 1925, the same year as Joan Clarkson was called,<sup>978</sup> so it is possible they knew each other from the Inner Temple before the case. By 1939, Joan Clarkson's profession was listed as 'assistant editor', but it is not known what she was editing.<sup>979</sup> She was also on the list of women who volunteered for the London Auxiliary Ambulance Service.<sup>980</sup>

### **Cornelia Sorabji (called to the Bar at Lincoln's Inn in 1923)**

Cornelia Sorabji was the next woman admitted to Lincoln's Inn in 1922. Her story has been well-told, and she is noted as the first woman to study law at Oxford University, the first female advocate in India, and the first woman to practise law in both India and Britain.<sup>981</sup>

### **Seeta Narayan Ajgaonker (called to the Bar at Lincoln's Inn in 1928)**

Seeta Narayan Ajgaonker was born on 24 April 1901 in Ratnagiri, in the Bombay Presidency of India. She was the second daughter of Narayan Laxman Ajgaonker, a landlord. Before relocating to Oxford, she attended Elphinstone College in Bombay where she graduated as BA. According to one source, she was the first woman to win the Jagannath Shankarshet Sanskrit scholarship for her studies in India in 1918.<sup>982</sup> In October 1923, she matriculated as part of the Oxford Society

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<sup>976</sup> 'Women Lawyers'.

<sup>977</sup> From the Middle Ages and the Victorian era, the Freedom was the right to trade, enabling members of a Guild or Livery to carry out their trade or craft in the Square Mile. 'Freedom of the City', City of London, accessed 15 December 2023, <https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/about-us/law-historic-governance/freedom-of-the-city>; Clifford, 'Chelsea Volunteer Ambulance Drivers: Joan Clarkson'; Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 'London, England, Freedom of the City Admission Papers, 1681-1930'.

<sup>978</sup> 'Use of Name in an Advertisement', *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, 21 February 1930, 7.

<sup>979</sup> '1939 England and Wales Register [database on-Line]'.

<sup>980</sup> Clifford, 'Chelsea Volunteer Ambulance Drivers: Joan Clarkson'.

<sup>981</sup> Mossman, Mary Jane, 'Cornelia Sorabji', Inner Temple, 4 December 2019, <https://www.innertemple.org.uk/women-in-law/pioneering-women-in-law/cornelia-sorabji/>.

<sup>982</sup> Raikar, Sudhir, 'International Women's Day Special', LinkedIn, 7 March 2023, <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/international-womens-day-special-sudhir-raikar/>.

of Home Students; her subject was 'The position of women in Ancient India according to the Dharmashastras'. Two years later, in 1923, she graduated as BLitt.

She was admitted to Lincoln's Inn in 1923 and, in addition, continued her studies at Oxford; she was given permission to supplicate for her DPhil on the topic 'The Social and Legal Position of Women in Ancient India as represented by a critical study of the Epics: The Mahabharata and the Ramayana' by the Board of the Faculty of Oriental Languages and Literature on 6 December 1926, and by the Committee for Advanced Studies on 1 March 1927.<sup>983</sup> She graduated as DPhil on 9 April 1927 and she passed the Bar Final with Class III the same year, in June.<sup>984</sup> She was called to the Bar in 1928, but it is not known what she did after she was called. It is likely that she returned to India.

### **Sita Vadivit Devadoss (called to the Bar at Inner Temple in 1928)**

Sita Vadivit Devadoss was born in Palamcottah, Tirunelveli District, India. Her father was the Honourable Sir David Muthiah Devadoss, a Judge at the High Court in Madras. Her mother, Chella Srinivasagam, was known as Lady Masilamoney Chellammal and played an important role in the education of women; she was an educator at Ewart School and Women's Christian College, Madras.<sup>985</sup> She was also a councillor of the Ladies Recreation Club in Madras, which was founded in 1911 with the aim of 'promoting social and friendly intercourse between European and Indian ladies and between Indian ladies of all classes and creeds'.<sup>986</sup> In fact, Sita Devadoss's parents provided the first home, Sylvan Lodge, for the Ladies Recreation Club.<sup>987</sup>

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<sup>983</sup> 'Seeta Narayan Ajgaonker Student Record', Oxford University Archives, January 2020, References: UR 1/2/20B; UR 2/3/6; UR 2/4/2.

<sup>984</sup> *The Times*, 'Bar Examinations', 16 June 1927, p.5.

<sup>985</sup> University of Cambridge. 'Devadoss, Sita Vadivu, Girton College, Cambridge Student Record'. Girton College, Cambridge. February 2020. Information sent via email.

<sup>986</sup> Published by Sriramv, 'Centenary of a Ladies Club', *Madras Heritage and Carnatic Music - Articles on Chennai, Its Heritage, History and Culture* (blog) (Madras Heritage and Carnatic Music, 19 April 2011), <https://sriramv.com/2011/04/19/centenary-of-a-ladies-club/>.

<sup>987</sup> Ibid.

The family were clearly well connected in the legal and political field: the first committee members of the Ladies Recreation Club included the wives of prominent legal and political men such as Mrs Ayling, the wife of Justice WB Ayling of the High Court.<sup>988</sup> Growing up in this environment must have had an influence on her, so it is not surprising that Sita Devadoss sought to break down traditionally closed barriers for women and become a barrister.

Between 1924 and 1928, Sita Devadoss attended Girton College, Cambridge; she read for the English Tripos in 1926, and the Law Tripos in 1928. Following her call to the Bar in June 1928, she returned to Madras where she enrolled in the Madras High Court in August the same year, just a few months after her call. This made her the first woman to practise law in Madras.<sup>989</sup> One newspaper reported in 1929 that Miss Sita Devadoss was the 'first Christian woman barrister in India' and that she came from a distinguished family in Palamcottah.<sup>990</sup> Although it appears that Sita Devadoss tried to practise in Madras, one source notes that she 'could never practise law for she had no clients' due to the fact that she was a woman; gender stereotypes were extremely prominent then, and remain so to some extent today.<sup>991</sup> In the face of those challenges, it appears that she became involved in legal issues, such as the reform of social legislation that affected women. For example, at the All-India Women's Conference, in 1936, she represented the Presidency by supporting the Women's Right to Divorce Bill. Their attempts were not successful at that time, and history shows that it would take a further three decades for divorce law to be reformed by the Madras Assembly.<sup>992</sup>

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<sup>988</sup> The first committee of the Ladies Recreation Club included Mrs Ayling, the wife of Justice WB Ayling of the High Court), Mrs A Davies (wife of Arthur Davies, ICS), Mrs Glyn Barlow (her husband was in the Department of Education and wrote the book *The Story of Madras*), Miss Lynch (later Mrs Drysdale and Inspectress of Schools), Lady Desikachari (wife of Sir VC Desikachari, a legal luminary), Mrs (afterwards Lady) Sankaran Nair (wife of Sir C Sankaran Nair, Judge, High Court of Madras), Mrs TV Seshagiri Iyer (wife of Justice Seshagiri Iyer of the High Court of Madras) and Mrs Seethamma Tiruvengkatachariar. Ibid.

<sup>989</sup> C. S. Lakshmi, 'Bodies Called Women: Some Thoughts on Gender, Ethnicity and Nation', *Economic and Political Weekly* 32, no. 46 (1997): 2953–62.

<sup>990</sup> *The Leader*, 'First Christian Woman Barrister in India', 12 April 1929, p.9.

<sup>991</sup> Lakshmi, 'Bodies Called Women: Some Thoughts on Gender, Ethnicity and Nation'.

<sup>992</sup> Cenite, Mark, 'Emerging Trends in Women Empowerment', in *The SAGE Guide to Key Issues in Mass Media Ethics and Law* (2455 Teller Road, Thousand Oaks California 91320: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2015), 847–58. It was not until 1949 that a woman could divorce her husband on the ground of bigamy.

### **Joan Meredyth Chicheley Plowden (called to the Bar at Inner Temple in 1936)**

Like her parents, Joan Meredyth Chicheley Plowden was a British subject. She was born in 1890 in Lahore, Bengal, India.<sup>993</sup> Her father, Sir Henry Meredyth Chicheley Plowden, belonged to a well-known family that had supplied public servants to India for generations. He was also a barrister, called to Lincoln's Inn in 1866, and a senior judge in Punjab. Although he was born in Sylhet, Bangladesh, he had attended British schools.<sup>994</sup> Joan Plowden's mother, Helen Beadon, was the daughter of Sir Cecil Beadon, KCSI, an English administrator in British India who served as lieutenant-governor of the Bengal Presidency from 1862 to 1866.<sup>995</sup>

By 1901, Joan Plowden was in England, as detailed by the 1901 Census. In 1918, she married Lieutenant Charles Armand Marie Jullien.<sup>996</sup> Later, in 1927, she was admitted to Lincoln's Inn; she was called just under 10 years after that, in June 1936. It appears that she also undertook the Law Society examinations while she was preparing for admission to the Bar, as in 1934 she passed the Law Society Final.<sup>997</sup> It seems that she did not practise; in 1939, she listed her profession as 'barrister-at-law ' (not practising).<sup>998</sup> Instead, she spent a lot of her life travelling through various regions of the Sinai and Egypt, as reflected in her book *Once in Sinai, The Record of a Solitary Venture*, published in 1940; this received a positive review in 'Books of the Day'.<sup>999</sup>

### **Winifred Hazel Watson (called to the Bar at Middle Temple in 1931)**

Winifred Hazel Watson was born in Muzaffarpur, Bengal, India in 1908.<sup>1000</sup> She was a British subject, but her family had close connections with India. Her father, Edward Fairlie Watson, was

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<sup>993</sup> Ancestry.com, 'India, Select Births and Baptisms, 1786-1947' (2014), Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., Provo, UT, USA; Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., '1911 England Census [database on-Line]'.  
<sup>994</sup> *The Times*, 'Obituary: Sir H. M. Plowden', 9 January 1920, p.13.

<sup>995</sup> KCSI is Knight Commander of the Order of the Star of India; 'Obituary: Sir Cecil Beadon', *The Times*, 20 July 1880, p.10.  
<sup>996</sup> *Sunday Mirror*, 'In News', 8 September 1918, p.7.

<sup>997</sup> *Western Mail & South Wales News*, 'Law Society's Examination Results', 31 March 1934, p.6.  
<sup>998</sup> '1939 England and Wales Register [database on-Line]'.  
<sup>999</sup> *The Illustrated London News*, 'Books of the Day', 20 April 1940., p.12.

<sup>1000</sup> Ancestry.com, 'India, Select Births and Baptisms, 1786-1947'.

a mechanical engineer working in Bengal; he was employed by the East India Company and was noted as Superintendent, Governor's Estates, Bengal.<sup>1001</sup>

Between 1927 and 1928, Winifred Watson attended Bedford College to study for a Journalism Diploma.<sup>1002</sup> After this, she was admitted to Middle Temple in 1928 and was called in 1931; however, it appears that she did not practise as the 1939 Census lists her profession as 'journalist'.<sup>1003</sup> Given that she had previously completed a diploma in journalism, it is perhaps not surprising that she chose to pursue that career.

### **Deena Kooka (called to the Bar at Lincoln's Inn in 1932)**

Deena Kooka was born in Calcutta in 1907. She came from a very accomplished family and was the daughter of Kaskhashroo A. Kooka of Calcutta, a cinema owner. Kaikhushroo Kooka was one of two partners in Kooka Sidhwa and Co, a business that managed cinemas.<sup>1004</sup> While in India, Deena Kooka obtained a B.A. in English in 1928 from Calcutta University<sup>1005</sup> and was a member of the Federation of University Women in India (now called the Indian Federation of University Women's Associations), which was founded in Calcutta in 1921.<sup>1006</sup> After she completed her BA she came to England, where she studied at Newnham College, Cambridge and took the examinations for the Law Tripos in 1930 and 1931.<sup>1007</sup> She was admitted to Lincoln's Inn in 1928, and was called in 1932.<sup>1008</sup> After she was called, she returned to India. In June 1932 she was listed

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<sup>1001</sup> *The Edinburgh Gazette*, 'Edward Fairlie Watson', 7 January 1936, p.25; Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 'UK, Registers of Employees of the East India Company and the India Office, 1746-1939', Ancestry.co.uk, 2018, <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/284160:61468?ssrc=pt&tid=105443389&pid=150064738475>.

<sup>1002</sup> Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 'London, England, Royal Holloway and Bedford College Student Registers, 1849-1931 [database Online]'.

<sup>1003</sup> '1939 England and Wales Register [database on-Line]'.

<sup>1004</sup> 'COMMISSIONER OF INCOME TAX Vs. GLOBE THEATRES PVT LIMITED'.

<sup>1005</sup> 'The Calendar For The Year 1924, Vol.5, Part.2, p.14', Internet Archive, accessed 23 December 2023, <https://archive.org/details/in.ernet.dli.2015.55573/page/n19/mode/2up?q=kooka>.

<sup>1006</sup> This Federation formed part of the International Federation of University Women. The Union was affiliated to the Indian Federation in 1921, being one of the four or five units which went to form the Federation. 'Women Graduates Union, since 1915', Women Graduates Union, accessed 22 December 2023, <https://www.womengraduatesunion.org/history.php>.

<sup>1007</sup> This was a form of words acknowledging women's success in the Tripos examinations without allowing them to graduate. Sam Evans, 'Email to Charlotte Coleman from Sam Evans, Assistant Archivist at Cambridge University Library', 9 January 2024.

<sup>1008</sup> Polden, 'Index to Women: Portia's Progress Women at the Bar in England 1919 - 1939'.

as travelling on the 'Cathay' to Bombay, accompanied by her brother.<sup>1009</sup> It is not clear if she undertook any legal cases when she returned to India, but she was listed in *The Times of India* under 'Barristers and Advocates' as Miss Deena Kooka.

Deena Kooka married Mohammed Ahmadullah and they had three children. In 1966, the Government of India appointed Mrs Deena Ahmadullah, a member of the Union, to the Press Council of India; she was the first woman to have served on the Press Council.<sup>1010</sup> She wrote a paper, *Prohibited Relationship Under the Special Marriages Act*, but this was not considered in the Family Law and Social Change Review.<sup>1011</sup> It is therefore clear that she retained an interest in the law and women's rights.

### **Dilnavaz Byramji Prestonji (called to the Bar at Inner Temple in 1931)**

Dilnavaz Byramji Prestonji was born in Nagpur, India. Her father was bestowed the title of Khan Bahadur, a formal title of respect and honour;<sup>1012</sup> Khan Bahadur Byranji of Nagpur was a contractor and honorary magistrate before his death in 1923.<sup>1013</sup> As such, the Byramji family was a highly respected, leading family; indeed, the town of Byramji, in Nagpur, was named after the family and was known for the affluent families living there.<sup>1014</sup> Dilnavaz Byramji Prestonji attended Nagpur University, where she obtained her BA in French, English and Economics.

Once she had arrived in the UK, she enrolled in Bedford College (in 1928) to study sociology.<sup>1015</sup> She was admitted to Inner Temple in the same year. Her referee on the Bedford admission form

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<sup>1009</sup> *The Civil & Military Gazette*, 'Outward Bound, Passengers by the "Cathay"', 19 August 1932, p.11.

<sup>1010</sup> 'Women Graduates Union, since 1915'.

<sup>1011</sup> S. Jaffer Hussain, 'FAMILY LAW AND SOCIAL CHANGE by Tahir Mahmood', *Journal of the Indian Law Institute* 19, no. 1 (1977): 93–98.

<sup>1012</sup> 'Byramji, Dilnavaz'. <https://archives.innertemple.org.uk/names/b2d4919d-3347-47e7-99e0-746420d1d450> Ibid. Khan Bahadur was a formal title of respect and honour, which was conferred exclusively on Muslim and other non-Hindu natives of British India. 'KHAN BAHADUR'.

<sup>1013</sup> 'Public Notices'.

<sup>1014</sup> It was noted that a stone plinth was discovered in one of the bungalows with the name BP Byramji and his sister Kamalrukh with the date 29-01-1921 Times Of India, 'Last Byramji Signs off from Byramji Town'.

<sup>1015</sup> Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc, 'London, England, Royal Holloway and Bedford College Student Registers, 1849-1931 [database Online]'.



was from S.R. Pandile, barrister-at-law (Inner Temple), Nagpur.<sup>1016</sup> It appears that she completed some of the courses in Sociology, which also included an Economics paper, and received a mark of 50 out of 100. This was a pass, but she was not happy with the mark; in a letter to the principal at the time, she indicated that she would complete her Bar Final before continuing with the Sociology course.<sup>1017</sup> Perhaps she felt that she could not give sufficient focus to both. She was subsequently called to the Bar in November 1931. It has not been possible to trace what happened to her after her call. It is likely that she returned home. She appeared in the Law List until 1934.<sup>1018</sup>

### **Bhicoo Batlivala (called to the Bar at Inner Temple in 1932)**

Bhicoo Batlivala was born in Bombay where her father, Sorabji Batlivala, was a successful mill owner. She was sent to Britain for her education, when she was 10 years old and attended the Cheltenham Ladies College. She was admitted to Inner Temple in 1929 and called in 1932. In July that year, the Dundee Courier noted that she had been present at court, in wig and gown; it also described her as 'dark, slender, and with dark auburn hair and regular features'.<sup>1019</sup>

Apparently, she practised law for a time but then went back to India and held some governmental positions such as Inspector of Schools.<sup>1020</sup> When she returned to England she met and married Guy Mansell in London in 1939. In the 1939 Census, she lists her name as Bee Mansell and her occupation as 'Barrister, formerly personal assistant to the Minister of Education'.<sup>1021</sup> Bhicoo Batlivala was an active member of the India League, an organisation founded in 1916 to promote the cause of Indian independence, regularly attending meetings in the 1940s.

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<sup>1016</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1017</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1018</sup> *The Law List 1932*.

<sup>1019</sup> *Dundee Courier*, 'Men and Women of Today: Women Barristers', 14 July 1932, p.12.

<sup>1020</sup> 'Bhicoo Batlivala', The Open University, accessed 27 December 2023, <https://www5.open.ac.uk/research-projects/making-britain/content/bhicoo-batlivala>; Jack Taylor, 'Untold Lives Blog: Bhicoo Batlivala, Campaigner for Indian Independence', British Library, 29 April 2021, <https://blogs.bl.uk/untoldlives/2021/04/bhicoo-batlivala-campaigner-for-indian-independence.html>.

<sup>1021</sup> Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., '1939 England and Wales Register'.

### **Mary Ruth Tabor (called to the Bar at Gray's Inn in 1932)**

Mary Ruth Tabor was a British subject by parentage and was born in Bengal, India. Her father, Francis Samuel Tabor, was an Indian Civil Servant and district and session judge<sup>1022</sup> Before her admission to Gray's Inn in 1929, Mary Tabor attended Newnham College Cambridge University to study Mathematics.<sup>1023</sup> After her call in 1932, it appears that she did not practise as a barrister and instead pursued a different career, in housing management. Initially, she trained in a London office and worked as a housing assistant. Indeed, in the 1939 Census, she lists her profession as 'Inspector Trained Housing Manager'. She was also a part-time ambulance driver, presumably to support the war effort.<sup>1024</sup> She was later responsible for rehoming bombed out people in Camberwell, before becoming Housing Manager for Holborn Borough Council. It appears that she continued with her housing manager career as in 1956 she was noted as being the Housing Manager of Stevenage Development Corporation and belonged to the Society of Housing Managers. Despite her long career in housing, Mary Tabor did not completely abandon her legal career; in 1956, she was sworn in as a Justice of the Peace and served on the Stevenage Bench.<sup>1025</sup>

### **Peroja Jamshed Bahadurji (called to the Bar at Lincoln's Inn in 1933)**

Peroja Jamshed Bahadurji was the daughter of Jamshed Nassarvanji Bahadurji, a Doctor in Bombay, India. She attended University College London, graduating in 1932 with an LLB.<sup>1026</sup> She was admitted to Lincoln's Inn in 1929 and called in 1933,<sup>1027</sup> but it has not been possible to trace what happened to her either before or after her Call.

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<sup>1022</sup> Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 'UK, Registers of Employees of the East India Company and the India Office, 1746-1939'.

<sup>1023</sup> *Hertfordshire Express*, 'Housing Manager', 1 June 1956, p.6.

<sup>1024</sup> '1939 England and Wales Register [database on-Line]'.

<sup>1025</sup> 'Housing Manager'.

<sup>1026</sup> 'Graduates List 1932 - Senate House Libraries - University of London, p.527', yumpu.com, accessed 27 December 2023, <https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/read/4813975/graduates-list-1932-senate-house-libraries-university-of-london>.

<sup>1027</sup> '(PDF) South Asians at the Inns of Court: Lincoln's Inn, 1864-1947', dokumen.tips, 1 January 2017, <https://dokumen.tips/documents/south-asians-at-the-inns-of-court-lincolns-inn-1864-1947.html?page=4>.

## *Burma*

The stories of the first Burmese woman admitted and called to the Bar have been told in a recent publication: Seeking 'A Fair Field' for Women in the Legal Profession: Pioneering Women Lawyers from Burma of 1924-1935.<sup>1028</sup> For the completeness of this thesis, their stories are briefly outlined below.

### **Coomee Rustom Dantra (called to the Bar at Inner Temple in 1928)**

Coomee Rustom Dantra was born on 23 September 1905 to a well-respected and wealthy family in Rangoon; she was the eldest daughter of Rustom Sorab Dantra and Shireen Spencer. Her father had been a member of the Middle Temple since 25 January 1892 and was called to the Bar in June 1896. Dantra attended Newnham College, Cambridge University in 1924 and conferred a Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree in Law in 1928.

A family friend backed her application to Inner Temple; Bomanje Cowasjee was an English barrister at law and a senior member of the Burmese Bar. He was a member of Lincoln's Inn and was called to the Bar in June 1892. Coomee Dantra is noted as being the first woman from Burma to gain entry to an Inn of Court; she was admitted to Inner Temple in 1924 and, in 1928, was the third woman from Burma to be called. When she returned to Burma, she practised law as a barrister at the Rangoon High Court from 1928 to 1934 and, in 1932, married a Dutchman, Jacob Cornelis Strooker. A few years later, she changed her career; between 1939 to 1945 she was a translator and was charged with translating French, German and Dutch into English for publishing.<sup>1029</sup>

### **Ma Pwa Hmee (called to the Bar at Inner Temple in 1926)**

Ma Pwa Hmee was born in 1902 to a privileged family in Rangoon; she was the eldest daughter of M. Tun Baw, a tax collector of Rangoon Municipal Corporation. She wanted to become a lawyer

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<sup>1028</sup> Chen and Li, 'Seeking "A Fair Field" for Women in the Legal Profession: Pioneering Women Lawyers from Burma of 1924-1935'.

<sup>1029</sup> Ibid.

to benefit the women in Burma and although she was the second Burmese woman to be admitted to an Inn of Court, she was the first to be called to the Bar of England and Wales.

After her call in 1926, she returned to Rangoon and laid claim to the distinction of being the first woman called to the Bar in Rangoon. Later, in February 1935, she made history again when she was appointed “one of the first Honorary Magistrates (First Class) in Rangoon.” Pwa Hmee later married U Myint Thein, who came from an eminent Mandalay family. U Myint Thein was educated at Rangoon University and at Queen's College, Cambridge. He was also a barrister at law and was called to the Bar by Lincoln's Inn in 1925.<sup>1030</sup>

### **Sarah Dhar (called to the Bar at Lincoln's Inn in 1927)**

Sarah Dhar was born on 16 December 1901 and was the third daughter of Surat Chandra Dhar, a lawyer in Rangoon. Like her counterparts, she was from a rather affluent and privileged family. By the time she was admitted to Lincoln's Inn in 1924, her father had already sent two of her elder brothers, William Dhar and John Dhar, to England to obtain a legal education; they were admitted to Lincoln's Inn in 1911 and 1912, respectively. Sarah Dhar was called in 1927 and was the second woman from Burma to achieve this. She sailed home from London in the same year, on 19 August. She emigrated to Canada in 1978 and died in Ottawa on 30 October 1987.<sup>1031</sup>

### *Uncalled*

The five women who were not called are featured in more detail in Chapter 3.

**Dr Averyl Harcourt** was born in 1875 to a Jewish family in Calcutta, West Bengal, India. She was the first woman from India to be admitted to an Inn of Court.

**Agnes Swaroop Kumari Gour** was the daughter of Sir Hari Singh Gour, barrister, writer and first Vice-Chancellor of the University of Delhi and Sagar University; during his tenure in the Central Legislative Assembly, Gour had successfully fought to secure the admission of women as legal

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<sup>1030</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1031</sup> Ibid.

practitioners in India.<sup>1032</sup> It is likely that Swaroop Kumari Gour returned to India and thus did not pursue her application at the Bar.

**Nur Jehan Mohammad Yusuf** was admitted to Middle Temple in 1929 but returned to India the following year.<sup>1033</sup>

**Helen Winifred Marguerite Rodrigo** was a citizen of Ceylon<sup>1034</sup> and certainly had some Indian parentage, likely from her mother.<sup>1035</sup> She is said to be the first Ceylonese woman to read for a degree at Oxford University.<sup>1036</sup> She did not proceed to call, returning to her native country.

**Chaturlaxmi Balkrishna Joshi** was the daughter of B. B. Joshi, a Barrister.<sup>1037</sup> It appears that she returned to her native country rather than proceeding to call.

### British West Indies

Five women from the British West Indies were admitted to the Inns of Court. Four of the women were born in British Guiana, and the other in Jamaica. As mentioned, the British West Indies was ethnically diverse. While all five women were British Guyanese by nationality, two were of Chinese descent, one mixed, one Indian and one Black Caribbean. Four of the five women were called to the Bar; Ella Violet Hoahing was not called. Table 4.8 below identifies these women.

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<sup>1032</sup> McDonald, 'Becoming Indian: William Broome and Colonial Continuity in Post-Independence India'.

<sup>1033</sup> See Polden's Index from Polden, *Portia's Progress: Women at the Bar in England, 1919–1939*.

<sup>1034</sup> Her country of citizenship is stated as Ceylon Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2012., 'UK and Ireland, Outward Passenger Lists, 1890-1960 [database on-Line]', Ancestry.co.uk, accessed 26 June 2023, <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/42277530:2997?ssrc=pt&tid=174222331&pid=172280888174>.

<sup>1035</sup> It was difficult to obtain Winifred Rodrigo's ethnicity as her surname is typically Spanish or Portuguese; however, her third child, Damini Basnayake, is from the Indian ethnic group; it is likely that she had some Indian parentage, possibly by her mother's side. We know that Damini Basnayake was Wickramasinghe before she married Arthur Basnayake. In this article it states that Winifred Rodrigo was Damani's mother and that she was the first Ceylonese woman to read for a degree at the University of Oxford. Leelananda De Silva, 'Appreciations: Arthur Basnayake, An Outstanding Diplomat', *The Sunday Times*, 1 November 2015, <https://www.sundaytimes.lk/151101/plus/169453-169453.html>; 'She Knew Aung San and Her Lingo Too!'

<sup>1036</sup> Wijethilaka, 'Being close to Aung San Suu Kyi'; De Silva, 'Appreciations: Arthur Basnayake, An Outstanding Diplomat'.

<sup>1037</sup> Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 'London, England, Royal Holloway and Bedford College Student Registers, 1849-1931 [database Online]'.

Inn	Admitted	Called	Age at Admission	Name	Country of Birth	Ethnicity
Lincoln's Inn	22-Nov-1920	27-Jan-1947	20	Ilma Gertrude May de Jonge	British West Indies	Mixed
Inner Temple	27-Sep-1922	28-Jan-1929	25	Iris de Freitas	British West Indies	Black (Caribbean)
Inner Temple	17-Oct-1924	Not Called	18	Ella Violet Hoahing	British West Indies	Asian - Chinese
Inner Temple	28-Jun-1927	17-Nov-1931	23	Gladys Eileen Sarran	British West Indies	Asian - Indian
Middle Temple	2-Nov-1929	17-Nov-1933	21	Lily Evalina Tie Ten Quee	British West Indies	Asian - Chinese

Table 4.8: Women Admitted to the Inns of Court who were born in 'British West Indies'

Marie Grace Augustin, a St. Lucian businesswoman, attempted to become the first female lawyer in the Caribbean in 1923; however, she was prohibited from taking her Bar exam in Guiana based on her sex.<sup>1038</sup> Therefore, coming to the Bar of England and Wales would have been the only option for women in the British West Indies.

#### **Ilma Gertrude May de Jonge (called to the Bar at Lincoln's Inn in 1947)**

Ilma Gertrude May de Jonge was the first woman from British Guiana admitted to the Bar (Lincoln's Inn) but due to her delayed call she was not the first woman called to the Bar from this jurisdiction. Ilma de Jonge was British and was born in Georgetown, County of Demerara, Colony of British Guiana.<sup>1039</sup> Her father, Jacob de Jonge, was Dutch-Guyanese; although he appears to have been a merchant, he also acted as an attorney in his district in some legal matters.<sup>1040</sup> Her mother, Mary Dora Sawn, was Anglo-Indian and was the daughter of the Honourable Robert

<sup>1038</sup> Marie Augustin in fact went on to be the first woman to be nominated as a parliamentarian in St. Lucia and also become the first female member of the St. Lucian legislature: Kalifa Lovelace, 'The Women Who Came Before Us- Celebrating the First Female Attorneys in the Caribbean', LinkedIn, 23 January 2022, <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/women-who-came-before-us-celebrating-first-female-kalifa-lovelace/>.

<sup>1039</sup> Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., '1911 England Census [database on-Line]'.  
<sup>1040</sup> Probate record states: "Merchant, of Georgetown, County of Demerara, Colony of British Guiana, died 28 July 1906, at the Island of Barbados." but newspaper reports notes that he was also an 'Attorney'.

Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry Operations, Inc., 'Scotland, National Probate Index (Calendar of Confirmations and Inventories), 1876-1936', Ancestry.co.uk, 2015, <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/152103:60558?ssrc=pt&tid=174768106&pid=242429094625>; 'Point 12', *Official Gazette of British Guiana*, 29 December 1900, p.1821.

Abraham Swan, a barrister-at-law and a judge in British Guiana.<sup>1041</sup> It is possible that Ilma de Jong was influenced by her grandfather when she chose to read at the Bar.

She attended Aberystwyth University College from 1919 until 1921, when she matriculated with a BA. It was noted at the time that she was likely to be the first woman student from the college to be called to the Bar.<sup>1042</sup> While she was indeed the first woman from Aberystwyth University College to be admitted to the Bar, she was not the first to be called (that honour went to her peer, Iris de Freitas). This is because, despite being admitted to Lincoln's Inn in 1920, she was not called to the Bar (under the name of Ilma Fuller) until 1947, some 27 years later. It is likely that her call was delayed because she married Walter Fuller in 1923<sup>1043</sup> and had two children. Suffice to say, she did not practise.

In the 1939 Census, she listed her profession as unpaid domestic duties; however, records show that she was an ambulance driver as part of the Women's Voluntary Service.<sup>1044</sup> In 1940, Ilma Fuller was mentioned, and pictured, in the *Reading Standard* when she attended a reception for the British Federation of University Women. She was a resident of Reading for many years and an accomplished linguist, attending many international conferences in her capacity of translator of speeches.<sup>1045</sup> She died in 1999.

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<sup>1041</sup> BranchBar, 'Hon. Robert Abraham Swan', Ancestry.co.uk, accessed 18 January 2024, <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/family-tree/person/tree/174768106/person/242443676270/facts>; Ancestry.com, 'India, Select Marriages, 1792-1948' (2014), Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., Provo, UT, USA; 'Commission', *Official Gazette of British Guiana*, 8 September 1900, 27.

<sup>1042</sup> Aberystwyth : University College of Wales, 'Reports Submitted to the Court of Governors / University College of Wales, Aberystwyth : University College of Wales (Aberystwyth, Wales), Vol. 1916-1924'.<https://archive.org/details/reportssubmitted1916univ/page/n269/mode/2up?q=jongelbid.>, p.269, 345, 437 and 479.

<sup>1043</sup> Walter Fuller was the general secretary of the Cinematograph Exhibitors Association, the national trade association for cinema operators in the UK. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc, 'England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1916-2005', 2010; Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., '1939 England and Wales Register'.

<sup>1044</sup> Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., '1939 England and Wales Register'.

<sup>1045</sup> *Reading Standard*, 'M.P. to Attending Reading Meeting', 6 December 1940, p.12.

### **Iris de Freitas (called to the Bar at Inner Temple in 1929)**

Iris de Freitas was the second woman from British Guiana admitted to the Bar in 1922; her story has been documented.<sup>1046</sup> She was born in 1896 in British Guiana where her father was M. G. de Freitas was a merchant; her mother was Barbadian.<sup>1047</sup> She was educated in Toronto prior to attending Aberystwyth University, where she studied Botany, Latin and Modern Languages and Law, graduating as Bachelor of Arts in 1922.<sup>1048</sup> Later, in 1927, she went on to achieve the LLB. She also undertook roles such as membership of the Students' Representative Council and President of the Women's Sectional Council.

She was called to the Bar in 1929, seven years after her admission to Inner Temple, and was the first woman from British Guiana and the Caribbean to practise law. It is not clear why there was such a long gap between her admission and call. Perhaps it was due to her studying the LLB during this time. She continued to practise when she returned home in 1929 and was the first woman to take the role of prosecutor in a murder trial there. In 1933, it was reported that she had become the first British Guinean woman barrister to be appointed to the Assistant Attorney's General Office; this was due to temporary shortage of law officers.<sup>1049</sup> She continued to practise law in Georgetown after marrying Alfred Casimiro Brazao in 1937; they did not have any children, and she eventually died in 1989.<sup>1050</sup>

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<sup>1046</sup> See for example a recent publication about Iris de Freitas: Collins-Gonsalves, Joanne. *Iris de Freitas Brazao, Legal Luminary and Trailblazer: Caribbean, Canada, Wales, England 1896-1989*. (Canada: Atlantic Academic Publishing Incorporated, 2023).

<sup>1047</sup> According to one article, her father was a merchant and came to British Guiana when labour was needed on the sugar plantations after the end of slavery: Paul de Freitas, 'Iris de Freitas - an Amazing Lady', Family de Freitas, accessed 18 January 2024, <https://crescentbeachcayman.com/defreitas/iris-de-freitas---an-amazing-lady.html>; 'The World Can Take Your Material Possessions, Even Your Life, but Never Your Education; It Is with You Endlessly!', Aber Special Collections, 16 March 2016, <https://aberrarebooks.wordpress.com/2016/03/16/the-world-can-take-your-material-posessions-even-your-life-but-never-your-education-it-is-with-you-endlessly/>.

<sup>1048</sup> 'Aberystwyth University Honours First Female Lawyer in the Caribbean'.

<sup>1049</sup> *Dominica Tribune*, 'Trinidad - Aug, 3', 8 August 1933, p.4.

<sup>1050</sup> 'Aberystwyth University Honours First Female Lawyer in the Caribbean'.



### **Ella Violet Hoahing (admitted to Inner Temple in 1924, but not called)**

Ella Violet Hoahing was ethnically Chinese and was the third woman from the West Indies, namely British Guiana, to be admitted to the Bar. She sat the Criminal Law and Procedure exam in 1925, but she was not called.<sup>1051</sup> Her story has been documented in Chapter 3.

### **Gladys Eileen Sarran (called to the Bar at Inner Temple in 1931)**

Gladys Eileen Sarran was born in 1904 in British Guyana. Her father, Frank William Sarran, was a merchant born in British Guiana and her mother was born in India.<sup>1052</sup> It is not known which university she attended, if any, but it was noted on the immigration form that she was a 'scholar' when she entered the UK in 1921.<sup>1053</sup>

She was admitted to Inner Temple in 1927 and was called in 1931. In the same year she married Victor Cecil Ramsaram who was, like her, a barrister at Inner Temple and a native of British Guiana.<sup>1054</sup> They both returned to the West Indies where, in 1932, it was reported that the husband-and-wife barristers were admitted to the Bar of the Supreme Court in Trinidad. It was noted that she was the first woman barrister to be admitted to practise in a West Indian court.<sup>1055</sup> The couple had at least one child, a daughter, Vidhya Ramsaran, who must have been born around 1935. It has been possible to trace this, as she travelled with Victor Cecil Ramsaran in 1951 when she was 16; the immigration form states she was 'daughter of above'; Victor Ramsaran was a magistrate at this point.<sup>1056</sup> Gladys Ramsaran was not travelling with them on that occasion, but she did travel from Southampton to the West Indies in 1953; her profession

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<sup>1051</sup> 'Women's Bar Success', 1 May 1925.

<sup>1052</sup> Sarran, Paul, 'Gladys Eileen Sarran', Ancestry.co.uk, accessed 18 January 2024, [https://www.ancestry.co.uk/family-tree/person/tree/178113602/person/222325699855/facts?\\_phsrc=iCe451&\\_phstart=successSource](https://www.ancestry.co.uk/family-tree/person/tree/178113602/person/222325699855/facts?_phsrc=iCe451&_phstart=successSource); Polden, 'Index to Women: Portia's Progress Women at the Bar in England 1919 - 1939'.

<sup>1053</sup> Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 'UK and Ireland, Incoming Passenger Lists, 1878-1960 [database on-Line]'.

<sup>1054</sup> Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 'London, England, Church of England Marriages and Banns, 1754-1938 [database on-Line]'.

<sup>1055</sup> *Dominica Tribune*, 'Woman and the Law', 28 January 1932, p.4.

<sup>1056</sup> Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 'UK and Ireland, Incoming Passenger Lists, 1878-1960 [database on-Line]'.

was noted as barrister-at-law.<sup>1057</sup> It has not been possible to trace any travel documents after this time, but both Victor and Gladys Ramsaram died in England and they appear to have travelled regularly between the UK and the West Indies. Gladys Ramsaram died in Brighton in 1982.

### **Lily Tie Ten Quee (called to the Bar at Middle Temple in 1933)**

Lily Tie Ten Quee was born in Jamaica in 1908. Her father, Alexander Tie Ten Quee, emigrated to Jamaica from China. He was a successful businessman in Jamaica and was the first Chinese magistrate on the island. Her mother was Hugh Moi.<sup>1058</sup> Her uncle was the first Chinese solicitor in Jamaica, and her brother also became a solicitor.<sup>1059</sup>

Lily Tie Ten Quee graduated from Newnham College, Cambridge and became Jamaica's first woman to be called to the Bar. When she returned home, there was a huge celebration in Jamaica to mark her call to the Bar and her father hoped that she would join the family firm of lawyers. However, she decided that she wanted to dedicate her life to the development of China and of Nanking, then the capital of China under the Nationalist government of Chiang-Kai-Shek; she was given a job at the Central Political Institute (CPI) in Nanking<sup>1060</sup> to teach jurisprudence and English literature. Unfortunately, she had to return to Britain in 1936, just ahead of the Nanking massacre.<sup>1061</sup> Later that year, she married the Cambridge University jurist and legal scholar Richard Meredith Jackson; they had two children, a son and daughter.<sup>1062</sup>

During the Second World War, she worked in the legal department of the Ministry of Supply. After the War, she offered hospitality to a great number of Chinese students at Cambridge

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<sup>1057</sup> Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2012., 'UK and Ireland, Outward Passenger Lists, 1890-1960 [database on-Line]'.

<sup>1058</sup> 'Lily Tie Ten Quee's Student Record from Newnham College', January 2020.

<sup>1059</sup> 'Lily Tie Ten Quee', Inner Temple, 6 October 2021, <https://www.innertemple.org.uk/celebrating-diversity-at-the-bar/lily-tie-ten-quee/>.

<sup>1060</sup> The CPI was a training college for graduates of other universities and trained diplomats and magistrates.

<sup>1061</sup> It was estimated 150,000-300,000 people were executed, and thousands of women raped by the invading Japanese forces.

<sup>1062</sup> Their son read for the Bar but decided to go and live in Jamaica where he was killed in a road accident in 1968.

University. Among her many other activities, she worked at the Legal Advice Centre that was run by the Cambridge Citizens Advice Bureau. She continued to live in Cambridge until her death in 1991 but made frequent trips to Jamaica to visit her mother.<sup>1063</sup>

## Europe

The four women admitted to the Bar from 'Europe' were born in Russia, Belgium, Jersey and France. All of them were called. Table 4.9 below identifies these women.

Inn	Admitted	Called	Age at Admission	Name	Country of Birth	Ethnicity
Lincoln's Inn	29-Sep-1922	17-Nov-1925	21	Sara Moshkowitz	Europe: Russia	White
Gray's Inn	17-Nov-1924	20-Jun-1928	24	Katherine Mary Evelyn Fearnley Sander	Europe: Belgium	White
Middle Temple	21-Apr-1925	2-May-1928	18	Louise Beryl Gruchy	Europe: Jersey	White
Gray's Inn	16-Nov-1928	17-Nov-1932	19	Marie Madeleine Delage	Europe: France	White - French

Table 4.9: Women Admitted to the Inns of Court who were born in 'Europe'

## Russia

Following the 1917 Revolution, the Russian Empire became the Soviet Union and was officially known as the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR).<sup>1064</sup> The Revolution brought about unprecedented changes to the legal profession. Decree No. 1, passed on 26 November 1917, stated that all unstained citizens of both sexes, holders of civic rights, may act as prosecutors and counsels for the defence; this extraordinary change was met with resistance by the Russian Bars of cities including Moscow and Petrograd, but to no avail.<sup>1065</sup> Sara Moshkowitz had to flee Russia after the revolution, so undertaking her legal training in Russia would not have been an option.

<sup>1063</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1064</sup> Four socialist republics were established in 1922: the Russian and Transcaucasian Soviet Federated Socialist Republics and the Ukrainian and Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republics. Martin McCauley et al., 'Soviet Union', in *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 29 November 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Soviet-Union>; Gregory Freeze, *Russia: A History, New Edition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

<sup>1065</sup> Samuel Kuchero, 'The Legal Profession In Pre- and Post- Revolutionary Russia', *The American Journal of Comparative Law* 5, no. 3 (1 July 1956): 443–70.

It should be noted that **Ivy Gwendoline Pollecoff** was also Russian; she was the daughter of Soloman and Esther Pollecoff.<sup>1066</sup> Her parents were born in Russia and came to the UK to escape persecution.<sup>1067</sup> She was born in England and has therefore not been included in the international women category.

### **Sara Moshkowitz (called to the Bar at Lincoln's Inn in 1925)**

Sara Moshkowitz was the first Russian Jewish woman to be admitted and called to the Bar of England and Wales. She was born in Kishinev and attended the University of Odessa, Russia. When the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 began, the family eventually had to leave Russia. Apparently, the family were left penniless, and Sarah did not know a word of English.<sup>1068</sup> Before coming to England, she spent some time in Turkey, France and Belgium. She was admitted to the Faculty of Law at the Sorbonne, Paris in 1920. In 1922, she was granted a scholarship by Lincoln's Inn; she was called to the Bar in 1925.

Sara Moshkowitz appears to have practised and was granted to read in the chambers of W.F. Beaumont in 1926 and EJ Heckscher in 1927; she was noted at 23 Old Square, then 3 Plowden Buildings.<sup>1069</sup> She combined legal practice with painting and exhibited at the Royal Academy. In 1930, she painted a portrait of Councillor William Rosser, Enid Rosser-Locket's father (Enid Rosser-Locket was admitted to Lincoln's Inn in 1922). She submitted it to the Royal Academy and had it accepted.<sup>1070</sup> This portrait of William Rosser came about because Sara Moshkowitz and Enid Rosser-Locket spent a holiday together in the summer of 1927 at Port Eynon, near Swansea.<sup>1071</sup> Enid Rosser-Locket and Sara Moshkowitz were both admitted to Lincoln's Inn in

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<sup>1066</sup> Holder, Joseph, 'Ivy Gwendolyn Pollecoff', Accessed 21 August 2023, <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/family-tree/person/tree/173382436/person/242248135380/facts>.

<sup>1067</sup> Abrams, Nathan, 'The Pollecoffs of Holyhead', Ports, Past and Present, accessed 21 August 2023, <https://portspastpresent.eu/items/show/720>.

<sup>1068</sup> *Western Mail*, 'An Academy Romance', 1 May 1930, p.11; *Western Mail and South Wales News*, 'Daughters of Zion: Woman Barrister's Visit to Cardiff', 20 October 1931, p.7.

<sup>1069</sup> Polden, 'Index to Women: Portia's Progress Women at the Bar in England 1919 - 1939'.

<sup>1070</sup> 'An Academy Romance'. It is stated in an article that Enid Rosser-Locket's father was Counsellor W Rosser of Swansea: *Western Mail*, 'A Modern Portia: A Welsh Girl's Legal Success', 26 April 1927, p.5.

<sup>1071</sup> *Western Mail and South Wales News*, 'Daughters of Zion: Woman Barrister's Visit to Cardiff', 20 October 1931; *South Wales Daily Post*, 'Fled From Russian Horror,' 1 May 1930. p.5.

1922 and clearly they must have had some kind of friendship between them if Sara Moshkowitz holidayed with them and painted a portrait of Enid Rosser-Locket's father.

In addition to practising law and painting, she belonged to several organisations including the British Bench and Bar Delegation, the Federation of Women Zionists and the Federation of Women Lawyers. She was also an honorary member of the Kappa Beta Phi legal sorority and the American Woman Lawyers Association.<sup>1072</sup> In 1933, she immigrated to Palestine and was admitted to the Palestine Bar in 1938.<sup>1073</sup> By 1939, she was specialising in commercial law and was one of only three practising women lawyers in Tel Aviv.<sup>1074</sup> She married Dr Harry Varkoni, a surgeon known as 'the surgeon of Galilee'.<sup>1075</sup> Later in the 1960s, her speeches were televised and aired on the radio.<sup>1076</sup>

### *Belgium*

It was not until 7 April 1922 that women in Belgium were finally permitted to enter the legal profession. Even then several restrictions remained, such as access to the bar of cassation (the Supreme Court). Given that Katherine Sander lived between England and Belgium, the English Bar would have been a good option for her.

### **Katherine Mary Evelyn Sander (called to the Bar at Gray's Inn in 1928)**

Katherine Mary Evelyn Sander (known as Evelyn) was born in Bruges, Belgium in 1900. She was the second daughter of Conrad Fearnley Sander and Rose Marguerite Autrand. According to the Sander family index website, the family fled from Bruges in August 1914 (presumably due to the

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<sup>1072</sup> 'Daughters of Zion: Woman Barrister's Visit to Cardiff'; *The Duke Chronicle*, 'Israel Lawyer, Artist Will Speak Tomorrow', 4 December 1946, p.6; *The American Jewish Times Outlook*, 'Around Greensboro', Serial #18 (1962): 234.

<sup>1073</sup> 'Israel Lawyer, Artist Will Speak Tomorrow'; Rubinstein, W. and Jolles, Michael A., *The Palgrave Dictionary of Anglo-Jewish History* (Springer, 2011).

<sup>1074</sup> Wright, 'The Jewish Women Who Were among the First to Seize the Opportunity to Be Lawyers'; Rubinstein and Jolles, *The Palgrave Dictionary of Anglo-Jewish History*.

<sup>1075</sup> 'Noted Woman Leader To Appear At Israel Anniversary Fete', San Francisco Jewish Community Publications, 14 April 1950: <https://www.nli.org.il/he/newspapers/jweekly/1950/04/14/article/12/?e=-----he-20--1--img-txIN%7ctxTI-----1>.

<sup>1076</sup> *The American Jewish Times Outlook*, 'Raleigh Hadassah', Serial #18, 1962: 251.

First World War). It is noted on the Sander website that Evelyn Sander 'was half French, a quarter German and a quarter English'.<sup>1077</sup> Despite being born in Belgium, the family appeared to live between England and Belgium.

Evelyn Sander was the first woman from Belgium to be admitted to Gray's Inn (17 November 1924) and was called in 1928.<sup>1078</sup> In 1930, she married Percy Rawlins (known as Peter) who was a barrister and County Court judge. He was called to Gray's Inn in 1926<sup>1079</sup> and so it is likely that the couple met there. They had two children; a son, who they adopted in 1936, and a daughter who was born in 1938.<sup>1080</sup> In the 1939 Census, Evelyn Rawlins' occupation was listed as unpaid domestic duties, so she did not practise after marriage and having children.<sup>1081</sup>

### *Channel Islands*

The Channel Islands comprise Jersey, Guernsey, Alderney, and Sark and are dependencies of the British crown (and so not strictly part of the UK); they have their own local laws and customs with differing constitutions.<sup>1082</sup> Given the close relationship with England, it is easy to understand why Louise Beryl Gruchy would have wanted to be admitted to the Bar of England and Wales.

### **Louise Beryl Gruchy (called to Middle Temple in 1928)**

Louise Beryl Gruchy was born in 1906 in St Clement, Jersey, Channel Islands; it is noted that her father, Godfrey Gruchy, was a farmer who was born in La Poile, in the Canadian province of Newfoundland.<sup>1083</sup> She was admitted to Middle Temple on 21 April 1925 and called in 1928. In

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<sup>1077</sup> 'Katherine May Evelyn Sander 1900-1989', accessed 7 December 2023, <https://www.chrisgrant.eu/genealogy/sander/sander/evelyn.html>.

<sup>1078</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1079</sup> *The Law List 1932; The Times*, 'Obituary: His Hon P.L.E. Rawlins', 29 April 1977, p.19.

<sup>1080</sup> 'Katherine May Evelyn Sander 1900-1989'.

<sup>1081</sup> '1939 England and Wales Register [database on-Line]'.

<sup>1082</sup> The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, 'Channel Islands', in *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 9 November 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Channel-Islands-English-Channel>.

<sup>1083</sup> Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 'Jersey, Church of England Births and Baptisms, 1813-1915', Ancestry.co.uk, 2016, [https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/435693:61218?tid=&pid=&queryId=47401a7a-b0ad-4ae7-93c4-66f35d7c283b&\\_phsrc=iCe50&\\_phstart=successSource](https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/435693:61218?tid=&pid=&queryId=47401a7a-b0ad-4ae7-93c4-66f35d7c283b&_phsrc=iCe50&_phstart=successSource); Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., '1911 Channel Islands Census', Ancestry.co.uk, 2011, <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/129728:2355>. <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/129728:2355>.

1931, she married a medical practitioner, Malcolm Herbert Cecil Dyson.<sup>1084</sup> On the marriage form she stated her occupation as 'barrister-at-law'.<sup>1085</sup> Their daughter, Jennifer Lucille Dyson, was born in 1934,<sup>1086</sup> and in 1939 Louise Beryl Dyson was listed as living in Cornwall with her husband, their child, and her mother and sister; her profession was listed as 'retired barrister-at-law', so clearly this status was important to her.<sup>1087</sup>

### *France*

From 1 December 1900, women were permitted to enter the profession. The first women to be called to the Bar in France were Jeanne Chauvin and Olga Petit; both were sworn in during December 1900.<sup>1088</sup> It is interesting that Marie Delage chose to be admitted to the Bar of England and Wales when the French Bar was already open to her.

### **Marie Madeleine Delage (called to the Bar at Gray's Inn in 1932)**

Marie Madeleine Delage was the first French woman to be admitted and called to the Bar of England and Wales. Very little is known about her. She was born on 19 March 1899 in Fouras, France, and was the third daughter of Marcel Delage, a naval officer.<sup>1089</sup> She attended the University of Paris, and later Oxford University where she undertook the Bachelor of Civil Laws as part of the Oxford Home Students scheme. She was admitted to Gray's Inn in 1928 and called

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content/view/435693:61218?tid=&pid=&queryId=47401a7a-b0ad-4ae7-93c4-66f35d7c283b&\_phsrc=iCe50&\_phstart=successSourceLehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 'Jersey, Church of England Births and Baptisms, 1813-1915'.

<sup>1084</sup> Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc, 'England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index, 1916-2005', 2010.

<sup>1085</sup> O'Reilly, Bill, 'St Just in Roseland Marriages Post 1900 (by Bride's Surname)', Rootsweb.com, 2016, [https://sites.rootsweb.com/~enggerop/st\\_just/st\\_just\\_mar\\_post\\_1900\\_bride.htm](https://sites.rootsweb.com/~enggerop/st_just/st_just_mar_post_1900_bride.htm).

<sup>1086</sup> 'Baptism Register of St Clement's Parish Church - Entry for Jennifer Lucille Dyson, Daughter of Malcolm Herbert Cecil Dyson and Louise Beryl Dyson', Jersey Heritage, accessed 7 December 2023, [https://catalogue.jerseyheritage.org/collection-search/?si\\_elastic\\_detail=archive\\_110458865](https://catalogue.jerseyheritage.org/collection-search/?si_elastic_detail=archive_110458865).

<sup>1087</sup> '1939 England and Wales Register [database on-Line]'.  
<sup>1088</sup> K. Buchanan, 'Women in History: Lawyers and Judges', *Custodia Legis: Law Librarians of Congress*, 2015, <https://blogs.loc.gov/law/2015/03/women-in-history-lawyers-and-judges/>.

<sup>1089</sup> Oxford University Archives, References UR 1/2/48 and UR 2/15.

in 1932, but it is not known if she practised; it appears that she returned to France at some point as she died there in 1982.<sup>1090</sup>

### Irish Free State

Six of the women admitted to the Inns were born in the 'Irish Free State', and all were called.

Table 4.10 below identifies these women.

Inn	Admitted	Called	Age at Admission	Name	Country of Birth	Ethnicity
Middle Temple	12-Apr-1920	26-Jan-1923	27	Ida May Coffin Duncan	Irish Free State	White Irish
Gray's Inn	20-Nov-1920	28-Jan-1924	26	Sydney Alice Malone	Irish Free State	White Irish
Lincoln's Inn	1-Jun-1921	16-Jun-1926	38	Mary Anne Elizabeth Moclair	Irish Free State	White Irish
Gray's Inn	1-May-1923	17-Oct-1935	27	Mary Christina Sheppard	Irish Free State	White Irish
Middle Temple	5-May-1924	26-Jan-1927	31	Kathleen Anna Burgess	Irish Free State	White Irish
Lincoln's Inn	12-Oct-1925	20-Jun-1928	21	Dorothy Travers Wolfe [Ungode Thomas]	Irish Free State	White Irish

Table 4.10: Women Admitted to the Inns of Court who were born in the 'Irish Free State'

The Irish Free State was established following the Anglo-Irish Treaty, which was signed on 6 December 1921 and became a self-governing dominion within the community of nations known as the British Empire.<sup>1091</sup> Women were permitted to enter the Irish Bar following the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act 1919. The Irish Bar would have been an option for the women below, but for some reason they chose the Bar of England and Wales.

### Ida May Coffin Duncan (called to the Bar at Middle Temple in 1923)

Ida May Coffin Duncan was born in 1892 in Rathdown, Ireland (located in the Irish Free State). Her father was Thomas John Duncan; he was secretary of the Stephen's Green Club in Dublin, a

<sup>1090</sup> Ancestry.com Operations, Inc, 'Web: France, Death Records, 1970-2021', Ancestry.co.uk, 2023, [https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/1434621:62201?tid=&pid=&queryId=5fd070fb-1a2d-45eb-8437-495dfd01e91f&\\_phsrc=iCe88&\\_phstart=successSource](https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/1434621:62201?tid=&pid=&queryId=5fd070fb-1a2d-45eb-8437-495dfd01e91f&_phsrc=iCe88&_phstart=successSource).

<sup>1091</sup> Goldthorpe, 'First Woman to Practise as a Barrister in Ireland and the (then) United Kingdom, Averil Deverell, 1921'.



gentlemen's club founded in 1840.<sup>1092</sup> Ida Duncan's mother, Eliza Marian Coffin, was born in India and was the daughter of Lieutenant General Sir Isaac Campbell Coffin. She died when Ida Duncan was very young.<sup>1093</sup> Ida Duncan graduated from Trinity College Dublin in 1915 with a BA in Law.<sup>1094</sup> It is said that she then took some years out after graduating, taking on work as a governess in France in order to build up the necessary financial resources to support her studies at the Bar.<sup>1095</sup> She was admitted to Middle Temple in 1920, and was called three years later in 1923. This makes her the first woman from Ireland (the Irish Free State) to be admitted and called to the Bar of England and Wales.

Ida Duncan appears to have had a long career at the Bar, and it is surprising that her story has not been documented more thoroughly. After being called to the bar, she moved into chambers at 7 King's Bench Walk; she later moved to 2 Paper Buildings and then to 4 Pump Court.<sup>1096</sup> In the same year as her call, 1923, she became the first woman admitted to the Hardwicke Society, a Bar debating society which met every Friday. There had historically been an annual Ladies' Night where women could deliver speeches, but women had not previously been permitted to become

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<sup>1092</sup> 'National Archives: Census of Ireland 1911', accessed 28 December 2023, [https://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/pages/1911/Dublin/Kingstown\\_No\\_\\_2/Northumberland\\_Avenue/95315/](https://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/pages/1911/Dublin/Kingstown_No__2/Northumberland_Avenue/95315/).

<sup>1093</sup> At the time of Ida Duncan's Call, *The Londonderry Sentinel* (1923) noted that she was the niece of Sir Clifford Coffin V.C. who was commanding the troops in Cylon, his father (Ida Duncan's grandfather) was Lieutenant General Sir Isaac Campbell Coffin was therefore her grandfather. The 1911 Census listed Thomas John Duncan as a widow. 'Lady Barrister in England'; 'National Archives: Census of Ireland 1911'.

<sup>1094</sup> *The Freeman's Journal*, 'Dublin, Lady B.L.', 26 January 1922, p.8; Ellen O'Flaherty, 'Email from Ellen O'Flaherty, Assistant Librarian, Trinity College Dublin to Charlotte Coleman', 29 January 2020.

<sup>1095</sup> 'Ida Coffin Duncan'.

<sup>1096</sup> As listed in telephone directories and her address on her Probate entry was 4 Pump Court. Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 'London, England, City Directories, 1736-1943', Ancestry.co.uk, 2018, <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/16793460:61265?ssrc=pt&tid=178003685&pid=272310508211>; Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 'England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1858-1995', Ancestry.com, 2010, <https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/17244632:1904?ssrc=pt&tid=74308499&pid=132416014793>.

members.<sup>1097</sup> One paper noted at the time that 'women have penetrated yet another fastness of the law'.<sup>1098</sup>

Ida Duncan undertook her first legal case in June 1923, when she was noted as being the first lady barrister to attend the Gloucestershire Assizes.<sup>1099</sup> Throughout her legal career, which spanned at least eight years from 1923 to 1931,<sup>1100</sup> she achieved multiple 'firsts' and broke down several barriers. As previously mentioned, she was noted as being the first woman to attend the Gloucestershire Assizes,<sup>1101</sup> she was also the first woman to defend a murder trial there.<sup>1102</sup> She was the first woman to appear in a case at Worcester,<sup>1103</sup> and the first to appear in the Court of Criminal Appeal.<sup>1104</sup> Perhaps not surprisingly, she achieved recognition as 'one of the best of the younger barristers'.<sup>1105</sup> The cases she worked on involved mostly civil matters<sup>1106</sup> but she also took on some criminal cases, which she mostly obtained through dock briefs.<sup>1107</sup> Of the 15 cases

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<sup>1097</sup> It was noted that Miss Rebecca West and Miss Cicely Hamilton had previously addressed the society, but women had yet to be admitted to the club as members. *The Leeds Mercury*, 'Women and the Law', 4 July 1925, p.6; *The Northern Whig and Belfast Post*, 'Woman in the Temple', 1 December 1923, p.11; *Aberdeen Press and Journal*, 'Women and Law: Admission to Famous Debating Society', 6 December 1923, p.4.

<sup>1098</sup> 'Women and Law: Admission to Famous Debating Society'; 'Women and the Law'; 'Woman in the Temple'.

<sup>1099</sup> *The Gloucestershire Chronicle*, 'Lady Barrister', 16 June 1923, p.6.

<sup>1100</sup> From a search of The British Newspaper Archive, 14 cases were identified that named Ida Duncan as the respondent, prosecutor or supporting another barrister between 1923 and 1931. It is possible that she undertook more that were not recorded.

<sup>1101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1102</sup> *The Vote*, 'Woman Defender in Murder Trial', 11 February 1927, p.43.

<sup>1103</sup> *Birmingham Daily Gazette* 'Doctor's Appeal', 22 March 1924, p.7.

<sup>1104</sup> She won this case and persuaded the court that the conviction of two men for burglary was unsafe because witnesses who identified them had previously been shown photographs of the men by the police. The Lord Chief Justice, presiding over the appeal, said that Ida had put the men's case 'with clearness and with force'. *The Times*, 'First Woman Barrister in Court of Criminal Appeal', 2 December 1924, p.6. *The Echo*, 'Miss Ida Duncan', 2 December 1924, p.3.

<sup>1105</sup> *Cheltenham Chronicle and Gloucestershire Graphic*, 'Quote from 'A Country Review: The Week at Gloucester'', 19 June 1926, p.2.

<sup>1106</sup> For example damages cases: 'Doctor's Appeal', *Gloucester Journal*, 'Brothers At Law', 19 June 1926, p.7 and *The Citizen*, 'Defamatory Libels Charge at Gloucestershire Assizes', 2 February 1928, p.7. ; two divorce cases in 1925 and 1926 (both of these were instructed by Mr F.P. Treasure) *The Citizen*, 'Local Divorce Case - Decree Against Siddington Woman', 26 November 1925, p.7; *The Echo*, 'Gloucester City, Breach of Promise to Marry', 10 March 1926, p.6.; forgery in 1926. 'Forgery in Tewkesbury,' *Tewkesbury Register*, 6 February 1926.

<sup>1107</sup> Criminal cases involved burglary 'First Woman Barrister in Court of Criminal Appeal'; theft *The Citizen*, 'Night Raid on Garage', 17 June 1929, p.1; *Western Mail and South Wales News*, 'Thief's Bad Record', 17 June 1929, p.9.; and murder 'Woman Defender in Murder Trial'.

identified, at least four of them (all civil matters) were instructed by Mr Frank Treasure of Treasures solicitors, who was a well-known Gloucestershire solicitor, Clerk to Gloucestershire city magistrates and a former Mayor of Gloucestershire.<sup>1108</sup> She was also instructed by Mr Sidney Baker of Messrs Baker and Smiths.<sup>1109</sup> A referral by Mr Sidney Baker in 1929 became one of her most significant cases; her client had been hit by an aeroplane and she was successful in obtaining damages, so setting a precedent.<sup>1110</sup>

In 1925, Ida Duncan attended the Sorbonne to celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Bar opening to women in France; she and Crystal Macmillan, another of the first women barristers, attended and both gave speeches.<sup>1111</sup> In 1931 she was appointed as Commissioner Under Mental Treatments Act; she was awarded an OBE in 1959 for this work.<sup>1112</sup> After this appointment, it appears that she did not undertake further legal cases. In 1959 she was Commissioner of the Board of Control, Ministry of Health.<sup>1113</sup> Her death was recorded in The London Gazette with the address of 4 Pump Court. Her occupation was noted as Barrister (retired).<sup>1114</sup>

### **Sydney Alice Malone (called to the Bar at Gray's Inn in 1924)**

Sydney Alice Malone was born in Glasnevin, Dublin, Ireland.<sup>1115</sup> Her father, John Malone, was a solicitor in Cookstown and a coroner for Dungannon.<sup>1116</sup> Sydney Malone attended both London University and the University of Ireland;<sup>1117</sup> she was admitted to Gray's Inn in 1920 and called in 1924. When she travelled to America with her sister Irene Malone in 1933, she listed her

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<sup>1108</sup> *Gloucestershire Echo*, 'Mr Frank Treasure', 1 April 1938, p.1; 'Treasures Solicitors in Gloucester, Gloucestershire GL1 2AZ', accessed 4 January 2024, <https://www.solicitorscentral.co.uk/solicitor/745875/treasures-solicitors>.

<sup>1109</sup> *Cheltenham Chronicle and Gloucestershire Graphic*, 'Death of Mr S. Baker', 5 December 1942, p.5.

<sup>1110</sup> *The Citizen*, 'Sequel to Aeroplane Flight', 16 June 1926, p.8; *Cheltenham Chronicle and Gloucestershire Graphic*, 'Hit By An Aeroplane', 19 June 1926, p.13.

<sup>1111</sup> *The Leeds Mercury*, 'Woman Barristers', 7 December 1925, p.4.

<sup>1112</sup> *The Women's Leader*, 'Personal, Miss Ida Duncan', 27 February 1931, p.31.

<sup>1113</sup> *Supplement to The London Gazette*, 'Miss Ida May Coffin Duncan', 13 June 1959, No.3709.

<sup>1114</sup> *The London Gazette*, Duncan, Ida May Coffin', 22 May 1975, No. 6710.

<sup>1115</sup> Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 'Ireland, Civil Registration Births Index, 1864-1958', Ancestry.co.uk, 2011, [https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/4849253:2573?tid=&pid=&queryId=5a220076-8a88-4064-9c52-fddde90a54fe&\\_phsrc=iCe276&\\_phstart=successSource](https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/4849253:2573?tid=&pid=&queryId=5a220076-8a88-4064-9c52-fddde90a54fe&_phsrc=iCe276&_phstart=successSource).

<sup>1116</sup> *Irish Weekly and Ulster Examiner*, 'Mr John Malone, Solicitor', 29 May 1920, p.4.

<sup>1117</sup> *Belfast Telegraph*, 'Ulster Lady as Barrister', 29 January 1924, p.5.

profession as 'barrister'.<sup>1118</sup> They had noted their country of intended residence as the USA, but both were living at 10 Eldon Rd, Hampstead three years later (in 1936). Sydney Alice Malone is listed under her birth name in the Thom's Law Directories for 1938-1940 at Ballybrack House, Ballybrack (a residential suburb of Dublin). It has not been possible to trace what happened to her after that.<sup>1119</sup>

### **Mary Anne Elizabeth Moclair (called to the Bar at Lincoln's Inn in 1926)**

Mary Anne Elizabeth Moclair was born in 1884 in Cashel, Ireland, part of the Irish Free State.<sup>1120</sup> She attended University College, Dublin and was admitted to Lincoln's Inn in 1921. She was called in 1926<sup>1121</sup> but it appears that she did not practise. Instead, she forged a career as a social worker and as the Organising Secretary to the West Moreland and Cumberland Mental Health Association, holding the latter role for almost 25 years. In her obituary, it was noted that 'The Guild of Professional Social Workers of Great Britain has lost one of its most valued members'.<sup>1122</sup> She was also noted as the first chairman of the Social Workers' Section of the Newman Association.<sup>1123</sup>

### **Christina Mary Sheppard (called to the Bar at Gray's Inn in 1935)**

Christina Mary Sheppard, known as Mary Sheppard, was born in 1896 in Dublin North, Ireland.<sup>1124</sup> Her father was John Sheppard, a medical practitioner.<sup>1125</sup> Perhaps following in her father's footsteps, Mary Sheppard graduated as a medical practitioner from Trinity College, University of Dublin, in 1919.<sup>1126</sup> She was admitted to Gray's Inn in 1923, and subsequently called to the Bar

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<sup>1118</sup> 'Outbound Passengers by the Washington to New York [online]' (17 August 1933), Find My Past.com.

<sup>1119</sup> Goldthorpe, Liz, 'Email to Charlotte Coleman from Liz Goldthorpe Who Has Researched the First Irish Women Barristers', 6 December 2019.

<sup>1120</sup> Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 'Ireland, Civil Registration Births Index, 1864-1958'.

<sup>1121</sup> *The Northern Whig and Belfast Post*, 'Calls to the Bar', 17 June 1926, p.8.

<sup>1122</sup> *The Standard*, 'A Great Social Worker', 10 February 1950, p.2.

<sup>1123</sup> *Ibid.*: The Newman Association is a national organisation whose members meet regularly in local "circles" to discuss and develop their understanding of the Christian faith.

<sup>1124</sup> Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 'Ireland, Civil Registration Births Index, 1864-1958'.

<sup>1125</sup> 'National Archives: Census of Ireland 1911'.

<sup>1126</sup> 'UK and Ireland, Medical Registers, 1859-1943', Ancestry.co.uk, 2023, <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/discoveryui-content/view/1761205:62268?tid=&pid=&queryId=c27003d8->

in 1935. As the papers reported, she was Assistant Medical Officer to the Walthamstow Borough Council at the time. *The Irish Times* published a picture of her in her gown on Call night.<sup>1127</sup>

It is likely that she did not intend to practise as a barrister; the 1939 Census lists her profession as 'medical practitioner' and she continued to appear on the Medical Registers until 1943.<sup>1128</sup> Mary Sheppard continued to live in Dublin, Ireland. Research also shows that she travelled with her brother, who was also a medical practitioner, in 1954 and also in 1959 when they appear to have departed from either New Westminster (British Columbia) or Oakland (Canada), heading for Liverpool.<sup>1129</sup> It has not been possible to trace what happened to Mary Sheppard after this time.

### **Kathleen Anna Burgess (called to the Bar at Middle Temple in 1927)**

Kathleen Anna Burgess was born in Dolphin's Barn, Dublin, Ireland; her father was a merchant.<sup>1130</sup> She attended Trinity College, Dublin, where she graduated in 1914. She is recorded as being a member of Dublin University Women Graduates' Association (DUWGA) in 1927, and she was also a prominent and highly respected member of the women graduates network.<sup>1131</sup> She was admitted to Middle Temple in 1924, and subsequently called in 1927. She became a member of the Oxford circuit but, according to *The Daily News*, did not intend to practise.<sup>1132</sup>

Kathleen Burgess got engaged to Averell Deverell's twin brother; their engagement was announced in March 1929. However just months later, in June, she was experiencing serious

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d6a6-4fd9-b00f-b555689f37f4&\_phsrc=iCe336&\_phstart=successSource; *Sunderland Daily Echo and Shipping Gazette*, 'Women's Ambition of Legal Honour Fading?', 22 January 1935, p.5.

<sup>1127</sup> *The Irish Times*, 'Called to the Bar', 25 January 1935; *The Essex Chronicle*, 'Court and Social', 25 January 1935, p.7.

<sup>1128</sup> 'UK and Ireland, Medical Registers, 1859-1943', 2023; Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., '1939 England and Wales Register'.

<sup>1129</sup> She featured in *The Catholic Standard* in the Letters to Editor section and noted her location as Howth, Dublin. 'Irish Nurses in England', *Catholic Standard*, 15 May 1953; Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 'UK and Ireland, Incoming Passenger Lists, 1878-1960 [database on-Line]'.

<sup>1130</sup> Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 'Ireland, Civil Registration Births Index, 1864-1958'; 'National Archives: Census of Ireland 1911'.

<sup>1131</sup> Membership open to women graduates and holders of university diplomas and past women students who had attended one term's lectures. Goldthorpe, 'Dublin University Women Graduates'.

<sup>1132</sup> 'Women Barrister Suicide', *Daily News (London)*, 15 October 1929, p.7.

mental health problems; by October, she had committed suicide.<sup>1133</sup> It was said she was of 'unsound mind' and suffering from a 'nervous breakdown'.<sup>1134</sup>

### **Dorothy Travers Wolfe (called to the Bar at Lincoln's Inn in 1928)**

Dorothy Travers Wolfe, later Dorothy Frances Travers (Jasper) Wolfe, was born in Skibbereen, Cork, Ireland in 1903.<sup>1135</sup> Her father was Jasper Travers Wolfe, who was a solicitor, Crown Prosecutor West Cork, a politician (Teachta Dála), and the First Corkman to be President of the Incorporated Law Society. It was said he had 'all of Munster as His Client'.<sup>1136</sup> Indeed, the firm Wolf & Co LLP, founded in 1894 by Jasper Travers Wolfe, claimed to be 'one of the largest law firms in West Cork'.<sup>1137</sup>

Dorothy Wolfe was admitted to Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford University on 18 October 1922; she graduated with a BA in Modern Languages on 14 November 1925.<sup>1138</sup> She was admitted to Lincoln's Inn in the same year and was subsequently called in 1928. In 1933, she married Sir Arwyn Lynn Ungode-Thomas, politician, Solicitor-General and judge; the couple had two sons and one daughter.<sup>1139</sup> Sir Arwyn Lynn Ungode-Thomas had a prolific legal career, working on my legal cases. Dorothy Wolfe appeared in the Law Directory at 2 Brick Court in 1934 but, a few years later, the 1939 census noted that her occupation was unpaid domestic duties.<sup>1140</sup> Despite this, she appeared on the Law Lists until 1953.<sup>1141</sup>

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<sup>1133</sup> Goldthorpe, 'Dublin University Women Graduates'.

<sup>1134</sup> 'Women Barrister Suicide'.

<sup>1135</sup> 'Oxford University Archive, Dorothy Travers Wolfe, January 2020, (Ref: UR 1/2/16)'.

<sup>1136</sup> durrushistory, '1952, Enormous Funeral, Skibbereen Closes Down, of Jasper Travers Wolfe, Born 1872, Solicitor, Crown Prosecutor West Cork, Three Times Elected TD, "He Had All of Munster as His Client", First Corkman to Be President Incorporated Law Society', West Cork History, 11 July 2020, <https://durrushistory.com/2020/07/11/1953-enormous-funeral-skibbereen-closes-down-of-jasper-travers-wolfe-born-1872-solicitor-crown-prosecutor-west-cork-three-times-elected-td-he-had-all-of-munster-as-his-client-first-corkma/>.

<sup>1137</sup> 'About Us - Wolfe & Co Solicitors', Wolfe & Co Solicitors - Market Street Skibbereen (Wolfe & Co. Solicitors, 13 May 2015), <https://www.wolfe.ie/about-us/>.

<sup>1138</sup> 'Oxford University Archive, Dorothy Travers Wolfe, (Ref: UR 1/2/16)'.

<sup>1139</sup> John Graham Jones, 'UNGOED-THOMAS, (ARWYN) LYNN (1904-1972), Labour Politician', Dictionary of Welsh Biography, 9 August 2011, <https://biography.wales/article/s8-UNGO-LYN-1904>.

<sup>1140</sup> Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., '1939 England and Wales Register'.

<sup>1141</sup> Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 'UK, City and County Directories, 1766 - 1946'; Polden, 'Index to Women: Portia's Progress Women at the Bar in England 1919 - 1939'.

## North America

Five of the women admitted to the Inns were born in 'North America' including Canada; two were sisters. Four of these women were subsequently called to the Bar.

Inn	Admitted	Called	Age at Admission	Name	Country of Birth	Ethnicity
Inner Temple	26-Apr-1924	11-May-1927	24	Winifred Bottrell McConnell	North America	White
Inner Temple	8-Oct-1924	Not Called	22	Alice Lorraine Campbell Holt-Kentwell	North America	Mixed
Middle Temple	22-Jun-1926	26-Jan-1933	26	Mildred Dunbar Miles	North America	White (American)
Middle Temple	24-Nov-1926	18-Nov-1929	22	Katherine Mumford Hendrick	North America	White (American)
Middle Temple	24-Nov-1926	18-Nov-1929	19	Jessie Edson Hendrick	North America	White (American)

Table 4.11: Women Admitted to the Inns of Court who were born in the 'North America'

## Canada

In Canada, women could become barristers from 1897.<sup>1142</sup> The Canadian Bar would have therefore been an option for Winifred McConnell, yet she chose the Bar of England and Wales.

## Winifred Bottrell McConnell (called to the Bar at Inner Temple in 1927)

Winifred Bottrell McConnell was born in Ontario, Canada.<sup>1143</sup> Her father, Richard George McConnell was a geologist and explorer.<sup>1144</sup> She arrived in England in 1922<sup>1145</sup> and was admitted to the Inner Temple two years later in 1924. After her call she appears to have stayed in England; she married Sir Anthony Highmore King, a Barrister at law at Inner Temple, in 1934.<sup>1146</sup> It is possible that they met through their connections at Inner Temple. No evidence has been found

<sup>1142</sup> Mossman, *The First Women : A Comparative Study of Gender, Law and the Legal Profession*.

<sup>1143</sup> Ancestry.com, '1901 Census of Canada', *Online Publication - Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc*, 2006, <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/databases/census-19>.

<sup>1144</sup> Eric J. Holmgren, Eric J, 'Richard George McConnell', accessed 21 March 2024, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/richard-george-mcconnell>.

<sup>1145</sup> Ancestry.com, 'Canada, Ocean Arrivals (Form 30A), 1919-1924', *Online Publication - Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc.*, 2009.

<sup>1146</sup> 'Sir Anthony King (Highmore)', *Who's Who & Who Was Who*, 1 December 2007, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ww/9780199540884.013.u156386>.

to suggest that Winifred McConnell ever practised, but she did write 'retired barrister at law' as her profession in the 1939 Census.<sup>1147</sup>

### *America*

In some parts of America, women could become lawyers from 1869.<sup>1148</sup> Therefore, the US Bar could have been an option for the women below; they still chose the Bar of England and Wales.

### **Mildred Dunbar Miles (called to the Bar at Middle Temple in 1933)**

Mildred Dunbar Miles was born in New York, where her family was prominent in business. She was a Durant scholar at Wellesley College, Massachusetts, USA, and a member of the House of Representatives in the Wellesley College Government Association. In this capacity, she served with other students to discuss and create laws concerning non-academic activities on campus. Mildred Miles also served on the Advisory Committee for a college publication called *The Outlook*, which was described as an annual illustrated journal of college life.<sup>1149</sup> Following her graduation in 1922, she taught English for a year at the University of Yenching in China. She then moved to England, where she was admitted to Middle Temple in 1926. She continued to live in England until her call in 1935. After this, she returned to the United States and became a member of the New York Bar. Shortly afterwards, she became an Associate Professor of Law and also a Legal Librarian at the Buffalo Law School. It was there that she met her husband, Louis L Jaffe, who was then the dean of the school. They married in 1938 and moved to Cambridge, Massachusetts in 1940 upon Louis Jaffe's appointment at Harvard as Professor of Administrative Law. They had two children and three grandchildren; Mildred Jaffe died in 1980 when she was 80 years old.<sup>1150</sup>

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<sup>1147</sup> Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., '1939 England and Wales Register'.

<sup>1148</sup> Keri Lynn Engel, 'Who Was the First Female Lawyer in the US?', *Amazing Women In History* | all the women the history books left out (*Amazing Women In History*, 25 October 2022), <https://amazingwomeninhistory.com/who-was-the-first-female-lawyer-in-the-us/>.

<sup>1149</sup> 'Wellesley College 1875-1975: A Century of Women', accessed 21 March 2024, <https://repository.wellesley.edu/object/wellesley14321>.

<sup>1150</sup> 'Louis L. Jaffe, 90, Noted Legal Scholar', *The New York Times*, 15 December 1996, <https://www.nytimes.com/1996/12/15/us/louis-l-jaffe-90-noted-legal-scholar.html>; 'Obituary for Mildred M. Jaffe (Aged 80)', *Newspapers.com*, 27 November 1980, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/61615826/obituary-for-mildred-m-jaffe-aged-80/?xid=637>.



### **Katherine Mumford Hendrick and Jessie Edson Hendrick (called at Middle Temple in 1929)**

Katherine Mumford Hendrick and Jessie Edson Hendrick were sisters born in Philadelphia. Katherine Hendrick was the older sister and was born in 1904; Jessie Hendrick was born in 1907. Their father was Frank Hendrick, a lawyer living in New York City. They both attended Bryn Mawr College in the United States before coming to England to read at the Bar.

Both sisters attended Oxford University, but Katherine was part of Lady Margaret Hall and Jessie was part of the Oxford Home Students scheme; they both matriculated in October 1926.<sup>1151</sup> The sisters were admitted to Middle Temple on the same day in 1926 and were called on the same day in 1929. It appears that Katherine Hendrick stayed in England and eventually married Sir Edwin Alan Hitchman, an English Civil Servant; their first child was born in 1941. By 1939, Katherine Hendrick's occupation was listed as 'unpaid domestic duties'.<sup>1152</sup> She died in England in 1996.<sup>1153</sup> Jessie Hendrick returned to America around 1931 and became a lawyer in New York. She married William Huger Hardie, a Yale educated engineer, in 1932; they had four children. The eldest son, William Huger Hardie Junior, was an attorney and published many articles of legal research. He was voted as the best lawyer in his field on many occasions.<sup>1154</sup>

### **Alice Lorraine Campbell Holt-Kentwell (admitted to Inner Temple in 1924, but not called)**

Alice Lorraine Campbell Holt-Kentwell was born in Hawaii, and the story has been documented in Chapter 3.

### **South Africa**

Four of the women admitted to the Inns of Court between 1919 and 1929 were born in South Africa; two of the women were South African, and two had British nationality. Two of the four women were called. *Table 4.12* below identifies these women.

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<sup>1151</sup> 'Oxford University Archives for Jessie Edson Hendrick. January 2020, Ref: UR 1/2/38; UR 2/1/156'; 'Oxford University Archives for Katherine Mumford Hendrick. January 2020, Ref: UR 1/2/38; UR 2/1/156'.

<sup>1152</sup> Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., '1939 England and Wales Register'.

<sup>1153</sup> 'Obituary for Katharine Hitchman', Newspapers.com, 30 December 1996, <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/104733705/obituary-for-katharine-hitchman/?xid=637>.

<sup>1154</sup> Legacy, 'William Hardie Obituary', Legacy, 21 May 2019, <https://obits.al.com/us/obituaries/mobile/name/william-hardie-obituary?id=8791720>.

Inn	Admitted	Called	Age at Admission	Name	Country of Birth	Ethnicity
Middle Temple	15-Jun-1922	6-May-1925	31	Gladys Evelyn Steyn	South Africa	White
Inner Temple	11-Jan-1924	Not Called	39	Mary Martin	South Africa	White
Middle Temple	1-Nov-1927	Not Called	17	Lala Smit	South Africa	White
Middle Temple	25-Jan-1928	29-Apr-1931	20	Nora Myfanwy Gipson	South Africa	White

Table 4.12: Women Admitted to the Inns of Court who were born in 'South Africa'

In South Africa, women were not permitted to join the legal profession until March 1923. Therefore, those in South Africa who wanted to become barristers would initially have had to enter the Bar of England and Wales.

#### **Gladys Evelyn Steyn (called to the Bar at Middle Temple in 1925)**

The first woman from South Africa to be admitted and called to the Bar of England and Wales was Gladys Evelyn Steyn, who was born in 1890 in Bloemfontein, South Africa. Her father was President Marthinus Theunis Steyn, who was president of the Orange Free State (a republic in Southern Africa) during the South African War. Her mother was Rachel Isabella 'Tibbie' Fraser; she fiercely opposed British rule in South Africa.<sup>1155</sup> As mentioned previously (in the introduction), later in life Gladys Steyn repeatedly erased or changed her archives in respect of her relationship with van Heerden's, foregrounding her mother instead of van Heerden.<sup>1156</sup> These silences suggests that she did not want to be remembered in this way, particularly as later she entered a heterosexual marriage.

Gladys Steyn was educated at Grey University College, Bloemfontein and became the principal of an elite school for girls started by her parents in Bloemfontein. By 1921, she had resigned as

<sup>1155</sup> E. Truter, 'Verset en volharding: die lewe van Rachel Isabella (Tibbie) Steyn gedurende die Anglo-Boereoorlog', *Literator* 20, no. 3 (26 April 1999): 51–68.

<sup>1156</sup> van der Westhuizen, "Lesbian dis/appearances: epistemic violence against internal dissidents in the formation of Afrikaner Identity." In *Violence: South African Perspectives*.

principal and had moved in with Petronella van Heerden, the first Afrikaner woman to become a doctor.<sup>1157</sup> The two women travelled to Europe for study purposes: Steyn to pursue Law, and Van Heerden to study Gynaecology.<sup>1158</sup> The pair were lovers;<sup>1159</sup> however, Tibbie Steyn, Gladys Steyn's mother, expressed severe discontent about their relationship in letters to her close friend Emily Hobhouse.<sup>1160</sup>

Gladys Steyn was admitted to Middle Temple in 1922 and was called in 1925. She did not practise in England but returned to South Africa where, as Adv Gladys Steyn, she appeared in the Circuit Court in Senekal as the first female public prosecutor in 1926. She was the first female lawyer in the Appeals Court, Bloemfontein and was a Member of the Provincial Council Free State.<sup>1161</sup> In August 1942 she married Walter Bosman, who was born in Hong Kong and was of mixed ethnicity (White Dutch and Chinese).<sup>1162</sup> This was Walter Bosman's second marriage; his first wife had died in March 1942. He had served as Captain in South Africa as a Mining Engineer and also published books including a history of The Bambatha Rebellion,<sup>1163</sup> which is still a valuable source in terms of the details it contains of the campaign<sup>1164</sup> At the time of their marriage, Walter Bosman was

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<sup>1157</sup> 'Dr Petronella A Van Heerden', The British Museum, accessed 11 January 2024, <https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/term/BIOG129188>.

<sup>1158</sup> Van Heerden described her and Steyn's five years together in Harrismith as the most joyful period of her life: van der Westhuizen, "Lesbian dis/appearances: epistemic violence against internal dissidents in the formation of Afrikaner Identity." In *Violence: South African Perspectives*.

<sup>1159</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1160</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1161</sup> Ibid.; Mabel Jansen, 'The Practical Realities of a Woman Practising at the Bar', *Advocate*, August 2006. Jansen, Mabel SC, 'The Practical Realities of a Woman Practising at the Bar', *Advocat*, August 2006.

<sup>1162</sup> Walter Bosman was born Ho Kai Kai in Hong Kong, he was one of five children of a Dutch father with Jewish roots and a Chinese mother. While his brothers identified themselves as Chinese and became prosperous and prominent citizens of Hong Kong, he adopted his father's surname and regarded himself as an English-speaking European Christian. Milner Snell, *From Ho Kai Kai to Captain Walter Bosman: Race and Cultural Identity in Hong Kong and Natal*, ed. Natalia (Natal Society Foundation 2021, 2021); 'South Africa, Natal Province, Civil Marriages, 1845-1955', FamilySearch.org, accessed 16 January 2024, <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:S3HT-DT17-QZX?i=2354&cc=2063749>.

<sup>1163</sup> An uprising of the Zulu people against the British rule of southern Africa.

<sup>1164</sup> Books include *The Natal Rebellion of 1906* (1907) and *Lands Unknown* (1938), which recounts his motoring journey from Paris to Bombay. Snell, *From Ho Kai Kai to Captain Walter Bosman: Race and Cultural Identity in Hong Kong and Natal*; Walter Bosman, *The Natal Rebellion of 1906* (United Kingdom: Longmans, Green, and Company, 1907); Walter Bosman, *Lands Unknown* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Daily Press, 1939).

77 years old and was a Company Director; Gladys Steyn was 51. Bosman died a few years later in 1945,<sup>1165</sup> but Gladys Steyn died in 1989 at the age of 98.

### **Mary Martin (admitted to Inner Temple in 1924, but not called)**

Mary Martin, later Dr Mary Turton, was born in Alice, Cape Colony. According to her student record at Edinburgh University, her nationality was British.<sup>1166</sup> She was not called to the Bar and her story is told in Chapter 3.

### **Lala Smit (admitted to Middle Temple in 1927, but not called)**

It has not been possible to trace precisely where or when Lala Smit was born, but it is highly likely she was born in South Africa as her father was the High Commissioner there. Her story has been included in Chapter 3 as she was not called.

### **Nora Myfanwy Gipson (called to the Bar at Middle Temple in 1931)**

Nora Myfanwy Gipson was of British nationality as by parentage,<sup>1167</sup> but was born in 1907 in Uitenhage, South Africa. Her father, Charles Gipson, was born in Kent and was an accountant for a newspaper in Port Elizabeth. Her mother, Mildred Gipson, was born in Wales but moved to South Africa when she was a baby. Mildred Gipson campaigned for women to get the vote in South Africa<sup>1168</sup> and believed in educational opportunities for both men and women; she encouraged Nora Gipson to study law (her brother, Trevor studied medicine at Cambridge).<sup>1169</sup>

Nora Gipson grew up in Redhouse, a small village in the Eastern Cape, and attended school there. When she was 10 years old, she went to the Collegiate School in Port Elizabeth. She applied for a

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<sup>1165</sup> Snell, *From Ho Kai Kai to Captain Walter Bosman: Race and Cultural Identity in Hong Kong and Natal*.

<sup>1166</sup> 'Martin, Mary', Inner Temple Collections, Accessed 16 January 2024, <https://archives.innertemple.org.uk/names/bf094fcb-0f48-4b07-a918-0ebe171295b9>.

<sup>1167</sup> It has not been possible to find evidence of her formal nationality but her son, John Warren, said his mother always held British nationality.

<sup>1168</sup> Mildred Gipson, known as Mim, in Nora Gipson's *Memoirs*, was invited to the Royal Garden Party in 1933 because of the services as a City Councillor in Port Elizabeth and to women's causes, especially women's suffrage Gipson, 'Nora Myfanwy Gipson's *Memoirs*', p.98.

<sup>1169</sup> Ibid.

place at Newnham College Cambridge in 1926 but was turned down because she was too young; the college suggested that she might reapply in 1927. Instead, she read Law at Rhodes University, Eastern Cape, South Africa; however, she did not enjoy her experiences and so left South Africa to read for the Bar at the London School of Economics, noting that this was where 'the Law students seemed to have congregated'.<sup>1170</sup> She was admitted to Middle Temple in 1928 and was subsequently called in 1931. She did not practise and wrote that 'a woman had to have legal profession connections, if she were to obtain a place in a set of Chambers. The only strings available to me to pull, lay in the newspaper Word, and, when the recession came, in 1931, I had to make places to earn my living in that milieu.'<sup>1171</sup> Subsequently, she remained in England and attended a secretarial college, finishing in 1932. She was able to get a job at the Evening Standard as a Private Secretary to the Managing Director in 1933 and later the editor, Mr Prewitt in 1934.<sup>1172</sup>

In 1934 she married John Gunn, a doctor who was introduced to her by her brother; they had three children. She did not work after her marriage, but she did stay in England living in London, Devon and later Essex where she died in 2003 at the age of 96. John Warren, her son, notes that she [Nora] 'sacrificed her career opportunities in order to ensure that all three of us obtained the best possible education. My brother and I are both Cambridge graduates, and my sister, now deceased, was an Edinburgh graduate. None of us took up the legal profession.'<sup>1173</sup>

Fortunately, it has been possible to obtain Nora Gipson's unpublished memoirs; these document her up-bringing, her education, and her life at the Bar and after the Bar. Although she was British by nationality, she grew up in South Africa and considered this home.<sup>1174</sup> However, although she lived in South Africa, she appears to have had a strong English influence. Her mother, for example, was strict with her English; she ensured that Nora Gipson spoke the language properly and

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<sup>1170</sup> Ibid., p.78.

<sup>1171</sup> Ibid. p.80.

<sup>1172</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1173</sup> 'Email from John Warren to Charlotte Coleman about His Mother, Nora Warren', 20 November 2019.

<sup>1174</sup> Nora Gipson notes that she intended to return to South Africa after qualifying for the Bar, p.91. Gipson, 'Nora Myfanwy Gipson's Memoirs'.

disapproved of the native Xhosa and Afrikaans languages. In addition, Nora Gipson had to attend extra elocution lessons.<sup>1175</sup> Despite this, the English Bar students still noted her difference. For example, Sybil Campbell referred to her as 'the wildebeest' because of her thick South African accent.<sup>1176</sup> It is likely that Nora Gipson, too, saw herself as South African as she wanted to return to South Africa after her studies. It is interesting that she notes that it was 'quite an experience' when she 'met a man of colour socially' at Cambridge when she was visiting her brother.<sup>1177</sup> Her previous experiences were that black people were servants or that they lived in neighbouring villages; they did not integrate with the White South Africans.

The stories of the international women admitted to the Inns of Court are important primarily because they are part of the story of the first women barristers. Indeed, some of them were the first women from their country to be admitted to the Bar of England and Wales. It is right to include the stories of other women in this group because, whether they achieved anything significant or not, they were there. For some, their choice to enter the Bar of England and Wales is an obvious one because, although they were born abroad, they were British citizens or the Bar in their native country was closed to them. In the case of some women, it is puzzling that they chose the Bar of England and Wales. For example, Marie Madeleine Delage, born in France, could have chosen to be admitted to the Bar in France but instead chose the Bar of England and Wales. Perhaps this was because she undertook her degree in England (at Oxford), as many of the other international women did, and wanted to complete her legal training at the same time. More broadly, we can understand from the stories of some of these women that their families moved around due to employment circumstances, particularly the military and links with the British Empire. Movement between countries was therefore very fluid.

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<sup>1175</sup> Ibid.p.42.

<sup>1176</sup> Ibid., p.80.

<sup>1177</sup> Ibid. p.78.

## Ethnicity

Ethnicity defines the group or subgroup to which people belong; usually they share identity based on culture, religion, traditions, and customs.<sup>1178</sup> The classification of ethnicity in this research has followed those adopted by the 2021 Census:<sup>1179</sup>

1. Asian: Indian; Pakistani; Bangladeshi; Chinese; any other Asian background.
2. Black: Caribbean; African; any other Black, Black British, or Caribbean background.
3. Mixed: White and Black Caribbean; White and Black African; White and Asian; any other Mixed or multiple ethnic background.
4. White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British; Irish; any other White background.
5. Other: Arab; any other ethnic group.

Of the 65 international women admitted and/or called to the Bar, 29 women were minority ethnic. In addition, Candida Dhunbar Saklatvala, admitted to Lincoln's Inn in 1926 (not called) was born in England to a British mother; her father was Indian. Therefore, the total number of minority ethnic women admitted to the Inns of Court between 1919 to 1929 was 30 out of 236 (12.7%). The ethnicity of the 65 international women who were admitted and/or called to the Bar, plus Candida Dhunbar Saklatvala, has been detailed below.

	Admissions	
Ethnicity	No.	% of total admissions
Indian	14	5.9
Chinese	6	2.5
Bamar	1	0.4
<b>Total Asian</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>8.9</b>
African	1	0.4
Caribbean	1	0.4

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<sup>1178</sup> Fenton, *Ethnicity*.

<sup>1179</sup> Gov Uk, 'List of Ethnic Groups', Gov.uk, 17 August 2011, <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/style-guide/ethnic-groups/>.

<b>Total Black</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0.8</b>
Anglo-Indian	3	1.3
Mixed-Polynesian	1	0.4
<b>Total Mixed</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1.7</b>
Middle Eastern / Jewish	3	1.3
<b>Total Other</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1.3</b>
White	36	15.3
<b>Total Ethnic Minority</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>12.7</b>

Table 4.13: Ethnicity of International Women Admitted to the Bar between 1919 and 1929

Of the 236 of women admitted (in total) between 1919 and 1929, 21 (8.9%) were of Asian ethnicity. This is the largest ethnic group among the overseas women (21 out of 65, or 32.3%). Overall, 30 of the 236 applicants (12.7%) were from ethnic minorities. The women who were minority ethnic are identified below. 21 out of 30 (70%) of the minority ethnic women were called to the Bar.

#### *Asian Ethnicity*

16 of the 21 (76.2%) ethnically Asian women were called to the Bar. These women are listed below.

<b>First Name</b>	<b>Inn</b>	<b>Admission</b>	<b>Call Date</b>	<b>Age at admission</b>	<b>Country of Birth</b>	<b>Ethnicity/ Nationality</b>
Mithan Ardeshir Tata	Lincoln's Inn	13-Apr-1920	26-Jan-1923	22	India	Asian - Indian
Ondan Kunathadathil Meenakshi Devi	Middle Temple	23-Apr-1920	27-Jan-1930	26	India	Asian - Indian
Cornelia Sorabji	Lincoln's Inn	1-May-1922	13-Jun-1923	54	India	Asian - Indian
Beng Hong Lin	Inner Temple	19-Nov-1923	16-Jun-1926	20	Asia: Malaysia	Asian: Chinese
Seeta Narayan Ajgaonker	Lincoln's Inn	21-Nov-1923	26-Jan-1928	22	India	Asian - Indian
Daw Phar Hmee	Inner Temple	21-Jan-1924	17-Nov-1926	22	India: Burma	Asian - Bamar



Soon Kim Teo	Inner Temple	28-May-1924	29-Jun-1927	19	Asia: Singapore	Asian: Chinese
Ella Violet Hoahing	Inner Temple	17-Oct-1924	Not Called	18	West Indies: British Guiana (Chinese)	Asian - Chinese
Sarah Dhar	Middle Temple	15-Nov-1924	29-Jun-1927	22	India: Burma	Asian - Indian
Sita Vadivit Devadoss	Inner Temple	16-Nov-1925	20-Jun-1928	19	India	Asian - Indian
Lucy See	Inner Temple	20-Oct-1926	27-Jan-1930	18	Asia: Singapore	Asian: Chinese
Gladys Eileen Sarran	Inner Temple	28-Jun-1927	17-Nov-1931	23	West Indies: British Guiana	Asian - Indian; Guyanese
Deena Kooka	Lincoln's Inn	17-Oct-1928	8-Jun-1932	20	India	Asian - Indian
Dilnavaz Byramji	Inner Temple	30-Oct-1928	17-Nov-1931	20	India	Asian - Indian
Agnes Swaroop Kumari Gour	Inner Temple	1-Jan-1929	Not Called	22	India	Asian - Indian
Beng Sim Wong	Lincoln's Inn	16-Apr-1929	Not Called	17	Asia: Malaysia	Asian: Chinese
Bhicoo Batlivala	Inner Temple	23-Apr-1929	8-Jun-1932	18	India	Asian - Indian
Peroja Jamshed Bahadurji	Lincoln's Inn	1-Nov-1929	26-Jan-1933	18	India	Asian - Indian
Lily Evalina Tie Ten Quee	Middle Temple	2-Nov-1929	17-Nov-1933	21	West Indies: Jamaica	Asian - Chinese
Helen Winifred Marguerite Rodrigo	Middle Temple	13-Nov-1929	Not Called	22	India: Ceylon	Asian - Indian
Chaturlaxmi Balkrishna Joshi	Middle Temple	20-Nov-1929	Not Called	23	India	Asian - Indian

Table 4.14: Women Admitted to the Inns of Court of Asian Ethnicity

### *Black Ethnicity*

Only two women, Iris de Freitas and Stella Jane Thomas, were ethnically Black; they were both called to the Bar and continued practising in the law in their native countries.

First Name	Inn	Admission	Call Date	Age at admission	Country of Birth	Ethnicity/Nationality
Iris de Freitas	Inner Temple	27-Sep-1922	28-Jan-1929	25	West Indies: British Guiana	Black - Caribbean; Guyanese
Stella Jane Thomas	Middle Temple	2-Dec-1929	10-May-1933	23	Africa: Nigeria	Black - African

Table 4.15: Women Admitted to the Inns of Court of Black Ethnicity

### *Mixed Ethnicity*

Four of the women were of mixed ethnicity: Ilma Gertrude May de Jonge, Coomee Rustom Dantra and Candida Dhunbar Saklatvala were Anglo-Indian. Alice Lorraine Campbell Holt-Kentwell was mixed English Chinese and Polynesian.<sup>1180</sup> Two of the four (50%) were called.

First Name	Inn	Admission	Call Date	Age at admission	Country of Birth	Ethnicity/Nationality
Ilma Gertrude May de Jonge	Lincoln's Inn	22-Nov-1920	27-Jan-1947	20	West Indies: British Guiana	Mixed - Anglo-Indian; British
Coomee Rustom Dantra	Inner Temple	14-Jan-1924	26-Jan-1928	21	India: Burma	Mixed - Anglo-Indian
Alice Lorraine Campbell Holt-Kentwell	Inner Temple	8-Oct-1924	Not Called	22	North America: Hawaii	Mixed - Chinese, English, Polynesian
Candida Dhunbar Saklatvala	Lincoln's Inn	4-Nov-1926	Not Called	17	UK - England	Mixed- Anglo-Indian

Table 4.16: Women Admitted to the Inns of Court of Mixed Ethnicity

### *Other Ethnicity*

Three women were of 'other' ethnicities: Averyl Harcourt was of Middle Eastern and Jewish descent potentially Iraqi Sephardic or Ashkenazi.<sup>1181</sup> Rita Reuben was born in Singapore; her father, Nassim Reuben, was a Jewish businessman who had lived in Singapore for over 40 years.<sup>1182</sup> It is possible that she was of Iraqi Sephardic or Ashkenazi descent as most of the Jews

<sup>1180</sup> Her father was Anglo-Chinese, and mother was Hawaiian.

<sup>1181</sup> Gayton, 'Email to Charlotte Coleman Regarding Averyl Harcourt'.

<sup>1182</sup> 'LIVED IN SINGAPORE FOR 40 YEARS'.

who lived and worked in Singapore were of this descent.<sup>1183</sup> She later became a naturalised British citizen.<sup>1184</sup> Nur Jehan Mohammad Yusuf's ethnicity has not been identified with certainty; however, it is likely she was either Indian or possibly Middle Eastern. It has not been possible to identify her city of birth but her city of residency on application to Middle Temple was Lucknow, India. She was recorded as Nur Telian Yusuf on the Middle Temple Register and was admitted in 1929. She was not called to the Bar, and her story is documented in Chapter 3.

First Name	Inn	Admission	Call Date	Age at admission	Country of Birth	Ethnicity/ Nationality
Averyl Harcourt	Middle Temple	19-Mar-1920	Not Called	40	India	Other - Middle Eastern/Jewish
Rita Reuben	Middle Temple	6-Apr-1921	28-Jan-1924	19	Asia: Singapore	Other - Jewish/Iraqi Sephardic or Ashkenazi (neutralised British)
Nur Jehan Mohammad Yusuf	Middle Temple	11-Jul-1929	Not Called	26	India	Other - Middle Eastern/Asian

Table 4.17: Women Admitted to the Inns of Court of Other Ethnicity

The international women who were minority ethnic were mostly from British India. These women were very young, with all but two of them in their teens or 20s. This suggests that they were either undergraduates or had just finished their undergraduate degree. It can be understood that while some of them had the option to enter the Bar in their native country, others had to be admitted to the Bar of England and Wales because their country would not allow women to enter the legal profession. Therefore, the Bar of England and Wales, may have been the only option for them. It is likely that some of the women wanted to study in England and felt that they could undertake legal training at the Bar simultaneously. For example, it is understood that at least 17 out of 30 (56.7%) of the minority ethnic women attended a university in the UK with Oxford, Cambridge and London being the most popular choices (43.3%). *Table 4.18* below sets out the Universities the minority ethnic women attended.

<sup>1183</sup> Singapore Government, 'Chesed-El Synagogue', Roots.gov.sg, accessed 1 February 2024, <https://www.roots.gov.sg/places/places-landing/Places/national-monuments/chesed-el-synagogue>.

<sup>1184</sup> 'Naturalisation Certificate: Rita Reuben'.

University	No. Attended	% of minority ethnic attended
Oxbridge	6	20.0%
London	7	23.3%
England (other)	1	3.3%
Wales	2	6.7%
Scotland	1	3.3%
India	7	23.3%
None	3	10.0%
Unknown	3	10.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Table 4.18: Universities the minority ethnic women attended

In Chapter 1, it was noted that there was an influx of university students as ex-service men turned to education following the First World War. Perraton, who has researched foreign students in Britain, also found that empire, industrialisation, and the growth of the middle-classes and the professions, led to an increase in universities, university numbers, and foreign students alike.<sup>1185</sup> It may therefore have been that the education system itself, as well as the Bar, attracted some international women.

## Was the Bar ethnically diverse in the 1920s?

This research has shown that 12.7% of the women admitted to the Inns of Court between 1919 and 1929 were minority ethnic. In that respect, it could be said that the Inns of Court were not significantly ethnically diverse during this 10-year period. However, if the scope of the data was extended to include male international students, it would obviously show a larger cohort of minority ethnic people at the Inns of Court during this time. When the 1920s figures are compared with more recent data from 2019 to 2023 a more nuanced picture emerges. All figures have been taken from the Bar Standards Board (BSB), Call to Bar and tenancy statics, Total

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<sup>1185</sup> Brewis, and Laqua, 'Students in England and the Legacy of the First World War'.

Practising Bar - Ethnicity.<sup>1186</sup> There are two caveats here. The first is that the figures from the Bar Standards Board relate to all practising men and women. The figures for 1920 to 1929 are for women only and include women who were admitted to the Inns (regardless of whether they proceeded to call or practise). Secondly, for the purposes of analysis of the 1920s data, it has been assumed that all those born in the UK were of White ethnicity.

Year	Total Admitted/ Practising	Minority background	Proportion of total (%)	White	Proportion of total (%)
1920-1929	236	30	12.7	206	87.3
2019-2023	86643	12582	14.5	67846	78.3

Table 4.19: Ethnic Composition of Lawyers in 1920-1929 vs. 2019-2023

Despite these caveats regarding the composition of the data, these figures can nevertheless reveal that there has not been significant progress in terms of ethnicity at the Bar over this 100-year period. It is notable and positive that 12.7% of women applicants in the 1920s were of minority ethnic background. If the admission of minority ethnic men during the 1920s was included in the data, the percentage would certainly be higher and perhaps could even exceed recent levels. Another finding is that, as in the 1920s, the dominant ethnic group in 2023 was Asian: around 8.2% of the Bar, and 11.3% of pupils, are Asian/Asian British.<sup>1187</sup> Those from Black/Black British backgrounds comprise around 3.6 % of the Bar, and 6.2% of pupils.<sup>1188</sup> It can therefore be concluded that the Bar in the 1920s, given today's context, was to some extent ethnically and culturally diverse. It is likely that the diversity at the Bar in the 1920s, and perhaps beyond, reflects the role the Inns of Court played in the British Empire and the way that it prompted the movement of people within colonial countries.

<sup>1186</sup> BSB, 'Statistics on Practising Barristers', Bar Standards Board, 2022, <https://www.barstandardsboard.org.uk/news-publications/research-and-statistics/statistics-about-the-bar/practising-barristers.html>; Bar Standards Board, 'Diversity at the Bar 2023 A Summary of the Latest Available Diversity Data for the Bar', January 2024, file:///Users/charlottecoleman/Downloads/Diversity-at-the-Bar-2023Final-Version.pdf. Note that the BSB's figures include *practising* men and women whereas the historical data includes women only who were *admitted* to the Inns of Court.

<sup>1187</sup> Bar Standards Board, 'Diversity at the Bar 2023 A Summary of the Latest Available Diversity Data for the Bar'.

<sup>1188</sup> Ibid.

## What attracted overseas women to the Bar of England and Wales?

First, a special relationship between colonial countries and the Inns of Court had endured for more than four hundred years.<sup>1189</sup> In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Middle Temple lawyers backed the first colonial settlement in America, eventually leading to the creation of a successful tobacco plantation. Subsequently, many sons of the colonial elite were sent to London to gain legal education and professional status. They primarily enrolled at Middle Temple, but also pursued studies at the Inner Temple, Lincoln's Inn, and Gray's Inn.<sup>1190</sup> Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries there was further expansion, despite the American colonies gaining independence, and this again saw the sons of colonial administrators and members of the judiciary sent back to London to pursue legal education at the Inns of Court. In the 12<sup>th</sup> century, the British Empire's global reach expanded and consolidated; the Inns' membership included young men from India, Burma, the Caribbean, Australia and New Zealand.<sup>1191</sup> In respect of legal training, a person living in North America, Canada, Australasia or South Africa had the option of studying law in their own country. Some jurisdictions, such as America, Canada and New Zealand, had their own Bar.<sup>1192</sup> For other territories such as Burma, Malaysia, Nigeria, South Africa, the only choice for studying law and pursuing a career in the legal profession was to go to England and become a barrister there. This was particularly true in jurisdictions where women were not permitted to enter the legal profession.

Secondly, the Inns of Court were said to be welcoming to overseas students, given their strong colonial links. It was noted in 1930 that 'fifty of the 101 students called to the Bar are the sons or daughters of people resident abroad. Nearly all will return to their native lands without attempting to practise in England'.<sup>1193</sup> Historian, Gwen Jordan, argued that there was a 'colour bar' in England in the 1920s, linked to the 1919 Race Riots in Britain, that made it difficult for

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<sup>1189</sup> Bedwell, 'Conditions of Admission to the Legal Profession throughout the British Empire'.

<sup>1190</sup> Rider, 'The Admission of Overseas Students to the Inner Temple in the 19th Century'.

<sup>1191</sup> 'The Nineteenth Century - Revolution and Revitalisation'.

<sup>1192</sup> Bedwell, 'Conditions of Admission to the Legal Profession throughout the British Empire'.

<sup>1193</sup> 'Woman Barristers: Outlandish Names'.

Black and minority ethnic workers to secure employment.<sup>1194</sup> It is unlikely that barristers *per se* would have been affected as much by this 'colour bar' as much because it was mainly blue-collar or working class roles, such as port workers, that were affected.<sup>1195</sup> Nevertheless, post-war job competition was already an issue and more competition from 'outsiders' (as foreign students were often seen) is unlikely to have been welcome at an already crowded Bar. If an international student was not a British subject, the Inns of Court would have been the only option for them if they wanted to pursue a legal career because the solicitors' profession excluded non-citizens until 1974.<sup>1196</sup> Kathleen Hoahing, born in British Guiana, was the first Chinese woman solicitor.<sup>1197</sup>

Thirdly, some may also have intended to undertake their degree in the UK, perhaps being attracted by the more prestigious universities. It would therefore have made sense for them to complete their legal training at the Bar of England and Wales at the same time. Therefore, in some cases, the education system may have influenced applications to the Bar rather than the Bar being the driver itself.

## Conclusion

This chapter has documented that there was a constant flow of international women seeking admission at the Bar. 27.5% of the women admitted to the Bar were born overseas. However, not all were from ethnic minorities: 55% of women admitted were of White ethnicity (American, Australian, British, French, Russian or South African). Some of these women were the daughters of military men who were stationed in overseas countries. Of the total women admitted across the four Inns of Court only 30 out of 236 (12.7%) were minority ethnic. While this means the Inns of Court were not particularly diverse in terms of ethnicity, when compared to more recent data

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<sup>1194</sup> Gwen Jordan, 'A Woman of Strange, Unfathomable Presence: Ida Platt's Lived Experience of Race, Gender, and Law, 1863-1939', *Harv. JL & Gender* 42 (2019): 219.

<sup>1195</sup> White working-class men blamed black and minority ethnic communities (colonial workers) for post-war job shortages: The National Archives, '1919 Race Riots', The National Archives (The National Archives), accessed 30 January 2024, <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/resources/1919-race-riots/>.

<sup>1196</sup> Abel, *The Legal Profession in England and Wales*.

<sup>1197</sup> 'First Chinese Woman to Become a British Solicitor'. 'Would Practice Here'.

the percentage of minority ethnic women admitted to the Bar in the 1920s was perhaps remarkable. To an extent, then, the Inns of Court were indeed ethnically diverse, particularly if the male applicants were considered.

It was also seen that 71.9% of women who were born in the UK were called, while 80% of international women were called. From the stories of these international women, it has been found that many came from affluent backgrounds. On top of this, there is now a greater appreciation of the motivation and effort that surrounded international students' admission to the Bar. For some of the international applicants, the Bar in their native country may not have permitted women to enter; for others, being admitted to the Bar of England and Wales was a prerequisite of admission to the native Bar.

While some international students may have been attracted to the Bar of England and Wales because there was a special relationship between colonial countries, others may simply have made a choice to undertake their degree in the UK. For these students, legal training at the Bar of England and Wales would have made sense. Whatever their motivation, it can be understood that there was a clear expectation for the international women to return home to practise.<sup>1198</sup> The women's stories have reflected this; many did indeed choose to return home, whether to practise or to pursue a life outside the Bar.

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<sup>1198</sup> Abel, *The Legal Profession in England and Wales*.



## Chapter 5 : Diminishing Diversity at the Bar?

*'Fewer of the new barristers than usual propose to practise in England, evidence of the serious overcrowding at the Junior Bar.'*<sup>1199</sup>

This thesis has so far focused on diversity of sex at the Inns of Court, the honourable societies that educated and trained barristers. This work now considers diversity of the practising Bar i.e. the body of independent barristers who represented the public in court, advised both clients and solicitors and who held the government to account. Previous chapters have found (unsurprisingly given the timeframe of this work) that the Inns of Court were not particularly diverse in terms of sex, education and social background. However, they were diverse to an extent in terms of age and ethnicity.

This chapter considers whether the practising Bar reflected the ethnic diversity at the Inns of Court. It also identifies and enumerates the women from the 1919 to 1929 cohort who went on to practise. The steps involved in practising as a barrister are briefly set out below. This chapter then identifies some of the women's professional and social interactions and connections with each after they were called in respect of chambers, circuits, professional groups and social interests. Identifying their interactions helps us to understand if there were the beginnings of any support or professional networks between these women, and to understand more about the first women barristers' personal interests. This chapter therefore seeks to understand diversity at Bar in terms of sex and ethnicity. It also seeks to identify some of the interactions these women barristers had to understand more about potential professional and support networks.

### **Practising as a Barrister**

To practise, a barrister typically undertook 'pupillage', meaning that they spent some time under the tutelage of a more senior practitioner. While this was considered indispensable, it was not mandatory until 1959 when the Bar Council ruled that all barristers would be required to

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<sup>1199</sup> *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 'Call to the Bar', 19 January 1926, p.7.

complete 12 months of pupillage.<sup>1200</sup> Pupillage itself was a challenge for some aspiring barristers because the pupil could not expect any professional income during this period and they had to pay for it.<sup>1201</sup> Moreover, the process of obtaining a pupillage appeared to have been more subjective, focusing on personal qualities rather than technical competence. In 1976, a study found that 37% obtained their pupillage through personal acquaintance or introduction by an intermediary; only 29% succeeded through the Inn pupillage or sponsorship schemes.<sup>1202</sup>

After pupillage, aspiring barristers had to obtain a 'tenancy' in chambers. Historically, chambers consisted of groups of barristers renting rooms (chambers) from the Inns of Court. Barristers could only practise in chambers; these had to be staffed by a clerk and, at that time, had to be located within the Inns of Court.<sup>1203</sup> Therefore, barristers would typically obtain their work through their chambers. For women, finding pupillage or chambers was a 'serious drawback' and often determined their success or failure at the Bar.<sup>1204</sup> Chambers were not obliged to take in women; indeed, many of the clerks were put off by the idea of a woman, thinking it would be bad for business. The Inns of Court did recognise this problem and politely recommended that there should be no discrimination in this respect.<sup>1205</sup>

Once in a chamber, most barristers found it necessary to join one of the seven circuits (listed below).<sup>1206</sup> The origins of the circuit system go back to the 12<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>1207</sup> A circuit describes the way that visiting judges would travel around the country each year, on 'circuits', to hear cases. Although the system of circuits had somewhat declined by the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, they were still

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<sup>1200</sup> Abel, *The Legal Profession in England and Wales*.

<sup>1201</sup> Ibid., p.53.

<sup>1202</sup> Ibid., p.55.

<sup>1203</sup> Duman, *The English and Colonial Bars in the Nineteenth Century*; Abel, *The Legal Profession in England and Wales*; Polden, *Portia's Progress: Women at the Bar in England, 1919–1939*.

<sup>1204</sup> Polden, *Portia's Progress: Women at the Bar in England, 1919–1939*.

<sup>1205</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1206</sup> Today there are only six circuits; the Oxford Circuit no longer exists. Williams, George Haigh Graeme, *Death of a Circuit: Being Some Account of the Oxford Circuit and How It Was Abolished* (Wildy, Simmonds & Hill, 2006); The Bar Council, 'Circuits of England & Wales', The Bar Council, accessed 22 May 2024, <https://www.barcouncil.org.uk/about/about-the-bar/circuits-of-england-wales.html>.

<sup>1207</sup> The Bar Council, 'Circuits of England & Wales'.

an important part of a barrister's practice.<sup>1208</sup> The members of the circuit controlled who could join and they could block entry of an applicant; rejection was not permitted on the grounds of sex, but the social life of the circuit mess was intensely masculine.<sup>1209</sup> Within the circuit there were messes or sessions. For example, the Criminal Court Bar mess was part of the South Eastern circuit and represented the interests of all Old Bailey practitioners.<sup>1210</sup> The Quarter Sessions, such as the Kent Session, were local (County) courts. Minor crimes could be dealt with at these Sessions, but more serious ones were dealt with by the Assizes. Both the Quarter Sessions and Assizes were abolished in 1972 when they were replaced by the Crown Court.<sup>1211</sup>

### Numbers in Practice

It is difficult to determine how many of the women admitted between 1919 and 1929 practised, because barristers did not have to take out a practising certificate. Identification of whether a woman practised therefore required reference to a variety of sources, including Directories, cases published in newspapers, and membership of a chambers and/or circuit. Membership of a chamber or circuit did not necessarily imply that a woman practised to any great extent, but it does indicate that they took a step towards practising for however long and with or without success.

Abel estimates that 20 women were practising according to the 1921 census. This was a mere 0.7% of the Bar, by 1931 the number of practising women had tripled to 79 (27%).<sup>1212</sup> In 1925, Theodora Llewelyn Davies estimated that around 20 women of the 40 who had been called were practising.<sup>1213</sup> Polden estimates that between 40 and 50 women were in practice in any given year from 1939 to the 1950s.<sup>1214</sup> Women barristers registered in the Law Directories, see *Table*

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<sup>1208</sup> Duman, *The English and Colonial Bars in the Nineteenth Century*.

<sup>1209</sup> Abel, *The Legal Profession in England and Wales*; Polden, *Portia's Progress: Women at the Bar in England, 1919–1939*.

<sup>1210</sup> 'Central Criminal Court Bar Mess', South Eastern Circuit, 2015, <https://southeastcircuit.org.uk/bar-messes/central-criminal-court>.

<sup>1211</sup> Mitchinson, Les, 'Quarter Sessions Records', Kent Family History Society, accessed 23 May 2024, <https://www.kfhs.org.uk/event-society-report-quarter-sessions-records-2021-11-25>.

<sup>1212</sup> Abel, *The Legal Profession in England and Wales*, p.80.

<sup>1213</sup> 'Miss L Davies Asks: Will They Stand the Strain?', *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, 12 November 1925, p.5.

<sup>1214</sup> Polden, *Portia's Progress: Women at the Bar in England, 1919–1939*.

5.1 below give us a further clue to the numbers of women who were potentially practising. An approximate, manual count of the number of practising men has also been included.

Directory (Year)	Men		Women		Total entries
	No.	% of total entries	No.	% of total entries	
<b>1930</b>	1876	98.7	25	1.3	<b>1901</b>
<b>1934</b>	1826	98.0	38	2.0	<b>1864</b>
<b>1940</b>	1808	97.9	38	2.1	<b>1846</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>5510</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>100</b>	

Table 5.1: Number of Barristers Listed in the 1930, 1934 and 1940 Directories and percentage of Total Entries<sup>1215</sup>

There were 25 women registered as practising barristers in the 1930's Directory; 15 of these were attached to a circuit. This is very close to Theodora Davies' estimate of 20 women. In 1934 and 1940, there were 38 women registered as practising; this is like Polden's estimate. Although there was some progress between 1930 and 1940, the number of women barristers registered in the Directory is still very low. Women made up just 2% of the practising Bar in London. It should be noted that not all women were registered in the London Directories. For example, Cicely Leadley-Brown was not listed in the Directories of 1930, 1934 and 1940; however, she was on the Northern Circuit and practised at the Liverpool Bar.<sup>1216</sup> As she was practising in Liverpool, there was perhaps no need to register in the London Directories. Therefore, relying on numbers of women listed in the Directory is not a complete picture of women practising but it does give an idea of approximately how many women practised as barristers.

<sup>1215</sup> London Metropolitan Archives, London, and London City Directories, 'London, England, City Directories, 1736-1943', 1940; London Metropolitan Archives, London, and London City Directories, 'London, England, City Directories, 1736-1943', 1934; Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2018., 'London, England, City Directories, 1736-1943 [database on-Line]'.

<sup>1216</sup> It was noted that there were three women members of the Liverpool Bar: Miss C. Leadley-Brown, Miss Rose Heilbron and Miss Mary L. Williams see: *Liverpool Daily Post*, 'Liverpool Women Who Take Control', 2 December 1943, p.2.

Although these numbers refer to only one source, women were very poorly represented at the practising Bar. In Chapter 1, it was noted that women made up 4% of admissions during this 10-year period. However, by the 1940s, women still comprised only 2.1% of the practising Bar. This is a variance of almost 50%. While male barristers were certainly dominant at the practising Bar, *Table 5.2* below shows that there was also a decline of men practising.

	Admitted between 1919-1929		Listed in 1940 Directory	
	No.	% of admissions	No.	% of admissions
<b>Men</b>	5968	96.2	1808	97.9
<b>Women</b>	236	4	38	2.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>6204</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1846</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 5.2: Comparison between the Number of Women and Men Admitted to the Inns of Court between 1919 and 1929 and Listed in the 1940 Directory

Although there were nearly 6,000 male admissions between 1919 and 1929, the number of male practising barristers was just under 2,000, a variance of 70%. While the above figures are an approximation, and the Directories may not have included all the male barristers (it did not include all the female barristers, particularly those who were practising in other areas), it is still a significant variance between admissions and the number of practising men. It was no easy feat to earn a living as a barrister, for men or for women. The situation was more exaggerated for women as they were the outsiders and unfamiliar. Indeed, one article noted in 1930 that:

*There is definite prejudice against women barristers in the legal world, according to a prominent solicitor. He said to-day that women have yet to prove themselves the equal of men as advocates. The real test of an advocate was whether he or she could convince a jury, and there was no doubt... that the average woman barrister was inferior to her male colleague, though certain women were making a comfortable living at the Bar.*<sup>1217</sup>

<sup>1217</sup> *The Midland Daily Telegraph*, 'Women Barristers: Seven to Be Called To-Night: Are They Inferior to Male Colleague?', 2 July 1930, p.5. This comment was from a 'prominent solicitor' who was interviewed for this article.

This statement is also backed up by Margaret Prothero's experiences. Her daughter recalled that:

*'My mother did practice at the bar (she was one of the first batch of 8 women barristers) at Lincoln's Inn Fields in London. She didn't do it for very long as the all-male solicitors were not keen on giving a woman the briefs at that time, so she became a barrister and worked with her brother Arthur C Prothero, as Prothero and Prothero. At one time they had several branch offices. One in the Temple in London and others in Greenwich and Deptford. Later she worked with the law firm of Tuck and Mann in Leatherhead, Surrey.'*<sup>1218</sup>

Margaret Prothero's experiences would not have been unique, and indeed as we can see from the comment in the *Midland Daily Telegraph*, sex discrimination and bias were an accepted norm. Clearly, no matter how hard they tried, however many cases they won, because they were women they were viewed as different and even inferior from the outset.

While it can be concluded that it was challenging for both men and women to earn a living at the Bar, it is also true that men remained extremely dominant and that diversity in terms of sex was somewhat limited. Analysis of more recent data indicates that women made up 39.2% of women practising at the Bar in 2023.<sup>1219</sup> There has therefore been significant progress in this regard, considering that they only made up approximately 2.1% of the Bar in the 1940s. Despite this progress, women still struggle to enter the higher levels of the profession such as King's Counsel. For example, at non-King's Counsel level, women made up 41.2% of the practising Bar in 2023 but at King's Counsel level they made up just 19.9%. This is a significant variance of nearly 50%. Thus, diversity in terms of sex at the Bar remains an issue to this day, not at the point of entry but at the higher levels of the profession such as King's Counsel.

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<sup>1218</sup> Sabin, Saga, "Email to Charlotte Coleman from Saga Sabin, Margaret Prothero's daughter", 16 December 2019.

<sup>1219</sup> Bar Standards Board, 'Diversity at the Bar 2023 A Summary of the Latest Available Diversity Data for the Bar'.

### Ethnic Diversity at the Bar

Of the 236 women admitted to the Inns of Court between 1919 to 1929 cohort, 174 women were called to the Bar (73.7%). Of these 174 called, approximately 79 women (33.5%) either practised or attempted to practise (as determined by membership to chambers or circuit). *Table 5.3*, below, breaks down the ethnicity of women admitted, called and practising.

	Admitted		Called		Practising	
	No.	% of admissions	No.	% of admissions	No.	% of admissions
White	206	87.3	153	64.8	66	28.0
Minority Ethnic	30	12.7	21	8.9	13	5.5
Total	236	100	174	73.7	79	33.5

Table 5.3: Number and Percentage (of Admissions) of Women Admitted to the Inns of Court between 1919 and 1929 who were Called and who were Practising (broken down by Ethnicity)

From the above, women of White ethnicity were dominant throughout this 10-year period from admission to call to practise. At admission, the Inns of Court starts off ethnically diverse to some extent, but this diversity is not fully reflected at the Call stage and is even lower at practice. Moreover, 12 of the 13 practising women who were of minority ethnicity did not practise in England; instead, they returned to their native country and practised there. Only Rita Reuben, who was from a Jewish background and of 'Other' ethnicity (potentially Iraqi Sephardic or Ashkenazi) practised in England; she was a naturalised British Citizen. In this way, the female practising Bar in the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s was not ethnically diverse. It consisted of White women.

As set out in Chapter 4, it was the expectation that international students would return to their native country to practise. The junior Bar was already overcrowded, and employment circumstances were volatile in the 1920s. Therefore, it is perhaps not surprising that the Bar of England and Wales only included of White women given the economic and social circumstances of the time. Between 2019 and 2023, it was estimated that 14.5% of men and women at the

practising Bar were of minority background.<sup>1220</sup> While this figure is still low by modern standards, it is still an improvement compared to one hundred years ago. It can therefore be seen, based on the figures above, that ethnic diversity got progressively worse at each stage (admission, call to practise) to the extent that there was a kind of informal 'colour bar' at the Bar.<sup>1221</sup> There are no comparable figures for men, so it is not possible to provide a complete representation of ethnic diversity at the Bar. However, it was not only women who struggled to practise at the Bar. Based on figures in the Law Directories, the number of men practising compared to the number admitted also significantly declined. While there has been recent progress in terms of diversity of sex, ethnic diversity still has some way to go.

## Interactions

This section will now focus on the interactions and connections between the first women barristers who were called to the Bar. The focus is on their interactions after call. An interaction is understood to mean 'an occasion when two or more people communicate with or react to each other'.<sup>1222</sup> A connection is defined as a relationship between two individuals that varies from acquaintance to friendship.<sup>1223</sup> Connections focus on professional membership including chambers, circuits and professional societies. Interactions including instances where women barristers worked together and attended a social event.

## *Chambers and Circuits*

Identifying the chambers and Circuits that women were attached to gives some understanding of the steps these women took in their practice and the interactions or networks they may have

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<sup>1220</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1221</sup> The notion of a 'colour bar' was raised in Chapter 4. It was linked to the 1919 Race Riots in Britain and excluded Black and minority ethnic workers from securing employment, typically in the working-class profession. See Jordan, 'A Woman of Strange, Unfathomable Presence: Ida Platt's Lived Experience of Race, Gender, and Law, 1863-1939'.

<sup>1222</sup> Cambridge Dictionary. 'Interaction'. Accessed 27 August 2024.  
<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/interaction>.

<sup>1223</sup> Omar Lizardo and Isaac Jilbert, "3.1 Social Network Analysis: From Relationships to Graphs," September 18, 2019, [https://bookdown.org/omarlizardo/\\_main/3-1-social-network-analysis-from-relationships-to-graphs.html](https://bookdown.org/omarlizardo/_main/3-1-social-network-analysis-from-relationships-to-graphs.html).



had. Some of these women were at the same chambers and therefore would likely have known each other or interacted in some way. The other women were in proximity. *Table 5.4* sets out the chambers that women from the 1919 to 1929 cohort joined. It should be noted that women barristers admitted after 1929 have not been included in the list above. Some chambers may have had more than one woman in 1934 or 1940, but this research has focused only on the first women; those who were admitted between 1919 and 1929 and subsequently called. Before exploring the potential connections and networks, some statistics will be reviewed to understand how diverse chambers were in terms of sex.

	Law Directory							
Chambers	1930		1932		1934		1940	
	Names	Total	Names	Total	Names	Total	Names	Total
<b>2 Paper Buildings</b>	Ida Duncan & Elsie Wheeler	2	Ida Duncan & Elsie Wheeler	2	Elsie Wheeler & Alexandra Christides	2	Ruth Thompson	1
<b>4 Paper Buildings</b>			Evelyn Acworth & Gladys Powell	2	Evelyn Acworth & Gladys Powell	2	Gladys Powell	1
<b>5 Paper Buildings</b>	Enid Rosser	1	Enid Rosser	1	Enid Rosser	1		
<b>1 Brick Court</b>	Florence Earengy & Ethel Lloyd Lane	2	Florence Earengy & Ethel Lloyd Lane	2	Florence Earengy & Ethel Lloyd Lane	2	Florence Earengy, Ethel Lloyd Lane & Constance Colwill	3
<b>2 Brick Court</b>			Jessie Hendrick & Katherine Hendrick	2	Mary Clark, Mildred Miles, Margaret Prothero & Dorothy Wolfe	4	Sybil Campbell, Irene Cooper-Willis & Mildred Miles	3
<b>4 Brick Court</b>	Sybil Campbell	1	Sybil Campbell	1	Sybil Campbell	1		
<b>1 New Square</b>	Muriel Wells	1	Muriel Wells & Robina Stevens	2	Hannah Cross, Sylvia Moulton & Muriel Wells	3	Hannah Cross & Harriet Vaizey	2
<b>5 New Square</b>			Cynthia Nancy Gover & Alice	2				

			Horsman					
<b>7 New Square</b>	Cynthia Nancy Gover	1	Kathleen Anderson & Phyllis Blake	2			Audrey Notcutt	1
<b>1 Crown Office Row</b>	Constance Colwill & Chrystal Macmillan	2	Theodora Llewyn Davies	1				
<b>5 Crown Office Row</b>			Ruth Thompson	1	Ruth Thompson	1		
<b>6 Crown Office Row</b>	Elsie Bowerman & Beatrice Davy	2						
<b>1 Garden Court</b>					Josemee Greenwood, Audrey Notcutt & Venetia Stephenson	3	Nadia Neville	1
<b>2 Garden Court</b>					Irene Cooper- Willis	1		
<b>1 Elm court</b>	Margery Lawrence & Rita Reuben	2	Rita Reuben	1	Margery Lawrence	1	Margaret Wailes	1
<b>4 Elm Court</b>	Alice Horsman & Lillie Monroe	2	Lillie Monroe	1	Edith Ferguson- Murdoch, Cynthia Nancy Gover, Alice Horsman & Lillie Monroe	4	Alice Horsman & Lillie Monroe	2
<b>1 King's Bench Walk</b>			Monica Cobb	1	Monica Cobb	1	Monica Cobb	1
<b>5 King's Bench Walk</b>					Dorothy Scott Stokes	1	Dorothy Scott Stokes	1
<b>11 King's Bench Walk</b>							Josemee Greenwood & Venetia Stephenson	2
<b>3 Plowden Buildings</b>			Helena Normanton	1	Helena Normanton, Rita Reuben & Sara Moshkowitz	3	Helena Normanton, Rita Reuben & Olive Reid Cruchley (nee Morris)	3

<b>New Court</b>	Ethel Bright Ashford	1	Ethel Bright Ashford	1	Ethel Bright Ashford	1	Ethel Bright Ashford	1
<b>8 Old Square</b>			Mercy Ashworth	1	Mercy Ashworth	1		
<b>13 Old Square</b>							Lettice Vivian	1
<b>15 Old Square</b>							Mary Clark	1
<b>18 Old Square</b>	Irene Cooper-Willis	1	Irene Cooper-Willis	1				
<b>23 Old Square</b>	Sara Moshkowitz	1	Sara Moshkowitz	1				
<b>1 Pump Court</b>			Constance Colwill	1				
<b>2 Pump Court</b>			Olive Cruchley (nee Morris)	1				
<b>6 Pump Court</b>	Venetia Stephenson	1	Venetia Stephenson	1	Olive Cruchley (nee Morris)	1		
<b>1 Essex Court</b>	Charlotte Young	1	Charlotte Young	1				
<b>3 Essex Court</b>			Chrystal MacMillan	1				
<b>8 Essex Court</b>					Chrystal MacMillan	1		
<b>1 Temple Gardens</b>			Elsie Bowerman	1	Elsie Bowerman	1		
<b>3 Temple Gardens</b>			Winifred McConnell	1	Winifred McConnell	1		
<b>5 Stone Buildings</b>	Beroe Bicknell	1	Beroe Bicknell	1	Beroe Bicknell	1	Beroe Bicknell	1
<b>4 Harcourt Buildings</b>	Joan Clarkson	1	Joan Clarkson	1				
<b>2 Cloisters</b>	Monica Cobb	1	Grace Prescott	1	Grace Prescott	1		
<b>3 Dr Johnson's Bldgs.</b>	Helena Normanton	1						
<b>Total</b>		<b>25</b>		<b>36</b>		<b>38</b>		<b>26</b>

Table 5.4: Chambers that Women Belonged to as Listed in the Legal Directory

Turning first to understanding diversity in terms of sex at the chambers, 37 different chambers have been identified above. Of these, six out of 37 (16.2%) had three or more women. In fact,

only two chambers had four women at the same time: 2 Brick Court and 4 Elm Court. Eight out of 37 (21.6%) had two women at the same time, and 23 out of 37 (62.2%) only had one woman. We can therefore see that most chambers only had one woman in the 1930s and 1940s. Therefore, chambers were not diverse in terms of sex. If the other women barristers admitted after 1929 were included, a more diverse picture may emerge; however, the percentage of women at chambers is unlikely to change significantly. For example, Abel's research reveals that in London in 1967, only one chamber had four women; four chambers had three women; 18 chambers had two women, and 37 chambers had one woman.<sup>1224</sup> The 1980s also saw a similar pattern (this is where Abel's research stopped). Despite this being over fifty years since the first women barristers were called (in 1922), the number of women in chambers was still poor, illustrating no significant progress in terms of sex diversity. Previous research into the first women admitted between 1919 to 1939 has found that only a few chambers were accommodating when it came to taking on women, with the majority having only one woman and only a handful housing five or more.<sup>1225</sup> This research therefore concurs with this finding, and leads us to question: what may have been different about those chambers that took more than the obligatory one or two women?

Research is still ongoing as to why a few chambers, including 1 Brick Court, 2 Brick Court, 1 New Square, 1 Garden Court, 4 Elm Court and 3 Plowden Buildings, each housed a few women at the same time. Some possible explanations may be that 3 Plowden Buildings was where Helena Normanton had chambers. It was said that she welcomed other women, so this is likely why it saw a number of women tenants.<sup>1226</sup> In addition, 1 Brick Court (where Ethel Lloyd Lane, Florence Earengy, and later Constance Colwill were) was the chambers of G. O. Slade.<sup>1227</sup> Gerald Osborn Slade of Middle Temple, was called to the Bar in 1921,<sup>1228</sup> just a year before the first women were

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<sup>1224</sup> Abel, *The Legal Profession in England and Wales*., see Table 1.23: Number of chambers with women tenants, London and provinces, 1967-84, p.353.

<sup>1225</sup> Polden, *Portia's Progress: Women at the Bar in England, 1919-1939*., p.323.

<sup>1226</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1227</sup> Identified in Polden: Ibid., p.309.

<sup>1228</sup> 'Slade, Sir Gerald Osborne (Hon. Mr Justice Slade)', *Who's Who and Who Was Who*, 1 December 2007, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ww/9780199540884.013.U52372>.

called (in 1922). This means he would have been at the Inns of Court at the same time as those first women admitted between 1919 and 1921. Perhaps he was more accustomed and welcoming towards women. One caveat is that some of these women may have been registered at chambers but may not have undertaken any legal work and therefore, may have been more of a token admission. For example, the Henrick sisters were registered at 2 Brick Court in the 1932 Law List, but do not appear to have undertaken any practice. As detailed in Chapter 4, Katherine Hendrick stayed in England and eventually married in 1941. Jessie Hendrick returned to America in around 1931 and became a lawyer in New York; she married in 1932. It is therefore possible that Katherine Hendrick tried to practise, but unlikely that Jessie Hendrick did.

The above information has set the scene that chambers in the 1930s and 1940s (and even later in the 1960s) were not diverse in terms of sex. This does not mean that women worked in isolation in their chambers. To the contrary, it can be seen from *Table 5.4* above that many of the women were co-located with others in the same chambers over the course of a few years. This illustrates that women at the same chambers must have known each other and would have interacted regularly, particularly as the various chambers were in close vicinity of each other. For example, Florence Earengy and Ethel Lloyd Lane were at 1 Brick Court in 1930, 1932, 1934 and 1940. Florence Earengy was noted in *The Times* as ‘one of the first women to be appointed Justice of the Peace’ (likely of Hampstead) but it has not been possible to confirm that she was indeed ‘the first’.<sup>1229</sup> She joined the Oxford Circuit but practised mainly as an honorary legal advisor of the National Council of Women.<sup>1230</sup> Ethel Lloyd Lane was also a member of the Oxford Circuit. She appeared in several cases including as a junior at the ‘cleft chin’ murder trial.<sup>1231</sup> Polden understands that she developed a ‘modest circuit practice’ but was not successful in obtaining a recordership; thus, her ambitions were ‘unfulfilled’.<sup>1232</sup> As has been previously noted,

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<sup>1229</sup> It was noted that he was the J.P. of Hampstead when she was called in 1928 see: *Westminster Gazette*. ‘Learned Women to Be Called to the Bar.’ 26 January 1928., p.7.; *The Times*, ‘Obituary: Mrs Florence Earengy: An Unrepentant Suffragette.’ 7 January 1964., p. 12.

<sup>1230</sup> ‘Obituary: Mrs Florence Earengy: An Unrepentant Suffragette’, *The Times*, 7 January 1964, 12.

<sup>1231</sup> An American paratrooper and Elizabeth Marina Jones, a striptease dancer, were charged with the murder of George Edwards Heath, a taxi driver ‘the man with the cleft chin’. *The Evening News*, ‘Admitted by Ticket: Dancer and U.S. Soldier on Trial.’ 16 January 1945., p. 3.

<sup>1232</sup> Polden, *Portia’s Progress: Women at the Bar in England, 1919–1939.*, p.309.

judgement as to whether her ambitions were unfulfilled or not depends on how 'success' is defined. Certainly, she was present among these women, making some strides towards greater sex diversity at an already competitive Bar.

It can also be seen that several women moved chambers. It would be interesting to find out why some moved, and some stayed. On the one hand, perhaps the atmosphere was not conducive, or perhaps they changed their practice area. Regardless of motivations, moving around would likely have expanded their connections and networks of women and male barristers. This can be seen in the case of Cynthia Nancy Gover (known as Nancy). She started at 7 New Square in 1930, which was where her father, John Gover KC and bencher at Middle Temple was based.<sup>1233</sup> She then moved to 5 New Square, where Alice Horsman (who moved from 4 Elm Court) was. In 1934 Nancy Gover and Alice Horsman were at 4 Elm Court; two other women, Edith Ferguson-Murdoch and Lillie Monroe, were also at 4 Elm Court in 1934. By 1940, only Alice Horsman and Lillie Monroe were listed at 4 Elm Court, and Nancy Gover was no longer attached to chambers. Both Alice Horsman and Nancy Gover practised on the North East Circuit. It is not known if Alice Horsman and Nancy Gover were friends before they met at 5 New Square, but they were certainly friends, as identified in Nora Gipson's memoirs. She writes:

*Horsman had a holiday cottage in the New Forest, and one weekend I visited her and her barrister friend, Nancy -, and we went riding on Forest ponies.* <sup>1234</sup>

In addition to Alice Horsman and Nora Gipson, Nancy Gover was also friends with Phyllis Jelleyman: she was a bridesmaid at Phyllis Jelleyman's wedding in 1932.<sup>1235</sup> All of these women were admitted to Middle Temple: Alice Horsman was admitted in 1920; Nancy Gover was admitted in 1923; Phyllis Jelleyman was admitted in 1929; and Nora Gipson was admitted in 1929. This illustrates that friendships between these women did not just develop between those who

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<sup>1233</sup> Polden, 'Index to Women: Portia's Progress Women at the Bar in England 1919 - 1939'; Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2018., 'London, England, City Directories, 1736-1943 [database on-Line]'.  
<sup>1234</sup> Gipson, 'Nora Myfanwy Gipson's Memoirs', p.80.

<sup>1235</sup> *Birmingham Gazette*, 'Woman Barrister, Kidderminster Couple's Daughter Married', 22 December 1932, p.11; Gipson, 'Nora Myfanwy Gipson's Memoirs'.

were admitted around the same time as each other. Being admitted to the same Inn of Court also appears to have influenced the women's social circles.

### *Analysis*

By considering the chambers these women belonged to, it has been possible to identify four findings. First, chambers were not diverse in terms of sex and indeed, even 40 years since the first women were called, diversity was still poor. Second, other female role models such as Helena Normanton may have attracted and welcomed women to the chambers where they presided. It is also possible that men who were at the Inns of Court at the same time as women were more accustomed and welcoming towards them when it came to tenancy at chambers. Third, women at the same chambers must have known each other and many of them were in close vicinity; this increases the likelihood of connections and networks. Fourth, moving to different chambers was quite common and these moves may have increased connections and networks with other women and male barristers.

### *Circuits*

Membership of circuits has been identified by Abel's figures stated in *Table 1.25*.<sup>1236</sup> The 1940s figures have been chosen to understand more about women in practice in this decade. There were seven circuits: South East Circuit; Oxford Circuit; Midland Circuit; Northern Circuit; North Eastern Circuit; Western Circuit; Wales & Chester Circuit.<sup>1237</sup> The circuit mess could not prohibit a woman, or anyone else, from attending the Assizes and attempting to practise on a circuit, but they did control membership and could refuse to admit a barrister. Membership of the circuits is set out below in *Table 5.5* below.<sup>1238</sup>

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<sup>1236</sup> Abel, *The Legal Profession in England and Wales*, Table 1.25 Size of Circuits and number of women barristers, 1785-1980.p.357.

<sup>1237</sup> This includes the North and South Wales Circuit, Chester and North Wales Division.

<sup>1238</sup> Alice Horsman see: 'North-Eastern Circuit Society', Middle Templar Magazine, accessed 13 June 2024, <https://middletemplar.org.uk/north-eastern-circuit-society-2023/>; Antony Harwood, *Circuit Ghosts: A Western Circuit Miscellany* (Copying Centre, 1980); 'Lady Barrister's Court Brief', *Western Mail*, 31 October 1924, p.11. Robina Stevens, stated in 1927 that she has been practising in court for the past

Circuit	No. of Men	No. of Women	% of Women Members
South East	688	20	2.8
Northern	288	12	4.0
Midland	219	3	1.4
Oxford	159	5	3.0
North East	221	6	2.6
Western	240	2	0.8
Wales & Chester	107	7	6.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>1922</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>2.8</b>

Table 5.5: Size of Circuits in 1940s

Of these 55 women, it is probable that 47 of them (85.5%) were admitted between 1919 and 1929 as they were members of these circuits (as determined by the Directories and Law Lists) see *Table 5.6* below.<sup>1239</sup> Women were again significantly under-represented, particularly in the Western and Midland Circuit where they do not even comprise 2%. The percentage of women members is more positive in the Northern and Wales and Chester Circuit. Overall, the South Eastern Circuit has the most members, both men and women, but the proportion of women is still low. To identify if there were any common themes between the women who were members of Circuits, have been identified below in *Table 5.6*.

Name	Inn	Called date
<b>South East Circuit</b>		
Ethel Bright Ashford (first woman member elected 1922)	Middle Temple	17-Nov-1922

three years see: *South Wales Daily Post*, 'Swansea Lady Barrister's Wedding', 25 July 1927, p.4. The Midland court refused to offer Monica Cobb, the first woman to hold a brief at assize in Birmingham, full membership of bar mess see, and Edith Hesling: Polden, *Portia's Progress: Women at the Bar in England, 1919–1939*. It is likely that Ethel Bright Ashford was the first woman. In 1922 she was one of the first women to appear in court and her intention to join the south-eastern circuit was noted see: *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 'Women Barristers', 21 November 1922, p.3.

<sup>1239</sup> Figures based on women listed in the Directories and Law Lists: 15 were practising on the South East Circuit, 9 on the Northern, 7 on the Midland, 7 on the Oxford, 4 on the North East, 2 on the Western and 2 on the Wales and Chester.



Theodora Llewelyn Davies	Inner Temple	17-Nov-1922
Olive Catherine Clapham	Middle Temple	17-Nov-1924
Elsie May Wheeler	Middle Temple	17-Nov-1922
Mercy Ashworth	Lincoln's Inn	26-Jan-1923
Rita Reuben	Middle Temple	28-Jan-1924
Elsie Edith Bowerman	Middle Temple	17-Nov-1924
Lillie Agatha Monroe	Middle Temple	2-Jul-1924
Venetia Josephine Mary Stephenson	Gray's Inn	17-Nov-1924
Enid Rosser	Lincoln's Inn	17-Nov-1927
Constance Colwill	Gray's Inn	17-Nov-1925
Dorothy Scott Stokes	Gray's Inn	26-Jan-1928
Nadia Neville	Gray's Inn	26-Jan-1932
Josemee Marguerite Bernal Greenwood	Gray's Inn	2-Jul-1930
Grace Geraldine Prescott	Gray's Inn	17-Nov-1930
Irene Grace Ruth Davies	Inner Temple	17-Nov-1931
<b>Northern Circuit</b>		
Edith Hesling (first women member elected 1923)	Gray's Inn	13-Jun-1923
Mildred Frances Carrothers	Middle Temple	2-Jul-1924
Dorothy Foster Jeffery	Gray's Inn	17-Nov-1924
Cicely Leadley-Brown	Lincoln's Inn	2-Jul-1924
Erna Reiss	Lincoln's Inn	17-Nov-1925
Eileen Agnes MacDonald	Middle Temple	17-Nov-1926
Edna Phyllis Bland	Gray's Inn	29-Jun-1927
Ruth Elizabeth Sophia Thompson	Inner Temple	27-Jan-1930
Edith Vera Cohen	Lincoln's Inn	2-Jul-1930
<b>North East Circuit</b>		
Helena Normanton	Middle Temple	17-Nov-1922
Alice Horsman (first woman member elected 1923)	Middle Temple	13-Jun-1923
Doris Tempest	Middle Temple	18-Nov-1929
Nancy Gover	Middle Temple	26-Jan-1927

Oxford Circuit		
Ethel Lloyd	Inner Temple	26-Jan-1925
Ida May Duncan (first woman member elected 1923)	Middle Temple	26-Jan-1923
Katherine Allison Swan	Inner Temple	26-Jan-1926
Winifred Bottrell McConnell	Inner Temple	11-May-1927
Kathleen Anna Burgess	Middle Temple	26-Jan-1927
Evelyn Acworth	Inner Temple	2-May-1928
Florence Earegey	Middle Temple	26-Jan-1928
Midland Circuit		
Monica Cobb (first woman member elected 1922)	Middle Temple	17-Nov-1922
Sybil Campbell	Middle Temple	17-Nov-1922
Charlotte Young	Middle Temple	26-Jan-1923
Henrietta Lilian Mary Gibbs	Middle Temple	17-Nov-1924
Beroe Bicknell	Middle Temple	13-Jun-1923
Joan Clarkson	Inner Temple	26-Jan-1925
Margery Kate Pearson Willison	Inner Temple	26-Jan-1928
Western Circuit		
Crystal Macmillan	Middle Temple	28-Jan-1924
Phillis Laura Jelleyman	Middle Temple	8-Jun-1932
Wales & Chester Circuit		
Robina Stevens (first woman member elected 1924)	Gray's Inn	28-Jan-1924
Gladys Powell	Middle Temple	17-Nov-1927

Table 5.6: Membership to Circuits of Women Admitted between 1919 and 1929

From the above, two findings can be made. First, women who were admitted to Middle Temple were prevalent on the circuit scene; indeed, they made up 23 of the 47 total women members of the circuits (48.9%). Gray's Inn saw 10 women practising on circuits. Inner Temple saw nine women, but Lincoln's Inn had only five women listed as members of a circuit. Secondly, the South East circuit is the most dominant, perhaps reflecting the geographical area (London and the

surrounding area) in which these women lived and practised. This finding can also be seen with men, as identified in *Table 5.5*.

Just over half, 6 out of 11 (54.5%), of women who were called in 1922 were members of a circuit. The other women members were called between 1923 and 1932. The first cohort of women admitted between 1919 to 1929 all became the first circuit members. The female first member of the Western Circuit was Beatrice Honor Davy.<sup>1240</sup> She was called to the Bar but practised as a solicitor, which is why she is not attached to a circuit.

Nine of the women members of the South East Circuit were also members of the Central Criminal Court (CCC) and they attended the Annual Bar Mess dinner, as listed below in *Table 5.7*.

Name	Inn	Called	Chamber	Circuit	CCC Bar Mess Dinner
Helena Normanton	Middle Temple	17-Nov-1922	3 Dr Johnson's Bldgs. 3 Plowden Buildings	North East	1933, 1937
Winifred Cocks	Middle Temple	19-Nov-1923			1933
Rita Reuben	Middle Temple	28-Jan-1924	1 Elm Court 3 Plowden Buildings	South East	1932, 1933, 1937
Venetia Stephenson	Gray's Inn	17-Nov-1924	6 Pump Court	South East	1932, 1933, 1937
Olive Reid Morris	Gray's Inn	26-Jan-1927	2/6 Pump Court 3 Plowden Buildings		1933
Enid Rosser	Gray's Inn	17-Nov-1927	5 Paper Buildings	South East	1932
Josemee Greenwood	Gray's Inn	2-Jul-1930	1 Garden Court 11 King's Bench Walk	South East	1933
Grace Prescott	Gray's Inn	17-Nov-1930	2 Cloisters	South East	1933
Nadia Neville	Gray's Inn	26-Jan-1932	1 Garden Court	South East	1933, 1937

<sup>1240</sup> Harwood, *Circuit Ghosts: A Western Circuit Miscellany*.

Table 5.7: Women who attend the Annual Central Criminal Court (CCC) Bar Mess Dinners in 1932, 1933 and 1937

The Central Criminal Court Bar Mess represented the interests of all Old Bailey practitioners and barristers appearing at the Central Criminal Court, usually on the South Eastern Circuit committee.<sup>1241</sup> It is therefore likely that those who practised in the Old Bailey or were members of the South Eastern Circuit would have attended or been a member of a mess such as this. Six out of the nine women listed (66%) were members of the South East Circuit. It has not been possible to identify from the Barrister Directories whether Winifred Cocks was a member of a circuit. Olive Morris was a member of the Central Criminal Court (and not a circuit). The anomaly is Helena Normanton, who was a member of the North East Circuit; however, we know from previous research that she practised in London and at the Old Bailey so this would link her to the Central Criminal Court Bar Mess.<sup>1242</sup>

From these brief interactions above, it can be understood that most of the practising women were working in close geographical proximity. Venetia Stephenson and Rita Reuben, for example, must have known each other personally. Not only were both called in the same year, they were also on the same circuit and attended all three of the Central Criminal Court Bar Mess annual dinners.<sup>1243</sup> It is also very likely that they knew Helena Normanton; first because of her reputation, and also because she attended two of the annual dinners.<sup>1244</sup> Nadia Neville also attended two out of three of the annual dinners.<sup>1245</sup> Venetia Stephenson, Rita Reuben, Helena Normanton and Nadia Neville all practised at the Bar for a significant time.

To an extent, there is some kind of sanctuary in these interactions although the type of relationship cannot be identified. Women were the minority; they were openly excluded, and

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<sup>1241</sup> 'Central Criminal Court Bar Mess'.

<sup>1242</sup> Bourne, *Helena Normanton and the Opening of the Bar to Women*, 2016.

<sup>1243</sup> *The Times*, 'DINNERS'. Saturday, 14 October 1933, p.15.; *The Times*, 'Dinners'. 8 April 1935, p.17.; *The Times*, 'DINNERS'. 2 June 1937, p.10.

<sup>1244</sup> *The Times*, 'DINNERS'. Saturday, 14 October 1933, p.15.; *The Times*, 'DINNERS'. 2 June 1937, p.10.

<sup>1245</sup> Ibid.

they had to deal with that. At least they had some other women alongside them while they persevered within an almost exclusively male profession. Although given the proximity of these women, it is highly likely they knew each other, these potential interactions, connections and relationships have not previously been identified. Auchmuty argues that when we re-examine historical evidence that has been discarded, distorted or suppressed, it becomes clear that many women have always spent the major parts of their lives with other women; that they have always confided in each other, sought and received sympathy and help from each other, supported and been supported by each other.<sup>1246</sup> This statement appears to reflect the position of the first women barristers. To explore this notion further, additional interactions between the first women barristers have been identified, these include colleagues working on the same case, a professional network and social interactions.

### *Colleagues*

Three instances of the first women barristers working together have been identified. These are detailed in *Table 5.8* below.

Case	Name	Inn	Called	Chambers	Circuit
Prosecution v Shea, 1929	Rita Reuben	Middle Temple	28-Jan-1924	1 Elm Court 3 Plowden Buildings	South East
	Crystal Macmillan	Middle Temple	28-Jan-1924	1 Crown Office Row 3/8 Essex Court	Western
Libel case 1930	Joan Clarkson	Inner Temple	26-Jan-1925	4 Harcourt Buildings	Midland
	Lady Ankaret Cecilia Jackson	Inner Temple	2-May-1928	Did not practise.	
Blackwell v	Venetia Stephenson	Gray's Inn	17-Nov-1924	6 Pump Court	South East

<sup>1246</sup> Auchmuty, 'By Their Friends We Shall Know Them: The Lives and Networks of Some Women in North Lambeth 1880-1940', p.79.

Blackwell, 1934	Constance Colwill	Gray's Inn	17-Nov-1925	Crown Office Row 1 Pump Court 1 Brick Court	South East
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Table 5.8: Women who were colleagues at the Bar

In 1929, Rita Reuben and Crystal Macmillan were on opposing sides of a grievous bodily harm case. Rita Reuben was prosecuting Michael Shea for causing grievous bodily harm to Ellen Fell. According to the news article, the Recorder 'on learning that Miss Rita Reuben was prosecuting, assigned the defence to Miss Crystal MacMillan'. It transpired that Mrs Fell said she wrongly accused Mr Shea, and he was found not guilty and discharged. Rita Reuben accused the witness of shielding the prisoner, which was condemned by the Recorder.<sup>1247</sup> It was noted that Counsel presented a striking contrast: Miss Reuben dark and petite and Miss MacMillan, wearing glasses, tall and dignified.<sup>1248</sup>

In 1930, Joan Clarkson represented Lady Ankaret Cecilia Jackson in a libel case against Good Housekeeping. The magazine published an image that suggested Lady Ankaret Cecilia Jackson's child was around five or six suggesting they were born outside the period of her marriage. A settlement was reached, and the record was withdrawn.<sup>1249</sup>

In 1943, Venetia Stephenson and Constance Colwill were involved in the same divorce case: Blackwell v Blackwell. Constance Colwill and Dorothy Knight Dix<sup>1250</sup> appeared on behalf of the Appellant, Mrs Dorothy Blackwell, as instructed by a woman solicitor. Venetia Stephenson was watching the case on behalf of the Married Women's Association.<sup>1251</sup>

From these few examples, it can be understood that women barristers interacted with each other in a professional capacity. It was therefore not just geographical proximity or membership to the

<sup>1247</sup> *The Scotsman*, 'Women Barristers in Opposition', 29 June 1929, p.10.

<sup>1248</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1249</sup> *The Yorkshire Post*, 'Use of Name in an Advertisement', 21 February 1930., p.7.

<sup>1250</sup> Dorothy Knight Dix was admitted to Inner Temple in 1931 and called in 1934; she was made Queen's Counsel in 1957. Polden, *Portia's Progress: Women at the Bar in England, 1919–1939*.

<sup>1251</sup> *Derby Evening Telegram*, 'Money Appeal by Housewife', 28 October 1943., p.8.

Inns of Court or chambers that linked these women, but also their professional work. These women would have known each other prior to undertaking these cases. Both Rita Reuben and Chrystal MacMillan were admitted to Middle Temple and called in the same year. Joan Clarkson and Lady Jackson were admitted and called to Inner Temple. Venetia Stephenson and Constance Colwill were admitted and called to Gray's Inn within one year of each other. While their professional undertakings were not necessarily related to the Inn that they were admitted or called to, it can nevertheless be seen as a theme in terms of connections and networks.

### *Professional Membership: The Grotius Society*

Another professional connection was via membership to the Grotius Society. The Grotius Society was founded in 1915. The society's objectives were 'to afford facilities for discussion of the Laws of War and Peace, and for interchange of opinions regarding their operation, and to make suggestions for their reform, and generally to advance the study of international law'.<sup>1252</sup> Members had to be British subjects, but the society undertook work for the International Law Association. Today the Grotius Society is part of the British Institute of International and Comparative Law.<sup>1253</sup>

To identify if the first women admitted to the Inns of Court were connected via the Grotius Society, searches were made in *Transactions of the Grotius Society*.<sup>1254</sup> The *Front Matter, Annual General Meeting* (AGM) and conference attendee sections from 1920 to 1948 were reviewed to understand who the women members were and what physical meetings they attended. Research stops at 1948 because the members list was no longer published after this date. The table below sets out membership and attendance to Grotius Society events.

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<sup>1252</sup> James Brown Scott, 'The Grotius Society', *The American Journal of International Law* 10, no. 2 (1916): 372–75.

<sup>1253</sup> Ibid.; 'History', British Institute of International and Comparative Law, accessed 20 June 2024, <https://www.biicl.org/history-of-biicl>.

<sup>1254</sup> Transactions of the Grotius Society include forty-four volumes of the Transactions of the Grotius Society covering the years 1915 to 1959 the text of some 380 lectures given at meetings of the Society in London, at conferences organised by the Society in London or in the provinces, were regularly printed. These lectures stretched over a wide field of International Law. Norman Marsh, 'British Institute of International and Comparative Law A Brief History: 1895 - 1958', November 1998, [https://www.biicl.org/documents/12\\_a\\_brief\\_history\\_of\\_biicl.pdf](https://www.biicl.org/documents/12_a_brief_history_of_biicl.pdf).

Name	Inn	Called	Grotius Membership	AGM	Conference
Venetia Stephenson	Gray's Inn	17-Nov-1924	1925 - 1931	1926	
Beroe Adrimar Bicknell	Middle Temple	13-Jun-1923	1928 - 1948	1928, 1934, 1936, 1940	1944
Olive Reid Morris	Gray's Inn	26-Jan-1927	1937 - 1939	1936	
Dorothi Mary Griffith	Middle Temple	17-Nov-1936	1935 - 1940		
Elfreda Margaret Willis	Inner Temple	10-May-1933	1935 - 1948	1942	1944, 1947
Beatrice Honour Davy	Middle Temple	17-Nov-1922	1941 - 1948		

Table 5.9: Members and Attendances at the Grotius Society

Venetia Stephenson was the first woman member in 1925 and the first woman to attend the Eleventh Annual General Meeting in 1926.<sup>1255</sup> There was some overlap between her membership and Beroe Bicknell's; however, they do not appear to have attended any of the AGMs together. Beroe Bicknell appears to have been a very active member. She first joined Grotius in 1928, and her membership may have continued post 1948 but this information was not easily available. In 1934, she wrote a paper, *Nationality of Married Women*, for publication in the journal and attended the AGM.<sup>1256</sup> It was instructed on the paper to read this before attending the meeting on 29 June 1934, presumably this would be a discussion point.<sup>1257</sup> She was on the Executive Committee between 1940 and 1941.<sup>1258</sup>

In 1936, Beroe Bicknell and Olive Morris, now Mrs Cruchley, attended the 21<sup>st</sup> annual meeting.<sup>1259</sup> Olive Cruchley was a member of Grotius Society for only a couple of years. Both Beroe Bicknell and Elfreda Willis attended the International Law Conference in 1944. Beroe Bicknell was called

<sup>1255</sup> *Transactions of the Grotius Society*, 'Front Matter', 11 (1925): i – xix; *Transactions of the Grotius Society*, 'Eleventh Annual General Meeting', 12 (1926): xv – xvii.

<sup>1256</sup> Bicknell, Beroë, 'The Nationality of Married Women', *Transactions of the Grotius Society* 20 (1934): 106–22; 'The Nineteenth Annual Meeting', *Transactions of the Grotius Society* 20 (1934): xix – xix.

<sup>1257</sup> Bicknell, 'The Nationality of Married Women'.

<sup>1258</sup> *Transactions of the Grotius Society*, 'Report of the Executive Committee for 1940', 26 (1940): xl – xlii; *Transactions of the Grotius Society*, 'Report of the Executive Committee for 1941', 27 (1941): xxxi – xxxii; *Transactions of the Grotius Society* 'Front Matter', 14 (1928): i – xxxiii.

<sup>1259</sup> *Transactions of the Grotius Society*, 'The Twenty-First Annual Meeting', 22 (1936): xxiii – xxiii.



to Middle Temple in 1923 but transferred to Lincoln's Inn in 1929 as she wanted to build a Chancery practice. It appears that as well as undertaking some cases, she wrote articles in *The Conveyancer* and was the first woman elected to the Institute of Conveyancers. She was also part of the Midland Circuit.<sup>1260</sup>

The connections identified above give an insight not only into who knew who and who worked together or were members of the same society. They also reveal the interests and professional lives of these first women barristers. While it is not surprising that these women were pursuing and undertaking legal work and joining specialised societies, these activities have not been widely recorded. Moreover, some of these women have been judged on their 'success' in terms of their practice and labelled as 'shining stars' or 'unfulfilled'.<sup>1261</sup> This creates a somewhat binary picture of the first women barristers' life at the Bar. While some of them may not have reached the heights they wanted, they were there undertaking legal work, pursuing their interests and in some cases working together. By moving away from binary notions of success and failure, this research provides a more nuanced and holistic picture of life at the Bar. While we may never know how the lesser-known women barristers perceived their own achievements, there is a sense of pride; certainly, their perseverance cannot be neglected or underestimated.

### *Social Interactions*

It has been established that these women related to each other and interacted in a professional capacity. This research will now identify some of the social interactions and connections of these women after they were called to the Bar to understand who knew each other, why and how they interacted with each other in a more social setting. This gives us a snapshot into what life was like at the Bar, what interests these women had, and how connected they were. It also gives some indication about some of the non-professional or private interests of the first women barristers. Social interactions are detailed in *Table 5.10* below.

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<sup>1260</sup> Polden, *Portia's Progress: Women at the Bar in England, 1919–1939*.

<sup>1261</sup> Polden labels the shining stars and unfilled women barristers in *Ibid*.

Date	Interactions at Events	Name	Inn	Called
1923	Attended a lunch arranged by the Oriental Circle.	Mithan Tata	Lincoln's Inn	26-Jan-1923
		Chrystal MacMillan	Middle Temple	28-Jan-1924
1923	Attended the Dance at Bedford College (International Suffrage Congress).	Mithan Tata	Lincoln's Inn	26-Jan-1923
		Letitia Fairfield	Middle Temple	26-Jan-1923
1923	Dined together at Lincoln's Inn to celebrate its quincentenary.	Mercy Ashworth	Lincoln's Inn	26-Jan-1923
		Cornelia Sorabji	Lincoln's Inn	13-Jun-1923
1923	Special Conferences, Congress, Rome 'Nationality of Married Women' in 1923.	Gladys Evelyn Steyn	Middle Temple	6-May-1925
		Chrystal MacMillan	Middle Temple	28-Jan-1924
1925	Attended the 25 <sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations for opening the legal profession to women in France.	Ida Coffin Duncan	Middle Temple	26-Jan-1923
		Chrystal MacMillan	Middle Temple	28-Jan-1924
1928	Attended the International Federation of University Women.	Sybil Campbell	Middle Temple	17-Nov-1922
		Cornelia Sorabji	Lincoln's Inn	13-Jun-1923
1929	Attended British Commonwealth League, Children in English Law.	Helena Normanton	Middle Temple	17-Nov-1922
		Beroe Bicknell	Middle Temple	13-Jun-1923
1931	Attended Lady Astor's Congress of Universities of the Empire Reception.	Sybil Campbell	Middle Temple	17-Nov-1922
		Venetia Stephenson	Gray's Inn	17-Nov-1924
1932	At Huntingdon British Legion charity event.	Elsie May Wheeler	Middle Temple	17-Nov-1922
		Grace Geraldine Prescott	Gray's Inn	17-Nov-1930
1942	Attended Women's Freedom League 35th Annual Conference, 'Feminist Brain Trust' panel.	Venetia Stephenson	Gray's Inn	17-Nov-1924
		Constance Colwill	Gray's Inn	17-Nov-1925
1947	25 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Women being allowed to be called to the Bar (organised by Helena Normanton)	Helena Normanton	Middle Temple	17-Nov-1922
		Ethel Lloyd Lane	Inner Temple	25-Jan-1925

Table 5.10: Interactions between the first women barristers

The first women barristers knew one another and interacted, as one would expect; they were not isolated satellites. This is only a 'snapshot', but it is useful to show that the women were connected and that they interacted in ways that have not necessarily been recorded. These identified social events can be categorised as follows: Celebrating Women in the Law; Women's Rights events; Legal Conferences; and Social Events. These interactions will now be reviewed in turn.

### *Celebrating Women in the Law*

The first recorded event in respect of this research was between Mithan Tata, who practised as a barrister in India, and Chrystal MacMillan who practised as a barrister in England. They attended a lunch arranged at the Oriental Circle in honour of Mithan Tata's call as the first Indian woman to have achieved that distinction. It was noted that Chrystal MacMillan was just one of the representatives from the chief feminist organisations. The organ of the women's movement, *The Vote*, noted that Mithan Tata intended to return to India where she hoped to obtain access to the Madras Courts of Law, which were not yet open to women.<sup>1262</sup> As explained in Chapter 4, she did indeed return to India and practise there being considered a highly successful barrister.<sup>1263</sup>

Again, we see Chrystal MacMillan networking with other legal women when she attended with Ida Coffin Duncan the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of the opening of the French Bar to women in 1925. It was noted that 'several women barristers attended' two of whom were Miss Chrystal Macmillan and Miss Ida Duncan'. They both made brief speeches. It was noted that Helena Normanton's presence was missed.<sup>1264</sup> It is highly likely that these women knew each other. They were both at the same Inn, called around a similar time and practised at the Bar. Ida Duncan was 27 years-old when admitted to the Bar and Chrystal MacMillan 48. Nevertheless, they would surely be acquaintances if not more.

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<sup>1262</sup> *The Vote*, 'Luncheon to Miss Tata', 9 March 1923, p.79.

<sup>1263</sup> Mukherjee, 'Tata [*married Name* Lam], Mithan Ardeshir [Mithibai]'.

<sup>1264</sup> 'Woman Barristers'.

England and Wales appear to have followed suit, as they held their own 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of women being allowed to be called to the Bar. The organiser was Helena Normanton. It was reported that:

*The Old Bailey went gay last night. The Lord Chief Justice (Lord Goddard), the Master of the Rolls (Lord Greene), the Attorney-General (Sir Hartley Shawcross) and many judges were there. So too were about sixty British women and others from India, France, Romania, China, Jamaica and Dominica - all barristers. There were also three dozen bottles of champagne, brought by the three French women barristers.*<sup>1265</sup>

It was noted that Ethel Lloyd Lane was in attendance and that her defence at the 'cleft chin' murder case was mentioned. This event is important as it evidenced that the women wanted to celebrate their achievements, and indeed they appear to have seen it as an achievement. This was a time to unite and be proud that they were women barristers. Kudos should go to Helena Normanton for organising this event and for making sure that women barristers had some acknowledgement of their efforts and work.

### *Women's Rights Events*

Mithan Tata and Letitia Fairfield, who practised as a medical doctor, attended a dance hosted at Bedford College, founded in London in 1849 as the first higher education college for women in the UK,<sup>1266</sup> in honour of the delegates to the International Suffrage Congress, created to allow women to come together with other women's groups around the world to discuss, communicate and ask questions about feminism,<sup>1267</sup> to be held in Rome in 1923. Mithan Tata attended with her mother, she was noted as the youngest of the women barristers who were called. The newspaper noted that Mrs and Miss Tata 'appeared as usual in their lovely national robes... Miss Tata in soft red.' Dr Letitia Fairfield was also a barrister and doctor of medicine.<sup>1268</sup> It is highly

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<sup>1265</sup> *The Daily Mirror*, 'A Champagne Night at the Old Bailey.' 19 December 1947., page number known but see Appendix C.; *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, 'Women Barristers' Party', 19 December 1947, p.2.

<sup>1266</sup> Bedford College Papers. 2024. Accessed 16 July 2024.  
<https://archiveshub.jisc.ac.uk/search/archives/ea72edbf-ccfd-3a04-8a64-021e9779134f>.

<sup>1267</sup> Archive of the International Woman Suffrage Alliance. 2024. Accessed 15 August 2024.  
<https://archiveshub.jisc.ac.uk/search/archives/a21280c0-a886-389e-9da0-17439377e1b3>.

<sup>1268</sup> *Western Daily Press*, 'Dance at Bedford College', 14 April 1923, p.9.

likely that Mithan Tata and Letitia Fairfield knew each other. Both were called on the same day and as the first Indian woman called to the Bar, Mithan Tata would likely have been known to many.

It is not clear if Mithan Tata and Letitia Fairfield attended the International Suffrage Congress (1923) in Rome, but it has been possible to identify two other women barristers who attended: Gladys Evenly Steyn, who practised law in South Africa, and Chrystal MacMillan. Chrystal MacMillan was appointed the Chairman of the Nationality of Married Women Conference. This considered the new United States law of September 1922, which allowed married women the right to retain or change her nationality.<sup>1269</sup> Gladys Steyn, representing Cape Town, was due to attend the conference.<sup>1270</sup> It is possible that both knew each other prior to attending this event as they were at the same Inn at the same time.

Sybil Campbell and Cornelia Sorabji attended the International Federation of University Women in 1928. It was noted that Members of the Council who will attend the Madrid meeting include Miss Sybil Campbell for Great Britain and Miss Cornelia Sorabji for India.<sup>1271</sup> It is highly likely that they would have known each other from the Inns of Court at their admission and call dates were relatively close together. Both women were known for their interest and support in women's education. Cornelia Sorabji supported educational rights, particularly for girls. She believed that education was crucial to social change.<sup>1272</sup> Sybil Campbell was a Girton College graduate and honorary Secretary of the British Federation of University Women from 1921 to 1933 and its honorary vice-president from 1947 to 1977. Polden notes her greatest achievement was 'Crosby Hall in Chelsea', an international hall of residence for overseas students.<sup>1273</sup> Through her

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<sup>1269</sup> *The International Woman Suffrage News*, 'Draft Programmes of Special Conferences', April 1923., p.101.

<sup>1270</sup> *The International Woman Suffrage News*, 'Some Delegates and Visitors Who Will Attend the Congress', April 1923., p.102.

<sup>1271</sup> *The Vote*, 'Spain to Offer Research Fellowship to University Women', *The Vote*, 7 September 1928, p.291.

<sup>1272</sup> Mossman, 'Cornelia Sorabji'.

<sup>1273</sup> Polden, 'The Lady of Tower Bridge: Sybil Campbell, England's First Woman Judge'.

involvement in Crosby Hall, she was connected to Naomi Constance Wallace. Naomi Wallace was involved in a project arranging a portrait of Sybil Campbell's to hang at Crosby Hall.<sup>1274</sup>

Sybil Campbell and Venetia Stephenson attended Lady Astor's Congress of Universities of the Empire Reception in 1931. Sybil Campbell was involved in more networks concerning education when she attended Lady Astor's Congress Reception to hear Viscount Cecil speaking at the Congress of Universities of the Empire.<sup>1275</sup> Significantly less is known about Venetia Stephenson's views on this subject. However, she clearly had an interest in women's status in society. As both Sybil Campbell and Venetia Stephenson practised and were of a similar age, they would likely have known each other.

Venetia Stephenson and Constance Colwill attended the Women's Freedom League 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference as part of the 'Feminist Brains Trust' panel in 1942, held at the Minerva Club.<sup>1276</sup> Constance Colwill was the Question Master and Venetia Stephenson was part of the 'distinguished team of experts' discussing women's activities and status. Both shared commonalities and it is highly likely they knew other, possibly as friends. Both were admitted to Gray's Inn at a similar time and around a similar age. Both had Chambers in a near vicinity at Pump Court and both practised on the South East circuit. In addition, both worked on the Blackwell v Blackwell divorce case in 1943; Venetia Stephenson was watching the case on behalf of the Married Women's Association.<sup>1277</sup>

### *Legal Related Events or Conferences*

Other social interactions of the first women barristers have also been noted. For example, it was reported that Mercy Ashworth, who had chambers in Lincoln's Inn and was listed on the South-Eastern circuit, and Cornelia Sorabji, who practised in India, were present at the dinner in

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<sup>1274</sup> 'Email to Charlotte Coleman from Hannah Westall (Ms) Archivist & Curator Girton College Regarding Naomi Constance Wallace; GCPP Wallace, M V 2a Various Papers about Sybil Campbell', 16 August 2019.

<sup>1275</sup> *The Western Morning News and Mercury*, 'Universities of the Empire', 2 July 1931., p.10

<sup>1276</sup> *International Women's News*, 'At Home and Abroad: Women's Freedom League', 3 July 1942, 187–88.

<sup>1277</sup> 'Money Appeal by Housewife'.

Lincoln's Inn hall when the Inn celebrated its quincentenary.<sup>1278</sup> As well as being at the same Inn and called at the same time, Merch Ashworth also had links with India as a schools inspector. She was also one of the more mature women at 51 years-old on admission and Cornelia Sorabji 54 years on admission. Therefore, they would most certainly have been aware of each other and perhaps may have had a friendship.

Outside of the Bar, Helena Normanton and Beroe Bicknell attended British Commonwealth League, Children in English Law in 1929. In March 1929, Helena Normanton presided over the British Commonwealth League's monthly luncheon where Miss Bicknell (Beroe Bicknell) gave a speech about Children in English Law. Beroe Bicknell discussed the changes that have taken place during the last hundred years, including child marriages and the age of consent.<sup>1279</sup> In addition, both women attended and spoke at the Women and the Future conference organised by the British Commonwealth League.<sup>1280</sup> It is highly likely that Helena Normanton and Beroe Bicknell knew each other as both were admitted to Middle Temple around the same time, and both practised, although on different circuits. However, there was quite a significant age gap. Their relationships may therefore have been professional colleagues rather than a friendship.

Although not listed in *Table 5.10* above, two other legal events were attended (as mentioned above when discussing *The Grotius Society*): Beroe Bicknell and Olive Morris, now Mrs Cruchley, attended the 21<sup>st</sup> annual meeting of The Grotius Society. Beroe Bicknell and Elfreda Willis attended the International Law Conference in 1944. It can therefore be seen that the first women barristers were engaging with their profession on different levels and potentially networking with each other.

### *Social Events*

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<sup>1278</sup> *The Penrith Observer*, 'Six New Women Barristers', 30 January 1923, p.6.

<sup>1279</sup> *The Vote*, 'Children and English Law', 1 March 1929, p.70.

<sup>1280</sup> British Commonwealth League, 'Women and the Future' Women of the Less Forward Races within the British Commonwealth. Their Needs and Our Responsibilities. The Enfranchised Women and the Future', 1929, <https://jstor.org/stable/community.33060546>.

A slightly different, but still relevant, interaction was between Elsie May Wheeler and Geraldine Prescott were both at the Huntingdon British Legion charity event in 1932. This interaction was slightly different from the others in the sense that it was a local social event arranged by the Huntingdon branch of the British Legion to commemorate Remembrance in connection with Poppy Day. It was noted that a 'Legion Cheese Trial' will be run and two women barristers: Miss Grace Prescott, who was mayor of Godmanchester, and Miss E. M. Wheeler of St Ives, have promised to 'claim and defend the cheese respectively. Another barrister, Mr S. L. Elborn was likely to be the judge.<sup>1281</sup> This was Mr Sydney Lipscombe Elborn, called to Inner Temple in 1919 and on the Midland circuit.<sup>1282</sup> The likelihood of them knowing each other through the Inns of Court is slimmer than the others because there was a six-year gap between Elsie Wheeler's call in 1922 and Grace Prescott's admission in 1928. They were also at different Inns of Court. However, both practised on the South East circuit, and they must have lived near each other as Huntingdon and St Ives are only five miles apart.

### *Analysis of interactions*

This chapter has captured interactions, and the beginnings of networks, of the first women barristers. Although the above only relates to a few uncovered interactions among the first women barristers, they were interacting with each other and there was, perhaps, some form of a professional network related to professional and social interests. Not only were they in proximity when they were at chambers, but several women also attended dinners either for professional or social reasons. There is a balance of professional interactions such as attending the Central Criminal Court Annual Dinner and Grotius Society conferences, as well as dinners related to women's education or women's interests. Events such as the British Commonwealth League was an opportunity for professional women to mingle in a social capacity. In addition, we can see that these women retained an interest in women rights more broadly as well as their role in society and education.

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<sup>1281</sup> *The Central Somerset Gazette*, 'Cheese in a Trial', 21 October 1932.,p.3.

<sup>1282</sup> *The Law List* 1932.



These interactions are important to note because the Bar was not diverse in terms of sex and women were very much a minority. However, women still succeeded in making their way in the profession, taking small but significant steps in this male-dominated world. It was highlighted in the Introduction that the first women barristers were often thought of as passive participants in a male-cultured Bar. While this may be accurate in the sense that they appeared to accept and conform to the male-cultures and practises at the Bar, it can also be seen that they had their own private interests; these often helped the broader cause of women's right or equality. Thus professionally, they were constrained and compliant, but privately, they used their legal knowledge to help women and continued being themselves.

Although it appears that most women barristers accepted the status quo at the Bar, they did not work in isolation; some worked together or indeed opposed each other in court; others pursued professional or social interests such as International Law via The Grotius Society, and some attended women's rights events. These interests led to interactions which, in turn, could have expanded both their social and professional circles. This sense of togetherness while, to use the modern metaphor, 'bowling alone',<sup>1283</sup> presents a juxtaposition for these first women barristers. It was the barrister's profession by nature to act and work alone, self-employed, self-sufficient and with a sound professional reputation. Consequently, the early women barristers appear to have conformed with the status quo, 'bowling alone' rather than utilising or making networks. Yet, it can also be seen that they did interact to some extent and therefore perhaps there were more subtle networks in existence than had previously been thought. Moreover, with the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations in 1947, it can be understood that they, or at least Helena Normanton, felt their efforts and achievements should be remembered and celebrated.

## **Conclusion**

There were approximately 38 women practising at the Bar between 1930 and 1940, making up around 2% of the Bar. Women were therefore very poorly represented at the practising Bar.

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<sup>1283</sup> Putnam, Robert, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 2001).

However, although men dominated the practising Bar, there was a large variance between the number of men admitted to the Inns and the number listed in the Directories. This illustrates that it was challenging for both men and women to practise at the Bar. Despite many women being in present chambers, being members of circuits and undertaking legal cases, in many ways they were still excluded and devalued. The idea that they were physically 'there' practising in chambers or on circuits, obscures a reality of 'statutory' inclusivity: yes, they were there but they were also openly excluded. Feminist historian Ren Pepitone found that the legal profession maintained an exclusive, masculine culture in the face of sweeping social changes across the 19th and 20th centuries.<sup>1284</sup> The first women barristers appeared to be aware of this and had no choice but to accept it; yet privately they pursued their own feminist, activist or professional interests. Therefore, while the misogynistic culture was constraining for women, that does not mean they were constrained in all aspects of their life. Fortunately, the position for women is slightly better at the Bar today; however, challenges around ethnicity remain.

Ethnic diversity at the Bar was almost entirely absent in respect of women; only one of the minority ethnic women called to the Bar later practised at the Bar of England and Wales. This was Rita Reuben, who was born in Singapore and was possibly of Iraqi Sephardic or Ashkenazi ethnicity (she was of Jewish descent). The lack of international women at the Bar was partly a reflection of social and professional expectations, and partly due to personal choice. However, while the women themselves may also have wanted to return to their native country, it does appear that there was an informal 'colour bar'. Chambers were also not diverse in terms of sex in the 1930s and 1940s, and this lack of diversity continued into at least the 1980s. The data is more positive today: in 2021/2022 women made up 186 out of 347 (53.6%) of tenants at chambers.<sup>1285</sup> The number of tenants considered minority ethnic, however, is still proportionally low: in 2021/2022 58 out of 347 (16.7%) were minority ethnic.<sup>1286</sup> Individual chambers are taking action to increase diversity of sex and ethnicity. For example, 3 Dr Johnson's Buildings has

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<sup>1284</sup> Pepitone, *Brotherhood of Barristers: A Cultural History of the British Legal Profession, 1840–1940*.

<sup>1285</sup> BSB, 'Statistics on Practising Barristers'.

<sup>1286</sup> Ibid.

published that 52.5% of their tenants are female, and 40% male. 72.5% are White and 20% are from a Black, Asian or Mixed background.<sup>1287</sup>

Nevertheless, although most women physically practised alone at their chambers, it can be understood that the women interacted with each other while at the Bar through chambers, circuits, societies and social events. Helena Normanton is worth calling out here: she welcomed women to her chambers and even organised a party to celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of women being allowed to be called to the Bar. Therefore, although the legal profession was a male dominated institution in its composition, philosophy and outlook, women nevertheless persevered with it and took the necessary steps to participate in practice at the Bar; they joined chambers and circuits and undertook legal cases; they joined some professional organisations such as The Grotius Society and they attended social events. There was perhaps a sense of togetherness between these women as they did interact in various ways. From identifying these connections, a more nuanced and holistic picture of the Bar is presented that does not focus only on professional success. Instead of seeing the first women barristers as ‘successes’ or ‘unfulfilled’, it can be understood that they were there undertaking legal work, pursuing their interests and in some cases working together. This relative achievement and perseverance should not be neglected or underestimated.

From the perspective of diversity and inclusion, women were still very marginalised throughout their professional undertakings. For some, membership to chambers and circuits was a result of those bodies fulfilling a requirement by taking on token women, rather than a step towards inclusivity and diversity at this level. Despite this, these women were still present, pursuing their interests or intended career paths, and perhaps even their passion. Whether successful or not, included or not, they were there.

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<sup>1287</sup> Equality & Diversity., 2024, 3 DJB. Accessed August 16, 2024. <https://www.3djb.co.uk/equality-and-diversity>.

## Conclusion

*The Inns of Court Alliance for Women exists to encourage and support women throughout their careers, and to increase retention and diversity within the profession. The ICAW recognised the challenges and barriers to career progression and wellbeing faced by women in the law, and the intersectional disadvantage faced by women from non-white ethnic backgrounds and by women with disabilities.*<sup>1288</sup>

This thesis constitutes, for the first time, a comprehensive review of all 236 women admitted to the Inns of Court between 1919 and 1929. It has drawn attention to debates in this field surrounding the Sex (Disqualification) Removal Act 1919, gender and the Inns of Court as well as silences in the archives in respect of lesser-known women. It is understood that although limited in terms of the marriage bar, the Act enabled the first steps towards greater diversity at the Inns of Court and practising Bar. In terms of gender, it suggested that women were aware they had to adapt their behaviour to conform with the all-male institution that is the Inns of Court, Bar and the legal profession more broadly. They were not ignorant, passive recipients of an unfamiliar patriarchal system – to the contrary, they were intelligent, educated and creative women. They undoubtedly faced challenges and had to adopt a professional persona that was perhaps at odds with their character (for some) but in private they still pursued their own interests, which tended to be feminist in nature.

In relation to gender, this thesis has added nuance to the distinction between ‘sex’ and ‘gender’, understanding that placing words in their historical context adds value to our understanding today. In the 1900s, ‘sex’ already had gendered connotations and examples of how women were the fairer or weaker sex. This was the society the first women barristers operated in, and this is what women today are still navigating. Not only did people at the Inns of Court have to deal with prejudice in terms of sex but also social status or call. The discussion around the requirement to state the father’s profession on the Inns of Court application form, has added important context to the social demographic of the Inns of Court. In the 1920s, the Inns of Court were typically

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<sup>1288</sup> ‘The Inns of Court Alliance for Women (ICAW)’.

middle-class institutions and the women who entered the Inns of Court typically fitted this demographic.

This research has been conducted through digital research and collective biography. Qualitative data and statistical analysis have enriched the historical context, and qualitative analysis has allowed for a greater focus on this research. Digital research has proved invaluable in terms of convenience, access and information but it does place demands on the historian such as possessing the necessary technical skills to store, manage and analyse data and organise information accordingly. Historians should be mindful of accuracy when dealing with online archives and sources and always cross-check sources to corroborate information. They should also be aware of inherent silences within archives as well as the silences they create through selecting the information they need. Yet, while focusing on a collective may lead to instances of silences, this also opens the door for future research through identifying a variety of sources and naming individuals who may have previously been unknown. Thus, historians should be clear and explicit about their methodologies to acknowledge the scope of their research as well as its limitations and any avenues for future research.

The overriding theme of this research has been the lack of sex diversity at the Bar during the 10-year term (1919 and 1929) as this research has found that there was a complete lack of sex diversity at the Bar - despite the fears the women would 'flood' the profession immediately after the passing of the enabling 1919 legislation. This scaremongering was completely unfounded; the floodgates were not opened. Women did not dominate the profession. This thesis has also drawn attention to the ethnic diversity of the first women at the Inns of Court and Bar. Ethnic diversity at the Inns of Court appears more positive when compared to recent statistics: 12.7% of the women admitted between 1919 and 1929 were minority ethnic and between 2019 and 2023, 14.5% of the whole Bar were minority ethnic. However, ethnic diversity significantly diminished for women practising at the Bar. Through exploring gender and ethnic diversity, this research has also identified lesser known, but equally important, pioneer women at the Inns of Court and Bar. It has recovered fragments of their untold stories, networks and connections. Unfortunately,

much of the evidence and history of these women's lives has been lost because history did not record them as their stories were not considered important.

There has been renewed interest in this area of legal history has been renewed following the centennial celebrations in 2019 of the opening of the legal profession to women. However, the great story of the first women barristers was, and still is, not complete. Whilst this thesis has gone some way towards uncovering the many untold stories therefore adding pieces to this historical jigsaw, there is more to do. There will always be different interpretations of the past, different avenues to explore and perhaps new sources that emerge, altering our understanding of what came before. This is, as Holton says, the kaleidoscopic nature of history.<sup>1289</sup> Moreover, much of the evidence has been lost or not recorded. For example, Robina Steven's complete diary has been lost, although fragments of it have been published in *Graya*. Many of the other women did not write about their lives. Nevertheless, this thesis has gone some way towards achieving completeness in terms of identifying and understanding more about the 236 women admitted to the Inns of Court between 1919 and 1929, especially by identifying the lesser-known women. This conclusion will summarise the research findings, ask why this research matters, and identify potential avenues for future research.

## **Research Findings**

Chapter 1 identified that 236 women and 5968 men were admitted to the Inns of Court between 1919 and 1929. Proportionally, women made up 4% of admissions over this 10-year period. Two key findings were made in respect of admissions: first, Middle Temple admitted the most men and women overall because, historically, Middle Temple had generally seen the most admissions; it offered new facilities, and overseas students were attracted to this Inn. Second, there was a high number of admissions of both men and women in the 1920s. In respect of women, the likely explanation is that the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act 1919 was passed on 23 December 1919, making 1920 the first full year that women could be admitted to the Bar. Men (and some women)

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<sup>1289</sup> Holton. *Suffrage Days: Stories from the Women's Suffrage Movement*.

may have also been encouraged by the economic and employment circumstances in 1920: 1920 was steady in terms of employment opportunities as the country was still benefiting from a relative economic boom following the First World War. However, by 1921, employment opportunities were volatile and there was significant unemployment. Other circumstances may also have affected the admission of men in the 1920s such as recovery from the Spanish Flu pandemic (1918 and 1920) and men returning from the First World War. There was also an influx of ex-service men at universities following government funding opportunities; this may have opened wider professional opportunities for some men.

Of the 236 women admitted to the Bar, 174 were called (73.7%). The percentage of women called at Middle Temple and Gray's Inn was particularly high. This research has established that women were no more likely to drop out than men, indicating that they were no different to men in respect of their journey to the Bar. Linking to academic competency, it was also found that women achieved better results in their Bar Finals than men. In terms of diversity of sex, it can be understood that the Inns of Court were not diverse across this 10-year period. Men made up 96% and women made up 4% of admissions between 1919 and 1929. 1920 looked a little promising, with women making up 6.2% of the total admissions, but this proportion dropped significantly between 1921 and 1928 (except for 1924). 1929 saw a slight rise, but still did not reach the peak of admissions seen in 1920.

Chapter 2 found that most women admitted to the Inns of Court between 1919 and 1929 were under 30; the '18 to 21' age category was particularly dominant. The average age was 26 years. This finding adds a more nuanced picture to the pre-existing understanding of the Inns of Court, highlighting that the Inns of Court contained both young and mature women. It shows us that the Inns of Court were diverse in terms of age. However, the Inns of Court were not particularly diverse in terms of educational background: most women who were admitted to the Inns of Court were university educated. 188 out of 236 (79.6%) were identified as either possessing a degree or reading for a degree. The most attended universities were Oxford, Cambridge and London

(54.2%) and the most popular subject was Law and Jurisprudence, indicating that the women's degree choice aligned to their career ambitions of becoming a barrister.

The social backgrounds of the women at the Inns of Court were not particularly diverse; the majority of the women's fathers were from white-collar or middle-class professions such as the commerce and industry sector (35.3%) or legal profession (20%). Although some women had fathers in blue-collar professions, these were the minority. From examining marital status, most women married (usually after call) with 54.7% marrying at some point and 39.8% not marrying at all. The percentage of women barristers marrying was low compared with women in society more broadly. Potential reasons for not marrying were identified and these included cohabiting; same-sex relationships; not wanting to marry or delaying marriage to avoid losing independence and/or to focus on a career; financial implications and costs; and individual circumstances such as death. In some cases, marriage affected whether a woman was called, due to the social conventions and expectations of women at the time; however more broadly in society women's employment after marriage increased in 1931. It is possible that some women may have benefited from professional opportunities where the marriage bar did not apply. This research has found that a typical woman at the Inns of Court in the 1920s was between the ages of 18 and 21, university educated, of a middle-class background and likely single at the time of admission.

Chapter 3 moved to a focus on collective biography, documenting the stories of the 62 women who were not called to the Bar. It has therefore significantly extended the historical record about the first women barristers as more information about these previously unknown women is now recorded. The likely reasons why these women did not proceed to call were identified. It was found that the more mature women tended to have had a career before their admission, and to have continued with this rather than becoming a barrister. Most younger women in their 20s did not continue to call because they got married or returned to their native country. Unfortunately, two women died and at least two suffered from mental illness. Two barriers to call were identified. The first of these was Bar exams; these were a barrier because some women could not pass them, despite multiple attempts. The second barrier was the social expectation that



women would cease work upon marriage and focus on the family. Although there were some women who could not fulfil their ambition of being called to the Bar, it can also be seen that some of these uncalled women went on to have successful careers and families. Therefore, uncalled did not necessarily mean unfulfilled.

Chapter 4 also focused on collective biography, recording the stories of the 65 (27.5%) international women admitted to the Inns of Court. These women have come from 23 countries including Africa, British India, Malaya, South Africa to the UK. It was found that not all the international women were minority ethnic; overall, only 29 (12.7%) of the women admitted between 1919 and 1929 were minority ethnic, and Asian ethnicity was the most dominant group. International students were younger than their peers born in the UK, and they had a higher call rate: 80% of international students were called compared to 71.9% of women born in the UK.

Some international students may have been attracted to the Bar of England and Wales because there was a special relationship between colonial countries, and the Inns of Court were said to be welcoming to overseas students. Others may have intended to undertake their degree in the UK and therefore legal training at the Bar of England and Wales would have made sense for them. Regardless of the reason for their choice, there was a clear expectation that international students would return home to practise; the women's stories reflected this, with only one ethnic minority woman practising at the Bar of England and Wales following call.

Chapter 5 found that approximately 38 women were practising at the Bar in the 1930s and 1940s, making up around 2% of the practising Bar. The Bar was not therefore diverse in terms of sex at any stage following admission. From call to practise, the number of women declined. However, a similar decline could be seen for men. This illustrates that it was challenging for both men and women at the Bar to establish a practice that was sufficient to live off. Ethnicity diversity at the Bar was also absent in respect of women, with only one minority ethnic women practising at the Bar of England and Wales (Rita Reuben). This was partly due to the social and professional expectations of the time: some of the women may themselves have wanted to return to their

native country, their home. Others may have had no choice, as international students were expected to return to their native country to practise. It therefore appears that there was an informal 'colour bar', which was a consequence of the overcrowding at the Junior Bar and volatile employment circumstances at that time. Although, physically, most women practised alone at their chambers, it can be understood that women interacted with each other while at the Bar through chambers, circuits, societies and social events. Their interactions reveal something about the personal interests of the first women barristers and illustrate that although, professionally, they were constrained at the Bar due to its male culture and practices, privately they could pursue their own interests; these tended to be related to women's rights and equality. There did not appear to be any organised professional networks, but they did come together in some instances to celebrate their achievements, such as for the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of women being called to the Bar in 1947.

Even though women were as academically competent as men in terms of their educational background and performance in Bar Final Exams, they still were perceived as less competent by other men in the legal profession because they were women. They therefore had to act more like men and 'deliberately de-emphasized their femininity to accord with the Inns of Court's masculine culture and increase their chances of professional success'.<sup>1290</sup> Therefore, although there was some minimal diversity in terms of sex, there was no inclusivity. A lack of diversity at the 1920s Bar may not be surprising given the social and historical context of the Inns of Court and legal profession. The Inns of Court did not want to admit women. They did not have a desire or intention to make the Bar more diverse and inclusive. That decision was (necessarily) thrust upon them by law. Are there any improvements today?

In 2023, data revealed that the Bar is certainly becoming more diverse in terms of sex: 39.2% of the practising Bar were female and 57.3% were male.<sup>1291</sup> In terms of ethnicity, research in 2023 found that 15.7% of the practising Bar (men and women) were minority ethnic and 77.2% were

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<sup>1290</sup> Pepitone, 'Gender, Space, and Ritual: Women Barristers, the Inns of Court, and the Interwar Press'; Sommerlad and Sanderson *Gender, Choice and Commitment.*, p.60.

<sup>1291</sup> Bar Standards Board, 'Diversity at the Bar 2023'.

white.<sup>1292</sup> More positive steps are now being taken at the Inns of Court, with the Inns of Court Alliance for Women (ICAW) established in 2011. The ICAW notes that:

*The Inns of Court Alliance for Women exists to encourage and support women throughout their careers, and to increase retention and diversity within the profession. The ICAW recognises the challenges and barriers to career progression and wellbeing faced by women in the law, and the intersectional disadvantage faced by women from non-white ethnic backgrounds and by women with disabilities.*<sup>1293</sup>

The challenges and barriers women, particularly women from non-White ethnic backgrounds and those with disabilities face, are still an issue today. Although there have been other professional support groups for women lawyers and women barristers, such as *Her Bar* and *Women in the Law UK*,<sup>1294</sup> the establishment of the ICAW acknowledges the specific challenges faced by the Inns of Court and Bar and, importantly, demonstrates that women and men are trying to work together to overcome these. Although it can be seen from the proximity of chambers and the membership of circuits that these women would have known each other and may have had their own informal support networks, they certainly could have done with a more organised and institutionalised support network such as the ICAW.

### **Why does this research matter?**

This research is important because first, there were 236 women admitted to the Inns of Court between 1919 and 1929. However, what is known about them is restricted to a limited number of the higher profile women. The centennial celebrations, projects and biographies did raise the profile of some of these women, the majority remained largely unknown. Many of the women's stories had already been identified due to recent research and projects, but several of these women were unknown. Moreover, there had been a focus on the 'successes' or those who

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<sup>1292</sup> Bar Standards Board, 'Diversity at the Bar 2023 A Summary of the Latest Available Diversity Data for the Bar'.

<sup>1293</sup> 'The Inns of Court Alliance for Women (ICAW)'.

<sup>1294</sup> 'About Us', Her Bar, accessed 29 July 2024, <https://www.herbar.co.uk/about>; 'Women in the Law UK', Women In The Law UK, 5 November 2018, <https://www.womeninthelawuk.com/>.

practised; thus, somewhat distorting and misrepresenting the picture of the Bar both in terms of 'successes and the representation of women at the Bar. This research identifies that the Inns of Court were relatively diverse in terms of ethnicity and age, but that the women were typically of a similar educational and social background. A more nuanced understanding of success, failure, circumstances and social expectations at the Inns of Court gives us a better reflection of society at the time; it highlights that not all these women set out to be barristers and not all of them were professionally driven. Of those who did set out to be barristers, some saw their career paths thwarted by unexpected barriers such as the Bar exams, social expectations and even death.

An unintended but important reason why this research matters is the audience. This research serves more than a piece of academic scholarship and therefore the audience was predominantly academic. As time progressed, and as contact was made with the relatives of the first women at the Inns of Court, it took on a new purpose. Kalela notes that, 'it is empathy that describes the historian's relation to the people studied, while sympathy, or rather concern and even solidarity, refers to one's relation to the people addressed.'<sup>1295</sup> This statement accurately sums up why this research is important and who it is for. There was a need for the successes and failures of the first women at the Inns of Court to be better understood. Contact with some of the families, friends and descendants of these first women at the Inns has brought a feeling of compassion to tell these unknown stories for them, so that their relatives could be remembered for their achievements; most family members were incredibly proud of what their mother, grandmother or distant relative achieved, given the circumstances at the time.

### **Avenues for Future Research**

This thesis has enriched present understanding of the Inns of Court and Bar through the data and stories of the 236 women admitted to the Inns of Court. Through the lens of diversity, it has drawn attention to the commonalities, differences and nuances of the women at the Inns of Court and Bar during this period. In doing so, it contributes significantly to our understanding of

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<sup>1295</sup> Kalela, 'Making History', p.119.

women professionals and the barriers and hurdles these women faced. Throughout this thesis, opportunities for further research have been identified. One of these is the collection of accurate data for male applicants and calls to Gray's Inn and Lincoln's Inn. If a sample of some of the men was collected and their stories traced, as for the first women cohort admitted between 1919 and 1929, it would be extremely useful for comparison purposes. It would likely be the case that published or well-known stories of 'men at the Bar' have also focused on the successful barristers, such as King's Counsel or judges. What about the men who failed and did not achieve anything particularly noteworthy? This kind of analysis would enrich understanding of the Inns of Court more broadly and would extend our knowledge of why these men were not called, what their family circumstances were, whether they married, and the attributes of a 'typical' male at the Inns of Court in the 1920s.

Another area of exploration could be identifying and understanding the international male students at the Inns of Court. It is known that there was a high number of international applications, but the number of men is not known. Likely the figure would be quite staggering. It would then be enlightening to find out how many international men practised at the Bar of England and Wales. This would give more insight into whether there was an informal 'colour Bar' or if it was just the international women who decided to return home. It is likely that the former is true, but there is currently no conclusive evidence. Moreover, ethnicity could be more thoroughly reviewed for the following decade, 1930 to 1940, to see if the findings of this thesis still applied for those women admitted later.

As with any historical research, there are still avenues to explore that would enrich our current understanding of the first women barristers. Nevertheless, this research has significantly added to the historical record of the first women barristers. It has found that 236 women were admitted between 1919 and 1929 and the vast majority of these were called (73.7%). Of those not called, marriage and other career avenues were typically the reasons for not completing legal training. It has been identified that the 'typical' woman barrister of this period was between the ages of 18 to 21, university educated and of a middle-class background. Finally, some of the interactions,

connections and networks of the first women barristers have been identified, illustrating that these women were not lone satellites but part of a larger network. This thesis has also helped current understanding of the Inns of Court and Bar by presenting a more nuanced picture in terms of sex, age, social and ethnic diversity.

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## Appendix A:

### 236 Women Admitted to the Inns of Court between 1919 and 1929



No.	Inn	Surname	First Name	Date of birth	Date of death	Admission	Call Date	Age at admission	University	Read	Bar Final	Employment (on application)	Region on application	Country of Birth	Ethnicity/ Nationality	Father's employment	Mother's employment	Married	Parent	Chambers (1932 LL)	Circuit (1932 LL)
1	Middle Temple	Normanton	Helena Florence	14/12/1882	14-Oct-1957	24-Dec-1919	17-Nov-1922	35	LDN: University of London	History	Class III	Lecturer	London	UK - England	White	Other: Piano Manufacturer (deceased)	Business: Ran a boarding house	Yes (1921) - -	No	4 Essex Court 3 Dr Johnson's Buildings 3 Powden Buildings (1934/1940) 5 Stone Buildings	North East
2	Middle Temple	Cobb	Monica Mary Geikie	3-Aug-1891	25-Nov-1946	2-Jan-1920	17-Nov-1922	28	LDN: UCL	Arts: Philosophy	Class II	Clerical	Kensington	UK - England	White	Clergy	Wife (father rector; marriage reform)	No	No	2, Cloisters, Temple (1930) 1 King's Bench Walk, Temple (1934/1940)	Midland
3	Middle Temple	Bruce	Charlotte Gwendoline	29-Aug-1883	1-Jan-1973	5-Jan-1920	Not Called	30	OXBRD: Oxford	Law: Jurisprudence			Weston	UK - Wales	White	Business, Financial: Accountant	Wife	No	No		
4	Middle Temple	Doherty	Auvergne	10-Mar-1896	5-Jan-1961	5-Jan-1920	17-Nov-1922	23	OXBRD: Oxford	Law	Class II	Student	London	Australia (WA)	White	Business (Merchant)	Activist	No	No		
5	Middle Temple	Ashford	Ethel Bright	18/03/1883	14-May-1980	8-Jan-1920	17-Nov-1922	37	LDN: University of London	Bus: Economics	Class II	Lecturer/ Councillor	London	UK - England	White	Business (Merchant)	Wife	No	No	New Court, Temple (1930/1940)	South East
6	Inner Temple	Davies [Calvert]	Theodora Llewelyn	18/04/1898	21-Dec-1988	9-Jan-1920	17-Nov-1922	21	OXBRD: Cambridge	Law	Class II	Student	London	UK - England	White	Business (Manager)	Wife	Yes (1929)*	Yes (2)	1 Crown Office Row (1932) 4 Paper Buildings (Inner Temple)	South East
7	Middle Temple	Fairfield	Josephine Letitia Denny	3-Oct-1885	1-Feb-1978	13-Jan-1920	26-Jan-1923	39	SCOT: Edinburgh + UCL	Medicine	Class II	Civil service + doctor	Hampstead	Australia	White	Other: Journalist (deceased)	Other: Musician - Widow (Scottish musician, Pianist)	No	No		
8	Middle Temple	Wallace	Naomi Constance	13-Feb-1891	26-Dec-1980	15-Jan-1920	17-Nov-1922	28	OXBRD: Cambridge	Lang: Medieval & Modern Languages	Class III	Clerical	London	UK - England	White	Legal	Deceased	No	No	4 Brick Court (1934) 2 Brick Court (1940)	
9	Middle Temple	Campbell	Sybil	10-Sep-1889	29-Aug-1977	16-Jan-1920	17-Nov-1922	30	OXBRD: Cambridge	Sci: Natural Sciences	Class III	Civil service	Birmingham	India - Ceylon	White	Business (Merchant)	Wife (father Sir William Bovill, chief justice of common pleas)	No	No		
10	Lincoln's Inn	Powell [Robinson]	Marjorie	10-May-1893	12-Jun-1939	16-Jan-1920	Not Called	26	OXBRD: Cambridge	Bus: Economics		Lecturer		UK - England	White	Other: Writer		Yes (1920) - -	Yes (2)	8 New Square (1932) 2 Paper Buildings	South East
11	Middle Temple	Clapham [Miles]	Oliver Catherine	21-Jan-1899	7-Mar-1973	17-Jan-1920	17-Nov-1924	21	OXBRD: Oxford	Law	Class III	Student	Hull	UK - England	White	Public Service: Counselor, Liberal (Proprietor)	Education: Schoolmistress	Yes (c.1923)	Yes (3)	2 Paper Buildings	
12	Middle Temple	Harverson	Audrey Clara	10-Dec-1900	28-Apr-1982	19-Jan-1920	26-Jan-1923	19	LDN: UCL	Law	Class II	Student	Hampstead	UK - England	White	Other: carpenter (father builder)		No	No		
13	Middle Temple	Wheeler	Elsie May	16/05/1895	31-May-1974	21-Jan-1920	17-Nov-1922	24	OXBRD: Cambridge	History	Class II	Student	Cambridge	UK - England	White	Legal (Solicitor)	Wife	No	No	5 Paper Buildings 2 Paper Buildings (1932/1934)	South East
14	Middle Temple	Dawes	Lilian Maud	18/01/1897	28-May-1905	22-Jan-1920	17-Nov-1922	23	LDN: UCL	Law	Class II	Student	Streatham Hill	UK - England	White	Business (Manager)	Wife	Unknown	Unknown		
15	Middle Temple	Davy	Beatrice Honour	13/12/1885	18-Apr-1966	24-Jan-1920	17-Nov-1922	33	LDN: King's College, Dublin	Law	Class II	Clerical	Exeter	UK - England	White	Medical (Doctor)	Wife (daughter of Walter James Tucker, solicitor and town clerk of Chard, Somerset)	No	No	6 Crown Office Row (1930)	
16	Inner Temple	Williams	Ivy	9-Jul-1877	18-Feb-1966	26-Jan-1920	10-May-1922	42	OXBRD: Oxford	Law	Class I	Lecturer	Oxford	UK - England	White	Legal (Solicitor)	Other: Wife (formerly domestic servant)	No	No		
17	Gray's Inn	Jones [nee]	Mary Selina Shaw	18/08/1873	20-Jan-1954	27-Jan-1920	Not Called	46	ENG: University of Liverpool	Law			Wales	UK - England	White	Other: Draper (census)		Yes (1899) +			
18	Lincoln's Inn	Thomson [nee Betb]	Gwyneth Marjory	27/10/1889	10-Sep-1921	27-Jan-1920	Not Called	29	OXBRD: Oxford			Civil service		UK - England	White	Education		Yes (1917) +	Yes (1917)		
19	Inner Temple	Lloyd [Lloyd Lane]	Ethel	10-Jul-1897	18-Aug-1974	29-Jan-1920	26-Jan-1925	24	LDN: UCL		Class I	Student	Lancashire	UK - England	White	Business (Commission agent)	Wife	Yes (1922)-		1 Brick Court (1930/32/1940)	Oxford
20	Middle Temple	Malcolm	Alice Annie Lumsden	22/10/1880	7-Mar-1957	29-Jan-1920	2-Jul-1924	39	SCOT: Glasgow	Arts: English	Class II	Teacher	London	UK - Scotland	White	Business, Financial: Accountant (deceased)		No	No	2 Brick Court (1930) 1 Essex Court (1930/32)	Midland
21	Middle Temple	Young	Charlotte Mary Avenel [Ssemah, Marjorie]	19/01/1895	14-Apr-1937	18-Mar-1920	26-Jan-1923	24	OXBRD: Cambridge	Joint: History + Law	Class II	Student	London	UK - England	White	Medical (deceased)	Widow	No	No		
22	Middle Temple	Harcourt [nee Dusk Cohen]		24/01/1875	12-Apr-1905	19-Mar-1920	Not Called	40	SCOT: Edinburgh	Medicine		Medical	London	India	Other - Middle Eastern/Jewish	Clergy: Chief Rabbi	Yes 7 +	Yes	7 King's Bench Walk 2 Paper Buildings (1930/32) 4 Pump Court	Oxford	
23	Middle Temple	Duncan	Ida May Coffin	5-Jun-1892	20-Apr-1975	12-Apr-1920	26-Jan-1923	27	IRE: Trinity College, Dublin	Law	Class III	Restaurant: governess	London	Ireland	White - Southern	Other: Clerical	Lady: Wife (from notable family)	No	No		
24	Lincoln's Inn	Tata [Lam]	Milhan Ardeshr	3-Feb-1898	22-Feb-1981	13-Apr-1920	26-Jan-1923	22	IND: Bombay, London (MA)	Bus: Economics	Class II	Student		India	Asian - Indian	Business (Industrialist)	Activist (social reformer)	Yes (1933)*	Yes (2)	Overseas	
25	Lincoln's Inn	Ashworth	Mercy	19/06/1868	24-Nov-1943	16-Apr-1920	26-Jan-1923	51	OXBRD: Cambridge	Science	Class III	School Inspector	London	UK - England	White	Business (Manufacturer)	Wife	No	No	8 Old Sq (1934)	South East
26	Middle Temple	Devi	Ordan Kunuthashah Meenashah	7-Mar-1905		23-Apr-1920	27-Jan-1930	26	IND: India	Science	Class III		Malabar; Chelsea	India	Asian - Indian	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown		
27	Middle Temple	Andrew	Katherine Robertson	30/06/1889	26-Nov-1972	24-Apr-1920	Not Called	30	SCOT: Edinburgh	Civil service: inspector of factories			Manchester	UK - Scotland	White	Education: Headmaster		No	No		
28	Middle Temple	Hastings [Page]	Anne Wilson	21/04/1885	23-Mar-1975	24-Apr-1920	Not Called	34	SCOT: Aberdeen	Arts: Philosophy		Civil service	Scotland	UK - Scotland	White	Clergy: Clergy+doctor		Yes (1945)	No		
29	Middle Temple	Taylor	Fanny Isabel	21/12/1883	5-Apr-1947	11-Jun-1920	Not Called	36	LDN: LSE			Civil service		UK - England	White	Military: sea captain (retired)		No	No		
30	Middle Temple	Sanderson	Evelyn	11-Jul-1879		12-Jun-1920	13-Jun-1923	40	OXBRD: Oxford	Arts: English	Class II	Teacher	Manchester	UK - England	White	Business (Merchant - deceased)	Widow	Unknown	Unknown		
31	Middle Temple	Bowie [Menzies]	Jessie Marguerite	17/10/1893	14-Mar-1987	14-Jun-1920	25-Apr-1934	26	ENG: Bristol	History	Class III	Officer of Trade Boards (1922) Insurance Broker (1934)	London	UK - England	White	Other: Piano tuner (1911); Auditor; Minister of Munitions	Wife	Yes (1966)*	No		
32	Middle Temple	Gibbs	Henrietta Lilian Mary	4-Aug-1901	1-Jul-1983	14-Jun-1920	17-Nov-1924	18	OXBRD: Oxford	Law	Class II	Student	Birmingham	UK - England	White	Medical	Wife	No	No	71 Temple Bar, Birmingham (1932) 1 Fountain Court, Birmingham	Midland
33	Gray's Inn	Hestling [Bradbury]	Edith	22-Jun-1899	19-Jun-1971	4-Oct-1920	13-Jun-1923	21	ENG: Manchester	Law	Class II	Student	Stockport	UK - England	White	Other: Grocer	Wife	Yes (1927)*	Yes (3)	23 King Street Manchester 2 Booth Street (1932)	Northern
34	Gray's Inn	Stevens [Bowles]	Mary Robina	21-Jan-1903	15-Jan-1951	8-Oct-1920	28-Jan-1924	17	LDN: University of London		Class I	Student	Wales	UK - Wales	White	Legal (Solicitor)		Yes (1927)*	Yes (2)	1 New Square (1930) Polden	Wales & Chester
35	Lincoln's Inn	Wing	Halcyon Selden	30-May-1899	14-Sep-1967	13-Oct-1920	Not Called	21	Unknown				UK - England	White	Legal (Solicitor)		Yes (1921)-	Yes (5)*			
36	Middle Temple	Walters	Margaret Alice	18-Feb-1893	4-Oct-1963	13-Oct-1920	28-Jun-1934	27	LDN: Bedford College	History	Class III	Civil service	Bexleyheath	UK - England	White	Engineer (deceased)	Widow	No	No		
37	Middle Temple	Keely	Ida Mary Southwell	19-May-1888	7-Nov-1959	19-Oct-1920	2-Jul-1924	23	OXBRD: Cambridge	Science	Class III	Civil service	Twickenham	UK - England	White	Legal (Barrister - deceased)	Widow	No	No		
38	Middle Temple	Troup	Alice Gertrude	27-May-1890	18-Jan-1973	1-Nov-1920	Not Called	30	LDN: UCL and LSE	History		Civil service		UK - England	White	Clergy		No	No		
39	Gray's Inn	Morrison	Edith Jane Douglas	11-Mar-1882	16-Jul-1964	1-Nov-1920	19-Nov-1923	38	SCOT: Aberdeen	Joint: Maths + Phil	Class III	Civil service	Manchester	UK - Ireland	Northern Irish	Clergy	Wife	No	No	5 Paper Buildings 4 Elm Court (1930/1934/1940) 5 New Square (1932)	North East
40	Middle Temple	Horsman	Alice	3-Sep-1890	25-Dec-1978	6-Nov-1920	13-Jun-1923	30	OXBRD: Oxford	Classics	Class II	Secretary+teacher	London	UK - England	White	Business (Merchant)	Wife	No	No		
41	Middle Temple	Hope [Groul]	Evelyn Priscilla	6-Dec-1895	1-Dec-1972	6-Nov-1920	16-Jun-1926	25	LDN: UCL	Joint: Science+Law	Class I	Student	Essex	UK - England	White	Clergy	Wife	Yes (1936)*	No		
42	Middle Temple	Bicknell	Berice Admiral	24-Dec-1898	24-Nov-1978	18-Nov-1920	13-Jun-1923	21	LDN: UCL	Law	Class II	Student	Surrey	UK - England	White	Legal: (Admitted as solicitor 1899+Master of the Vinters (wife) (deceased))	Wife	No	No	5 Stone Buildings (1932/1940)	Midland
43	Gray's Inn	Malone	Sydney Alice	24-Oct-1893	9-May-1905	20-Nov-1920	28-Jan-1924	26	IRE: University College, Dublin	Science	Class II		London	Ireland	White - Southern	Legal (Solicitor+concone r)		No	No		
44	Middle Temple	Pratt	Edith Helen	20-Dec-1882	14-May-1959	20-Nov-1920	Not Called	37	OXBRD: Cambridge	Lang: Medieval and Foreign Languages		Civil Service		UK - England	White	Legal: Solicitor		No	No		
45	Lincoln's Inn	Jonge [Fuller]	Ima Gertrude May de	23-Aug-1900	1-Oct-1999	22-Nov-1920	27-Jan-1947	20	WAL: Aberystwyth University College		Class III	Student	Georgetown	West Indies: British Guiana	Mixed - Anglo-Indian; British	Business (Merchant - deceased)	Widow	Yes (1923)-		1 Crown Office Row (1930) 3 Essex Court (1934)	Western
46	Middle Temple	Macmillan	(Jessie) Crystal	13-Jun-1872	21-Sep-1937	22-Nov-1920	28-Jan-1924	48	SCOT: Edinburgh	Joint: Maths + Phil	Class II	Women's groups	London	UK - Scotland	White	Business (Merchant - deceased)	Deceased	No	No		
47	Middle Temple	Pickering	Doris Evans	4-May-1895	10-Mar-1953	13-Dec-1920	Not Called	25	ENG: Leeds				UK - England	White	Legal: Solicitor		No	No			
48	Middle Temple	Cocks	Winifred Nellie	1-Oct-1891	10-Aug-1979	21-Dec-1920	19-Nov-1923	29	LDN: University of London	History	Class III	School teacher	Twickenham	UK - England	White	Clergy	Wife	No	No		
49	Middle Temple	Westall [Phillips]	Maria Alice	17-Sep-1901	1-Feb-2002	12-Jan-1921	19-Nov-1923	19	LDN: University of London		Class II	Student	London	UK - England	White	Public Service: Police (Court Clerk)	Wife	Yes (1925)*	Yes		
50	Middle Temple	Carrollers [Mordsant]	Mildred Frances	3-Jul-1900	3-Jan-1984	13-Jan-1921	2-Jul-1924	20	OXBRD: Oxford	Law: Jurisprudence	Class II	Student	Liverpool	UK - England	White	Business (Merchant)	Wife	Yes (1929)*		1 Essex Court	Northern

									LDN: University of London											1 Elm Court (1930) 3 Powden Buildings (1934/1940) 3 Middle Temple Lane	
51	Middle Temple	Reuben	Rita	2-Mar-1902	1-Sep-1997	6-Apr-1921	28-Jan-1924	19		Law	Class II	Student	London	Asia: Singapore	Other - Jewish/British (neutralised)	Business (Merchant, Singapore)		No	No		South East
52	Middle Temple	Smith	Ann Elizabeth	18-Feb-1883		6-Apr-1921	6-May-1925	38	LDN: London		Class II		Birmingham	UK - England	White	Other: advertising (deceased)	Widow	Unknown	Unknown		
53	Lincoln's Inn	Moclar	Mary Anna Elizabeth	1884	3-May-1905	1-Jun-1921	16-Jun-1926	38	IRE: University College, Dublin		Class II		London	Ireland	White - Southern	Business: Farmer	Deceased	No	No		
54	Lincoln's Inn	Snell [Maynard]	Kathleen	8-Mar-1898	2-Dec-1985	18-Aug-1921	2-Jul-1924	22	OXBRD: Cambridge	Bus: Economics	Class I	Student	Titchhurst	UK - England	White	Legal (Solicitor)		Yes (1924)*	Yes (6)		
55	Lincoln's Inn	Hume [see Hope] later Lady McCalm	Violet Mary	21-Apr-1887	30-Oct-1964	21-Sep-1921	Not Called	34	LDN: London University			Widow	London	UK - England	White	Public Service: J.P. and Sheriff		Yes (1912) +			
56	Inner Temple	Price	Edith Mary	14-Nov-1897	15-May-1980	30-Sep-1921	2-Jul-1924	23	OXBRD: Cambridge	History	Class II	Social Worker	Teddington	UK - England	White	Engineer	Wife	No	No	11 Old Square	
57	Middle Temple	Bowerman	Elsie Edith	18-Dec-1889	18-Oct-1973	11-Oct-1921	17-Nov-1924	31	OXBRD: Cambridge	Lang: Medieval & Modern Languages	Class II	WSPU	Sussex	UK - England	White	Businessman: counsellor: deceased (wealthy)	Widow	No	No	6 Crown Office Row (1930) 1 Temple Gardens (1934) 1 Hare Ct 3 Pump Ct	South East
58	Gray's Inn	Sisamore [Archer]	Kathleen Maria Margaret [Jane]	3-Nov-1898	1-Sep-1982	17-Oct-1921	17-Nov-1924	23	Unknown		Class II	Administrative at War Office	London	India	White - British	Business (Director)	Wife	Yes (1939)*	No		
59	Middle Temple	Monroe [Barnett?]	Lillie Agatha	2-Apr-1885	1-Aug-1963	17-Oct-1921	2-Jul-1924	36	LDN: University of London		Class II	Chemist	London	UK - England	White	Education: Schoolmaster	Wife	Yes (1956)*		4 Elm Court (1930/1934/1940)	South East
60	Gray's Inn	Jeffery	Dorothy Foster	18-Aug-1903	3-Jul-1970	26-Oct-1921	17-Nov-1924	18	ENG: Manchester		Class II	Student	Heywood	UK - England	White	Medical (Surgeon)	Wife	No	No	6 St Anne's Passage, Manchester	Northern
61	Inner Temple	Stapole	Dorothy Laura Muriel	9-Jul-1897	30-May-1905	15-Nov-1921	Not Called	24	Unknown				London	Africa: Mauritius	White - British	Military: Isolated colonel		Yes (1950)	No		
62	Lincoln's Inn	Leadley-Brown	Cicely	23-Oct-1882	21-May-1905	18-Nov-1921	2-Jul-1924	39	Unknown		Class II	Teacher	Cheshire	UK - England	White	Other: Estate agent	Wife	No	No	8 Cook Street, Liverpool	Northern
63	Middle Temple	Weir	Margaret MacLaren	2-May-1903	14-Dec-1965	6-Jan-1922	Not Called	18	Unknown					UK - Scotland	White	Public Service: MP		Yes (1936/1953)	Yes?		
64	Inner Temple	Willis	Irene Cooper	16-Aug-1882	2-Jan-1970	10-Jan-1922	17-Nov-1924	37	OXBRD: Cambridge	Mathematics	Class II	Secretary	Blackheath	UK - England	White	Legal (Barrister+KC+IT benchner - deceased)	Widow	No	No	18 Old Buildings, 2 Garden Court (1934) 6 Stone Buildings 15 Old Square, 2 Brick Court (1940)	
65	Gray's Inn	Shyvers	Winifred Packard	30-Jan-1903	6-May-1994	11-Jan-1922	Not Called	22	OXBRD: Oxford - Cherwell Edge		Class II		London	UK - England	White	Business, Financial: Shipbroker		Yes (1928) - -	Yes (1)		
66	Gray's Inn	Stephenson	Vendela Josephine Mary	15-Oct-1891	5-Dec-1967	18-Jan-1922	17-Nov-1924	31	Unknown		Class II	Military	London	UK - England	White	Other: Artist (deceased)	Widow	No	No	1 Garden Court (1934) 6 Pump Court (1932) 11 King's Bench Walk (1940) 1 Essex Court 2 Harcourt Buildings	South East
67	Inner Temple	Thomas	Leila Mabel	25-May-1896	17-Aug-1981	20-Jan-1922	Not Called	25	AUS: Sydney University and LSE	Joint: History and English		Lecturer	Sydney	Australia	White - South African	Clergy: Rev		Yes (1925)	Yes (1)	St Georges Mansion, red lion sq.	
68	Gray's Inn	Wall	Jessie Irene	1-Jun-1890	3-Jan-1953	24-Jan-1922	6-May-1925	32	OXBRD: Cambridge	Lang: Modern Language	Class I	Civil service	London	India	White - British	Engineer (Civil engineer)		No	No		
69	Inner Temple	Clarkson	Joan	22-Nov-1902	7-Nov-1980	5-Apr-1922	26-Jan-1925	20	None		Class II		Chertsey	India	White - British	Military (CMG, DSO)	Other: Dairy Farmer (born New Zealand)	No	No	4, Harcourt Bldgs (1930/32)	Midland
70	Middle Temple	Phipps	Emily Frost	11-Jul-1865	3-May-1943	24-Apr-1922	26-Jan-1925	66	LDN: University of London	Classics: Latin and Greek	Class II	Headmistress	Swansea	UK - England	White	Other: Coppersmith (deceased)	Widow	No	No	3 Essex Court	
71	Lincoln's Inn	Rosser [Lockett]	Enid	30-Apr-1899	29-Dec-1980	27-Apr-1922	17-Nov-1927	22	OXBRD: Oxford	Bus: Economics	Class III	Student	Swansea	UK - Wales	White	Public Service: Counsellor	Legal: JP	Yes (1944)*		5 Paper Buildings (1934)	South East
72	Lincoln's Inn	Sorabji	Cornelia	15-Nov-1866	6-Jul-1954	1-May-1922	13-Jun-1923	54	IND: Bombay+Oxford	Law	Class II	Teacher		India	Asian - Indian	Clergy: Clergy (deceased)	Activist	No	No	13 Cork Street (1932) 22 Old Buildings Overseas	
73	Middle Temple	Steyn	Gladys Evelyn	12-Dec-1890	25-Sep-1989	15-Jun-1922	6-May-1925	31	LDN: University of London	Law	Class II	Principal of school	South Africa	South Africa	White - SA	Public Service: O.P.S. ex-president	Activist (Women leader, South Africa)	Yes (1942)	No	Overseas	
74	Lincoln's Inn	Reiss	Erna	28-Oct-1888	25-Dec-1974	21-Jun-1922	17-Nov-1925	33	ENG: Manchester	Arts: Philosophy	Class II	Social worker	Manchester	UK - England	White	Business (Merchant - deceased)	Widow	No	No	3 St James Square 7 Chapel Walks	Northern
75	Inner Temple	Croschwaite	Elizabeth Margaret	1-Dec-1902		17-Jul-1922	Not Called	20	OXBRD: Oxford	Law: Jurisprudence		Student	King's Langley	UK - England	White	Public Service: Engineering inspector, Ministry of Health		Yes (1925)? - -			
76	Inner Temple	Billson	Marion Graham (Graeme)	17-Jul-1902	9-May-1962	13-Sep-1922	Not Called	20	OXBRD: Cambridge				Leicester	UK - England	White	Business (Merchant)		No	No	Practised as a solicitor	
77	Inner Temple	de Freitas [Brazeo]	Iris	28-Oct-1896	11-Jun-1905	27-Sep-1922	28-Jan-1929	25	WAL: Aberystwyth University College	Law	Class II	Student	Georgetown	West India: Caribbean; Guyanese	Black - Caribbean; Guyanese	Business (Manufacturer)		Yes (1937)*	No	Overseas	
78	Lincoln's Inn	Moshkowitz [Moshkowitz? Varkey]	Sara		3-May-1905	29-Sep-1922	17-Nov-1925	21	EURO University of Odessa+Sorbonne	Law	Class II	Student	London	Europe/Russia	White - Russian	Business (Merchant)		Yes (post call)		3 Powden Buildings (1934)	
79	Gray's Inn	Sanger	Sophie	1-Mar-1881	7-Dec-1950	6-Oct-1922	20-Jun-1926	41	OXBRD: Cambridge	Mathematics	Class II	International Labour Office	Surrey	UK - England	White	Business (Wholesaler - deceased)	Widow	No	No		
80	Lincoln's Inn	Snow	Lilian Mabel	25-Sep-1876	20-Aug-1963	24-Oct-1922	24-Jun-1925	46	Unknown		Class II		London	UK - England	White	Business (Merchant)	Wife	No	No	14 Old Square	
81	Inner Temple	McKeown	Edna Ellen	22-Jan-1900	28-Dec-1991	11-Nov-1922	Not Called	21	OXBRD: Cambridge 1922-24	Law				UK - England	White	Public Service: Parliament Secretary, Ulster		Yes (1926)	Yes (2)		
82	Inner Temple	Swan [Morrison]	Katherine Allison Baroness Elizabeth Adelaide Mary [Hugh]	21-Jul-1898	26-Mar-1983	18-Nov-1922	26-Jan-1926	24	SCOT: Edinburgh	History	Class III		Leith	UK - Scotland	White	Clergy	Wife	Yes (1924)-	Yes (4)	6 King's Bench Walk	Oxford
83	Lincoln's Inn	Clifton		21-Jan-1900	5-Jul-1937	3-Jan-1923	26-Jan-1926	22	None		Class II			UK - England	White	Earl of Darnley of Cobham Hall		No	No		
84	Lincoln's Inn	Buckley	Ruth Burton (Hon.)	7-Dec-1896	1-Jul-1986	8-Jan-1923	16-Jun-1926	24	Unknown		Class II		London	UK - England	White	Legal (Barrister + Judge+QC+Peer )	Wife	No	No		
85	Inner Temple	Evans	Dorothy	10-Jun-1895	22-Sep-1943	9-Jan-1923	17-Nov-1925	29	ENG: Manchester	History	Class III	Secretary to Association of Women Clerks	London	UK - England	White	Education: Schoolmaster	Wife	No	No		
86	Gray's Inn	Colwill	Constance	22-Jun-1887	1-Apr-1971	10-Jan-1923	17-Nov-1925	36	LDN: Bedford College	Law	Class II	School teacher, part time lecturer	Barnes	UK - England	White	Legal (Barrister's clerk)	Wife	No	No	1 Crown Office Row (1930) 1 Pump Court (1932) 1 Brick Court (1940)	South East
87	Gray's Inn	Stokes	Dorothy Scott	25-Nov-1894	2-Nov-1968	19-Jan-1923	26-Jan-1926	29	OXBRD: Oxford	Lang: Language	Class II		London	UK - England	White	Public service - civil (deceased)	Widow	No	No	3 Powden Buildings 5 King's Bench Walk (1934/1940) 3 Brick Court 4 Paper Buildings 6 Pump Court	South East
88	Middle Temple	Ewart	Mary Eleanor	15-Jun-1904	1-Oct-1929	23-Jan-1923	Not Called	18	Unknown				London	UK - England	White	Business: Director		No	No		
89	Inner Temple	Fixsen	Gerardine MacAndrew	11-Sep-1885	4-Feb-1956	28-Feb-1923	Not Called	37	Unknown				Farncombe	UK - England	White	Public Service: Clerk in Home Office		No	No		
90	Middle Temple	MacDonald	Eileen Agnes	1904/1905	23-Mar-1969	21-Mar-1923	17-Nov-1926	18	ENG: Manchester	Law	Class II	Student	Chorlton-cum-Hardy	UK - England	White	Medical (Dentist)	Wife	No	No	3 James Square (1932) 1 Hare Court (1940)	Northern
91	Lincoln's Inn	Macraighen	Mary Frances	3-Feb-1903	2-Feb-1998	23-Apr-1923	Not Called	20	None				UK - England	White	Legal: Barrister + Judge, Baron	Lady: Charitable work	Yes (1931)	Yes (3)			
92	Gray's Inn	James	Ethel Denison	7-Apr-1887	17-Mar-1965	25-Apr-1923	Not Called	27	WAL: University College Aberystwyth	Arts				UK - England	White	Other: Architect		No	No		
93	Gray's Inn	Sheppard [Jones]	Mary Christina	14-May-1896	7 19807	1-May-1923	17-Oct-1935	27	IRE: Trinity College, Dublin	Medicine	Class III	Medical Officer	Essex	Ireland	White - Southern	Medical (GP)	Wife	Yes (1943)*	No		
94	Inner Temple	Owen [Candler]	Marjorie	17-Mar-1904	20-Jul-1932	5-May-1923	14-May-1930	19	OXBRD: Oxford	Law	Class III	Student	Richmond	UK - England	White	Other: Artist	Wife	Yes (1930)*	Yes		
95	Middle Temple	Tempest	Doris	30-Dec-1897	1-Aug-1987	4-Sep-1923	18-Nov-1929	25	OXBRD: Cambridge	History	Class II		Shipley	UK - England	White	Business (Manufacturer)	Wife	No	No	Permanent House The Hedrow, Leeds (1932) 38 Park Square	North East
96	Middle Temple	Meeklegirn [Edgecombe]	Vera Beatrice Marjorie	1-Dec-1904	15-Oct-1981	20-Sep-1923	16-Jun-1926	18	LDN: UCL	Law	Class III	Student	London	UK - England	White	Military	Wife	Yes (1926)*			
97	Gray's Inn	Wells	Muriel Maude	25-May-1901	20-May-1962	2-Oct-1923	16-Jun-1926	22	Unknown		Class II		Derby	UK - England	White	Business (Brewer)	Wife	No	No	1 New Square (1934/1932) 5 New Square (1932) 4 Elm Court (1934)	North East
98	Middle Temple	Gover	Cynthia Nancy Rachel	7-Apr-1902	17-Aug-1981	22-Oct-1923	26-Jan-1927	21	Unknown		Class I		London	UK - England	White	Legal (Barrister+KC+M benchner)		No	No		
99	Gray's Inn	Strettell	Kathleen Marjorie	17-Mar-1903	4-Feb-1968	14-Nov-1923	11-May-1927	20	ENG: Liverpool University	Law	Class III	Student	Wales	UK - England	White	Business (Merchant)	Wife	No	No		
100	Middle Temple	Griffith	Dorothy Mary	6-Aug-1894	16-May-1946	14-Nov-1923	17-Nov-1936	29	WAL: Aberystwyth University College	BA	Class III	Administrative officer	Dolgellau	UK - Wales	White	Education: Schoolmaster	Wife	No	No		
101	Inner Temple	Schuster	Elizabeth Alice	12-Oct-1902	5-Jun-1905	19-Nov-1923	Not Called	20	LDN: Bedford College				London	UK - England	White	Legal: Parliament Secretary, barrister IT		Yes (1925) - -	Yes (1)		
102	Inner Temple	Lim [Oon]	Beng Hong	17-Mar-1905	3-Feb-1979	19-Nov-1923	16-Jun-1926	20	LDN: UCL	Law	Class III	Student	Penang	Asia: Malaysia	Asian: Chinese	Business (Merchant)		Yes (1927)	Yes (2)	Overseas	
103	Lincoln's Inn	Agarwal/Agaswal	Seeta Narayan	24-Apr-1901		21-Nov-1923	26-Jan-1926	22	OXBRD: Oxford	Arts: English	Class III	Student	Oxford	India	Asian - Indian	Business (Landlord)		Unknown	Unknown		

104	Inner Temple	Martin (Turton)	Mary	1-Jul-1883	9-Oct-1958	11-Jan-1924	Not Called	39	SCOT: Edinburgh	Medicine	Class III	Doctor	London	South Africa	White - British	Clergy	Widow	Yes (1928)-	No		
105	Inner Temple	Dartha (Shooker-Carlisle)	Coombe Ruston	23-Sep-1905		14-Jan-1924	26-Jan-1928	21	OXBRD: Cambridge	Law	Class II	Student	Rangoon	India Burma	Mixed - Anglo-Indian	Legal (Barister)	Wife	Yes (1932)*	Yes (3)	Overseas	
106	Lincoln's Inn	Last	Dorothy Mary	10-Mar-1890	14-Jun-1905	19-Jan-1924	Not Called	35	None-Southport Physical Training College	Teacher training			London	UK - England	White	Engineer		Yes (1925)	Yes (1)		
107	Inner Temple	Hmee (Thein)	Ma Twa-Daw Phar	16-Mar-1905	15-May-1905	21-Jan-1924	17-Nov-1928	22	IND: Rangoon		Class III	Student	Rangoon	India Burma	Asian - Bamar	Public service - civil		Yes (post call)	No	Overseas	
108	Lincoln's Inn	Alderson (nee Munro)	Jessie Elliot	15-Jun-1883	29-Apr-1905	26-Mar-1924	Not Called	40	EUKRO: Jena and Berlin MA: Aberdeen	Arts: Philosophy		Lecturer	Northumbria	UK - Scotland	White	Other: Carpenter	Wife	Yes (1911) +	Yes (1)		
109	Gray's Inn	James	Ann Amfield	24-Apr-1900	2-Mar-1885	17-Apr-1924	Not Called	23	ENG: Manchester	History			Northwood	UK - England	White	Other: Grocer & Confectioner	Wife	Yes (1928)	Yes (1)		
110	Inner Temple	McConnell (King)	Winifred Bottrell	9-Jan-1900	24-Dec-1982	26-Apr-1924	11-May-1927	24	None		Class III		London	America/Canada	White - Scottish	Other: Geologist		Yes (1934)*	No	3 Temple Gardens (1934)	Oxford
111	Middle Temple	Burgess	Kathleen Anna	15-May-1892	12-Oct-1929	5-May-1924	26-Jan-1927	31	IRE: Trinity College, Dublin	Arts: English	Class II	Senior Moderator	Ireland	Ireland	White - Southern	Business (Merchant)	Wife	No	No		Oxford
112	Gray's Inn	Williams (Jones)	May Louise Gordon	9-Feb-1906	25-Dec-1975	21-May-1924	29-Jun-1927	18	Unknown		Class III		Cardiff	UK - Wales	White	Legal (Solicitor)	Wife	Yes (1939)*	No	22 Park Place, Cardiff (1932)	
113	Inner Temple	Teo (Lo)	Soon Kim	23-Jun-1904	23-Apr-1978	28-May-1924	29-Jun-1927	19	LDN: UCL	Law	Class III	Student and teacher	Finchley	Asia: Singapore	Asian: Chinese	Business (Merchant)		Yes (1929)*	No	Overseas	
114	Gray's Inn	Warner	Marion Alice	27-Oct-1891	13-Jan-1950	14-Jun-1924	17-Nov-1927	33	Unknown		Class III	Probation officer	London	UK - England	White	Clergy		No	No		
115	Gray's Inn	Smith (Walker-Smith Thompson/Hanna)	Joan Coulton Walker	28-Feb-1906	28-Feb-1961	17-Sep-1924	12-Jun-1929	18	OXBRD: Cambridge	History	Class II	Student	London	UK - England	White	Public service-MP	Wife	Yes (1935/1947)*	Yes (3)		
116	Inner Temple	Holt-Kentwell	Alice Lorraine Campbell	5-Apr-1902	30-Sep-1985	8-Oct-1924	Not Called	22	OXBRD: Oxford, St Hughes				Oxford	North America: Hawaii	Mixed father (Eng/Chinese) and Hawaiian mother (Polynesian)	Legal: Barister (IT), founder of newspapers		No	No		
117	Middle Temple	Cogan (Agoston)	Isabel	5-Nov-1905	1-Feb-1999	10-Oct-1924	29-Jun-1927	18	LDN: University of London	Law	Class II	Student	Wallington	Asia: Philippines	White	Business (Merchant)	Wife	Yes (1943)	No		
118	Middle Temple	Slade (Williams)	Betty Fox	29-Aug-1906	15-Nov-1992	13-Oct-1924	17-Nov-1927	18	LDN: University of London		Class II	Student	Berkshire	UK - England	White	Legal (Barister)	Wife	Yes (1935)*	Yes (4)		
119	Middle Temple	Powell (nee Chitham)	Gladys Siddle	17-May-1891	1-Jun-1961	13-Oct-1924	17-Nov-1927	35	LDN: University of London		Class III		Bridgend	UK - Wales	White	Business (Shipowner - deceased)	Wife	Yes (1915) +		4 Paper Buildings (1934)	South Wales
120	Inner Temple	Hoahing	Ella Violet	3-Sep-1906	21-Mar-1959	17-Oct-1924	Not Called	18	Unknown			Student	Twickenham	West Indies: British Guiana (Chinese)	Asian - Chinese	Business (Merchant)	Mother: English, step-mother: medical	Yes (1926)	Yes (1)		
121	Gray's Inn	Morris (Cuchley)	Olive Reid	18-Jul-1902	4-Jan-1975	17-Oct-1924	26-Jan-1927	22	ENG: Liverpool University	Law	Class II	Student	Lancashire	UK - England	White	Business (Merchant - deceased)	Widow	Yes (1929)*		6 Pump Court (1934) 3 Polden Buildings (1940) 4 Brick Court	
122	Lincoln's Inn	Harding (Lloyd-Johnes)	Hilda Craig	7-Aug-1887	19-Dec-1975	17-Oct-1924	2-May-1928	36	LDN: Bedford College	Arts: English	Class II	School teacher	Egypt	UK - England	White	Business (Shipowner - deceased)	Widow	Yes (1949)*	No	1 New Court (1932) 37 Meridian Court	
123	Inner Temple	Evans (Moore) (nee Cooper Willis)	Gwyneth (Howell)	14-Jun-1895	10-May-1945	20-Oct-1924	12-Jun-1929	29	None		Class III	Secretary at Post Office	London	UK - England	White	Legal (Barrister-HC+IT teacher - deceased)	Wife	Yes (1919/1934) +			
124	Lincoln's Inn	Crichton	Vida Mar Struge	15-Aug-1902	19-May-1969	23-Oct-1924	Not Called	22	OXBRD: Oxford	History	Class III	Lecturer	York	UK - England	White	Other: first welfare officer at the Rowntree Cocoa Works	Public service: First woman Lord Mayor of York	Yes (1931)	Yes (3)		
125	Inner Temple	Bryce	Margaret Janet Richmond	4-Aug-1902	1-Jul-1994	27-Oct-1924	Not Called	22	LDN: Bedford College	Arts: English		Student	London	UK - England	White	Legal: Doctor of medicine: Barister (IT)	Wife	No	No		
126	Inner Temple	Mackie (Clifford Smith)	Alice Josephine	4-Apr-1903	18-Jan-1988	8-Nov-1924	29-Jun-1927	21	ENG: Sheffield University		Class III	Student	Sheffield	UK - Scotland	White	Other: Surveyor		Yes (1937)*			
127	Gray's Inn	Bland (Moschopp)	Edna Phyllis	16-Sep-1904	1-Apr-1997	13-Nov-1924	29-Jun-1927	19	ENG: Liverpool University	Law	Class III	Student	Liverpool	UK - England	White	Business - Financial (Stockbroker)	Wife	Yes (1930)*	No	15 Union Court, Liverpool	Northern
128	Middle Temple	Dhar	Sarah	1-Apr-1903		15-Nov-1924	29-Jun-1927	22	IND: Rangoon	Science	Class III	Student	Rangoon, London	India Burma	Asian - Indian	Legal (Advocate)		No	No		
129	Middle Temple	Fletcher-Moulton	Sylvia Hon.	15-Jun-1902	27-Jul-1989	17-Nov-1924	12-Jun-1929	22	OXBRD: Cambridge	Joint: History + Law	Class II	Student	London	UK - England	White	Legal (Lord Justice of Appeal - deceased); barrister	Widow	No	No	1 New Square (1934)	
130	Gray's Inn	Sander (Rawlinson)	Katherine Mary Evelyn Faamley	11-Jun-1900	1-Jul-1989	17-Nov-1924	20-Jun-1928	24	Unknown		Class III	Organiser and speaker for NSPCC	London	Europe: Belgium	White	Other: Horticulturist	Wife	Yes (1930)*	Yes (2)		
131	Middle Temple	Manley (Lamb)	Phyllis	1-Nov-1902	6-Jun-1905	19-Dec-1924	28-Jan-1935	22	LDN: LSE	Bus: Economics	Class II	Civil service	London	UK - England	White	Public Service: Tax inspector	Wife	Yes (1926)-			
132	Lincoln's Inn	Goode	Winifred Margaret	10-Mar-1904	26-Jan-1991	14-Jan-1925	28-Jan-1929	20	LDN: UCL	History	Class II	Student	Birmingham	UK - England	White	Military (lieutenant colonel+OBE)	Wife	No	No		
133	Inner Temple	Acworth	Evelyn	4-Feb-1900	1-Oct-1999	16-Jan-1925	2-May-1928	24	LDN: King's College	Science	Class III		London	UK - England	White	Medical (Chemist (PhD); Fellow of Institute of Chemistry)	Education: Science	No	No	4 Paper Buildings 1930-63 (Polden)	Oxford
134	Inner Temple	Willson (Mitchell)	Margery Kate Pearson	2-Feb-1904	2-Aug-1984	30-Jan-1925	26-Jan-1928	20	None		Class III		Birmingham	UK - England	White	Legal (Solicitor)	Wife	Yes (1930)*	No		Midland
135	Inner Temple	Lewis	Dorothy Alice North	20-Oct-1905	1-Jul-2002	3-Mar-1925	Not Called	19	ENG: Liverpool University				Wimbledon	UK - England	White	Legal: Solicitor		Yes (1927) - -	Yes ?		
136	Inner Temple	Thompson (married Bowerman) (neeThompson)	Ruth Elizabeth Sophia	10-Mar-1905		19-Mar-1925	27-Jan-1930	28	OXBRD: Oxford		Class III		Bristol	UK - England	White	Public Service: (Court Clerk, Missionary (deceased))	Widow	Yes (1917) +	Yes (1)	5 Crown Office Row (1932/1934) 2 Paper Buildings (1940)	Northern
137	Middle Temple	Gruchy (Dyson)	Louise Beryl	25-Jun-1906	18-Jul-1955	21-Apr-1925	2-May-1928	18	LDN: University of London		Class II	Student	Jersey	Europe: Jersey	White - Jersey (French)	Business: Farmer (deceased)	Widow	Yes (1931)*			
138	Lincoln's Inn	Kilroy (Meynell)	Alix Hester Marie	2-Feb-1903	31-Aug-1999	22-Apr-1925	Not Called	22	OXBRD: Oxford	PPE	Class III	Student	Melton Mowbray	UK - England	White	Legal: solicitor (Medical (Surgeon))	Activist	Yes (1946)-	No		
139	Inner Temple	Howard (Jackson)	Elady Ankerel Cecilia Carolyn	23-Apr-1900	9-Apr-1945	27-Apr-1925	2-May-1928	25	None		Class III		London	UK - England	White	Military (Soldier-Poet+P officer)	Wife	Yes (1927)-	Yes (2)		
140	Middle Temple	Carrier (Ainger)	Marie Angela	14-Aug-1905	2-Jun-1952	6-May-1925	2-May-1928	19	ENG: University College Leicester	Law	Class III	Student	Leicester	UK - England	White	Business, Financial: Accountant	Wife	Yes (1929/1949)*	No		
141	Middle Temple	Earengrey (nee How)	Florence	1-Apr-1877	29-Dec-1963	13-May-1925	26-Jan-1928	47	LDN: University of London	BA	Class II	Involved in women's groups	Hampstead	UK - England	White	Business (Merchant)	Other: Wife (barrister domestic servant)	Yes (1899) +	Yes (1)	1 Brick Court (1932/1940)	Oxford
142	Gray's Inn	Neville	Nadia	14-Jul-1888	19-May-1943	21-May-1925	26-Jan-1932	37	Unknown		Class III	Student	London	UK - England	White	Other: Journalist		No	No	1 Garden Court (1940) 1 Dr Johnson's Buildings	South East
143	Gray's Inn	Blake (nee Turner)	Phyllis Lucy Morgan	23-May-1898	1-Jun-1986	1-Oct-1925	20-Jun-1928	27	OXBRD: Cambridge	Bus: Economics	Class II		London	UK - England	White	Medical (Doctor, OBE)	Wife	Yes (1923) +	No	7 New Sq (1932) 1 Garden Court, Temple	
144	Lincoln's Inn	Walle (Ingulde Thomas)	Dorothy Travers	26-Nov-1903	13-Jul-1978	12-Oct-1925	20-Jun-1928	21	OXBRD: Oxford	Lang: Language	Class III	Student	Ireland	Ireland	White - Southern	Legal (Solicitor)	Wife	Yes (1933)*	Yes (3)	2 Brick Court (1934)	
145	Middle Temple	Clark (nee McCormick)	Mary Josephine	3-Jul-1889		16-Oct-1925	20-Jun-1928	36	ENG: Liverpool University	BA	Class II	School teacher	Liverpool	UK - England	White	Medical (Doctor+Surgeon)	Wife	Yes (1913) +		2 Brick Court (1934) 15 Old Sq (1940)	
146	Inner Temple	Vaizey (Burrows)	Harriet Elizabeth	6-Dec-1906	1-May-1984	2-Nov-1925	20-Jun-1928	19	None		Class III		Essex	UK - England	White	Business - Financial (Insurance broker)	Deceased	Yes (1939)*	Yes (2)	1 New Square (1940)	
147	Inner Temple	Devadas (Devadas)	Sita (Deveti) Veduti	16-Feb-1906	5-Jul-1995	16-Nov-1925	20-Jun-1928	19	OXBRD: Cambridge	Joint: English, Law	Class III	Student	Madras	India	Asian - Indian	Legal (Judge)	Activist (women's education)	Yes (post call)	No	Overseas	
148	Lincoln's Inn	Stephens (Cooke)	Pauline Elinor St. Clare	13-Jan-1905	3-Oct-1992	20-Nov-1925	28-Jan-1929	20	OXBRD: Cambridge	Law	Class III	Student	London	UK - England	White	Legal (Barister)	Other: Deceased (artist)	Yes (1930)*	Yes (4)		
149	Inner Temple	Lawrence (Rogers)	Margery	20-Mar-1905		18-Jan-1926	24-Apr-1929	20	None		Class III		London	UK - England	White	Business (Director)	Wife	Yes (1933)*		1 Elm Court (1930/1934)	
150	Middle Temple	David (Artemus Jones)	Mildred Mary	18-Jul-1888	1-Dec-1980	23-Mar-1926	8-Jun-1932	37	LDN: Bedford College	Lang: French	Class II		Cardiff	UK - Wales	White	Business (Importer)	Wife	Yes (1927)-	No		
151	Gray's Inn	Brooks (Eastwood) (nee Poppewell)	Nora Mary Margaret Woolhills(Walsh)	13-May-1895		26-Mar-1926	2-Jul-1930	32	ENG: Manchester	Bus: Commerce	Class III		Lancashire	UK - England	White	Lecturer	Yes (1917/1929) +				
152	Gray's Inn	Prothero (Warner)		18-Nov-1906	26-Jun-1905	14-Apr-1926	28-Jan-1929	19	LDN: King's College	Law	Class II	Student	St Margarets	UK - England	White	Public Service: Police Officer (CID)	Wife	No	Yes (1)	2 Brick Ct (1934)	
153	Inner Temple	Mackinnon	Aine	30-Oct-1899	1-Jan-1970	14-Apr-1926	Not Called	26	OXBRD: Newham College, Cambridge and Edinburgh			Student	Edenbridge	UK - England	White	Business: Financial: Underwriter at Lloyds		No	No		
154	Lincoln's Inn	Russett-Smith	Enid	3-Mar-1903	1-Jul-1989	7-Jun-1926	Not Called	23	OXBRD: Newham College, Cambridge	Lang: Language				UK - England	White	Business: Farmer (Merchant)		No	No		
155	Gray's Inn	Jones-Baleman	Margaret	13-Aug-1900	6-May-1970	16-Jun-1926	Not Called	26	OXBR: Oxford (HS) Winter William Scholar	Law			Derbyshire	UK - England	White	Public Service: Indian Civil Service	Wife	No	No		
156	Middle Temple	Miles (Jaffe)	Mildred Dunbar	1-Dec-1889	2-Jun-1905	22-Jun-1926	26-Jan-1933	26	USA: Wellesley College		Class II		London	North America: USA	White - American	Business (Manufacturer)		Yes (post call)	Yes (2)	2 Brick Court (1934/1940)	
157	Inner Temple	See (Chen)	Lucy (Chye Hong)	22-Mar-1905	12-Jun-1905	20-Oct-1926	27-Jan-1930	18	LDN: UCL		Class II	Student	London	Asia/Singapore	Asian: Chinese	Public service: Commissioner+JP+Comptroller of HSBK		Yes (1930)*	Yes (3)	Overseas	
158	Lincoln's Inn	Saklatava	Candita Dunbar	23-Mar-1905	24-May-1905	4-Nov-1926	Not Called	17	ENG: Reading					UK - England	Mixed-Anglo-Indian	Public Service: Politician (Shapurji Saklatava)		Yes (1934)	Yes (1)		
159	Middle Temple	Anderson (Wahia)	Kathleen Bruce	5-Apr-1899	1-Nov-2000	5-Nov-1926	18-Nov-1929	27	OXBRD: Cambridge	Arts: English	Class III	Secretary	London	UK - England	White	Public - civil service	Wife	Yes (1945)*		7 New Square (1932)	
160	Inner Temple	Alexander (Anning)	Joan Baker	14-Mar-1906	1-Jun-1999	8-Nov-1926	2-Jul-1930	20	OXBRD: Oxford	Law	Class II	Student	Leeds	UK - England	White	Legal (Barister, Assistant Recorder)	Wife	Yes (1933)*	Yes (2)*	5A Shaw Lane, Leeds	
161	Inner Temple	Crawshaw (nee Burnett)	Isabella	8-Apr-1899	13-May-1905	9-Nov-1926	Not Called	27	OXBRD: Cambridge	Arts: English		Research worker	South Shields	UK - England	White	Engineer	Wife	Yes (1926) - -	Yes (2)		

162	Lincoln's Inn	Cohen [Tarsh]	Edith Vera	20-Apr-1908	26-Oct-1994	9-Nov-1926	2-Jul-1930	18	LDN: King's College	Law	Class II	Student	Hampstead	UK - England	White	Business (Merchant)	Wife	Yes (1931)*	Yes (2)	34 Castle St. Liverpool 24 Dale St. Liverpool 27 Dale St.	Northern
163	Middle Temple	Ferguson-Murdoch [Pirie]	Elizabeth [Edith]	12-Feb-1897	22-Jun-1905	18-Nov-1926	27-Jan-1930	26	AUS: Sydney and London	Law	Class III	Lecturer	London	Australia (WA)	White - Australian	Business: hotel keeper	Widow	Yes (1933)*	No	4 Elm Court (1934)	
164	Middle Temple	Hendrick [Hitchman]	Katherine Mumford	30-Nov-1904	1-Dec-1996	24-Nov-1926	18-Nov-1929	22	OXBRD: Oxford		Class II	Student	New York	North America: USA	White - US	Legal (Lawyer)		Yes (1937)*	No	2 Brick Ct (1932)	
165	Middle Temple	Hendrick [Hardie]	Jessie Edson	7-Apr-1907	29-Nov-1978	24-Nov-1926	18-Nov-1929	19	OXBRD: Oxford		Class II	Student	New York	North America: USA	White - US	Legal (Lawyer)		Yes (post call)	Yes (1)	2 Brick Ct (1932)	
166	Middle Temple	Harris [Gattie]	Marguerite Lesley	16-Jan-1900	29-Dec-1993	10-Dec-1926	20-Apr-1932	26	Unknown		Class III		London	Australia: New Zealand	White	Business (Merchant)	Wife	Yes (1933)*	Yes (1)		
167	Inner Temple	Roberts [nee Glaser]	Eva Louise	16-Nov-1887	19-May-1905	18-Dec-1926	26-Jan-1931	39	ENG: Manchester	Medicine	Class III	Medical practitioner	London	UK - England	White	Medical		Yes (1916) +			
168	Middle Temple	Lever [Stone]	Dorothy Rae	9-Oct-1908	10-Mar-1995	11-Jan-1927	18-Nov-1929	18	ENG: Manchester	Law	Class II	Student	Manchester	UK - England	White	Business (Merchant)	Wife	Yes (1931)*	Yes (2)	South Australian Bar Solicitor / Overseas	
169	Inner Temple	Hackett	Patricia	25-Jan-1908	18-Aug-1963	2-May-1927	27-Jan-1930	19	AUS: Adelaide University	Law	Class II	Student and journalist	Perth	Australia	White - Australian	Business (Newspaper proprietor - deceased)	Business: Mining company director + welfare worker ; Lady	No	No		
170	Inner Temple	Sharp	Evelyn Adelaide	25-May-1903	9-Jan-1985	4-May-1927	Not Called	23	Unknown					UK - England	White	Clergy: Reverend		No	No		
171	Middle Temple	Rushton	Helen	1-Mar-1905	14-Jun-1962	7-May-1927	14-May-1930	39	ENG: Manchester	Arts: Philosophy	Class II	Probation officer	Manchester	UK - England	White	Business (Merchant)	Wife	No	No		
172	Lincoln's Inn	Bragg [nee Hopkins]	Alice Grace Jenny	21-Oct-1899	10-Apr-1989	17-May-1927	Not Called	27	OXBRD: Cambridge	History			Manchester	UK - England	White	Medical: Doctor	Wife	Yes (1921) +	Yes (4)		
173	Inner Temple	Sarran [Ramaraman]	Gladys Eileen	29-Mar-1904	24-Aug-1982	28-Jun-1927	17-Nov-1931	23	None		Class III	Student		West Indies: British Guiana	Asian - Indian: Guyanese	Business (Merchant)		Yes (1931)*		Overseas	
174	Gray's Inn	Martin	Phyllis Mabel	16-Feb-1893	10-Aug-1986	3-Oct-1927	2-Jul-1930	34	Unknown		Class III	Administrative officer	Epsom	UK - England	White	Business (Merchant - deceased)	Widow	No	No		
175	Gray's Inn	Wolseley	Cecilia Lucy Cavendish	14-Oct-1903	14-Jan-1972	7-Oct-1927	17-Nov-1930	24	Unknown		Class III		London	UK - England	White	Other: Planter	Wife	No	No		
176	Gray's Inn	Greenwood	Josanne Marguerite Bernat	26-Jun-1892	1-Sep-1970	7-Oct-1927	2-Jul-1930	35	ENG: Leeds University	Lang: Language	Class III	Secretary (administration)	London	Africa: Mauritius	White - British	Military: Engineer + Military + MBE (deceased)	Widow	No	No	1 Garden Court (1934) Mire House 4 Pump Court Orchard Street, Canterbury 11 King's Bench Walk (1940)*	South East
177	Inner Temple	Simey	Gertrude Margaret Stewart [Peg]	8-Jul-1903	23-May-1984	14-Oct-1927	26-Jan-1934	24	OXBRD: Oxford	PPE	Class III	Student	London	UK - England	White	Legal (Barrister)	Wife	No	Yes (3)		
178	Middle Temple	Epstein	Ruth	1-Apr-1909	15-Jun-1905	14-Oct-1927	2-Jul-1930	18	LDN: University of London		Class II	Student	London	UK - England	White	Business: Merchant, Moss Empires, Ltd		Yes ?	Yes ?		
179	Inner Temple	Christides [Feakes]	Alexandra Millicent	8-Jul-1908	1-Dec-1989	21-Oct-1927	2-Jul-1930	19	LDN: University of London		Class III	Student	London	UK - England	White	Business (Merchant)	Wife (father was solicitors clerk)	Yes (1945)*	Yes (1)	2 Paper Buildings (1934)	
180	Lincoln's Inn	Dalches [Seres]	Ruth	15-Mar-1908	1-Jan-2000	31-Oct-1927	Not Called	19	LDN: King's College London			Student	Brondesbury	UK - England	White	Legal: Lecturer, Rabi Barrister, Lincoln's Inn	Wife	Yes (1935)	Yes		
181	Middle Temple	Smit	Lala			1-Nov-1927	Not Called	17	Unknown	Law				South Africa	White - SA	Legal: High Commissioner of South Africa: Barrister		Unknown			
182	Gray's Inn	Burke-Bloor	Nora	19-Oct-1907	12-Oct-1994	5-Nov-1927	Not Called	19	ENG: Nottingham	Law		Student	Nottingham	UK - England	White	Other: Warehouseman	Wife	No	No		
183	Middle Temple	Johnson	Dorothy	20-Dec-1890	22-Nov-1977	8-Nov-1927	10-May-1955	36	ENG: Leeds University	Arts	Class III	Civil service	London	UK - England	White	Business (Commission agent - deceased)	Widow	No	No		
184	Middle Temple	Bickerton [Tidmarsh]	Agnes	9-Dec-1906	1-Apr-1969	10-Nov-1927	17-Jun-1931	20	LDN: UCL	Law	Class III	Student	Cheshire	UK - England	White	Engineer	Public Service: Town Council + Women's Liberation Association	Yes (1934)*	No		
185	Middle Temple	Haring	Ruth	1-Jan-1907		16-Nov-1927	2-Jul-1930	20	ENG: Manchester	Law	Class II	Student	Manchester	UK - England	White	Medical	Wife	Unknown	Unknown		
186	Inner Temple	Julien [nee Ploeden]	Joan Meredith Chapple	29-Sep-1890	28-May-1905	16-Nov-1927	24-Jun-1936	37	OXBRD: Oxford	History	Class III		Berkshire	India	White - British	Legal (Barrister + Judge - deceased)	Widow	Yes (1918) +	No		
187	Middle Temple	Pollock	Ivy Gwendolene	29-Jul-1908	4-Mar-1993	17-Nov-1927	Not Called	18	Unknown					UK - England	White	Business: Businessman		Yes (1935)	Yes (1)		
188	Gray's Inn	Overton	Sybil Gertrude	18-Oct-1895	14-Feb-1978	17-Nov-1927	Not Called	32	LDN: BA and MB from University of London London School of Medicine for Women & St Mary's	Medicine		Doctor	Paddington	UK - England	White	Business: Farmer		Yes (1931)	No		
189	Gray's Inn	Prescott	Grace Geraldine	20-Apr-1907	31-May-1905	16-Jan-1928	17-Nov-1930	21	Unknown		Class III		London	UK - England	White	Engineer	Public Service: Mayoress of Godmanchester ; Lady	No	No	2 Cloisters (1934) 3 Ploeden Buildings	South East
190	Middle Temple	Gipson [Warren]	Nora Myfanwy	9-Nov-1907	1-Dec-2003	25-Jan-1928	29-Apr-1931	20	LDN: LSE	Law (South African)	Class III	Student	London/Port Elizabeth	South Africa	White - British	Business: Financial Accountant	Activist (feminist and campaigned for vote in SA)	Yes (1934)*	Yes (3)		
191	Middle Temple	Hayes	Susan Margaret Rankin	1-Apr-1892	12-May-1954	26-Apr-1928	Not Called	35	ENG: Sheffield University (scholarship)	History		Secretary	Wimbledon	UK - England	White	Medical: Surgeon		No	No		
192	Middle Temple	Keating	Mary Gladys	3-Nov-1895	15-Aug-1980	17-May-1928	17-Nov-1931	33	ENG: Bristol	Arts: English	Class III	Teacher	London	UK - England	White	Clergy	Wife	No	No		
193	Gray's Inn	Coxon [nee Neale]	Florence Ada	5-Feb-1905	1-Jul-1951	7-Jun-1928	26-Jan-1933	65	Unknown		Class III	Women's groups	King's Lynn	UK - England	White	Business (Merchant - deceased)	Widow	Yes (1884) +	Yes (3)		
194	Inner Temple	Alexander	Beatrice Hope	20-Apr-1909	1-Mar-1999	8-Jun-1928	26-Jan-1934	19	OXBRD: Oxford	Law	Class II	Student	London	UK - England	White	Legal (Solicitor)		No	No		
195	Inner Temple	Kirby	Caroline Frances Meme	11-Oct-1887	21-Oct-1965	14-Jun-1928	Not Called	41	OXBRD: Oxford				London	UK - England	White	Clergy: Vicar (Surgeon/Doctor ) later Called to Bar		No	No		
196	Gray's Inn	Butcher	Mary Josephine	25-Apr-1909	1-Feb-2006	14-Sep-1928	29-Apr-1931	19	Unknown		Class I		Worthing	UK - England	White	Legal (Barrister + judge) ; later Called to Bar	Wife	No	No		
197	Gray's Inn	Youard [nee Aklin]	Rosaline Joan (Hon Mrs)	8-Sep-1908	5-Sep-1973	11-Oct-1928	9-Jun-1937	20	LDN: University of London	History	Class III	Student	Sussex	UK - Wales	White	Legal (Barrister + judge) ; Baron	Lady: Wife (Baroness)	Yes (1929)-	Yes (4)		
198	Middle Temple	Watson [Wilson]	Winifred Hazel	8-Oct-1908	1-Apr-2011	12-Oct-1928	17-Jun-1931	20	LDN: Bedford College		Class III	Student	Bedford	India	White - British	Engineer		Yes (1938)*	No	13 Old Square (1940)	
199	Gray's Inn	Vivian	Lettice	31-May-1908	1-Apr-2005	12-Oct-1928	20-Apr-1932	20	LDN: King's College	History	Class III	Student		UK - England	White	Public - civil service	Wife	Yes (1955)*	Yes (1)		
200	Gray's Inn	Ensor [Pettipiece/Cutbill]	Helen Diana	21-Jun-1910	19-Aug-2002	15-Oct-1928	17-Nov-1931	18	LDN: King's College	Law	Class III	Student and secretary to Mayor	Ealing	UK - England	White	Medical (Doctor + Surgeon)		Yes (1935)*	No		
201	Gray's Inn	Stevens	Noel Anna Brennan	1-Jan-1910	1-Apr-1945	16-Oct-1928	Not Called	18	Unknown					UK - Scotland	White	Legal (Solicitor)		No	No		
202	Lincoln's Inn	Kooka	Deena	17-Nov-1907		17-Oct-1928	8-Jun-1932	20	IND: Calcutta	Arts: English	Class II		Calcutta	India	Asian - Indian	Business (Owner)		Unknown	Unknown		
203	Inner Temple	Byramji [Byramji Prestorji]	Dilnawaz	4-Jan-1908		30-Oct-1928	17-Nov-1931	20	IND: Mores College, Nagpur; Bedford College	Arts: social studies	Class III		India	India	Asian - Indian	Business (Contractor - deceased)	Widow	Yes (post call)			
204	Lincoln's Inn	Cross [Wright]	Hannah Margaret	25-Apr-1908	19-Jan-2008	2-Nov-1928	17-Jun-1931	20	OXBRD: Oxford	PPE	Class III	Student	Wallingford	UK - England	White	Legal (Barrister)	Lady: Wife (Land owner, daughter of judge Walter Phillimore, 1st Baron Phillimore)	Yes (1936)*	Yes (2)	1 New Square (1934/1940)	
205	Inner Temple	Froggatt [Hopkins]	Edith Irene	19-Apr-1909	1-Jan-1998	9-Nov-1928	17-Nov-1932	19	ENG: Sheffield University	Law	Class III	Student	Sheffield	UK - England	White	Medical (Dental surgeon)	Other: Assistant at Post Office	Yes (1935)*	No		
206	Gray's Inn	Whittingham-Jones [Oppenheim]	Mary Edith Barbara	13-May-1907	28-Nov-1958	10-Nov-1928	17-Jun-1931	21	OXBRD: Cambridge	Joint: History/Law	Class III	Student	Liverpool	UK - England	White	Business: Financial Clerk	Wife	Yes (1940)*	Yes (1)		
207	Gray's Inn	Delage	Marie Madeleine	19-Mar-1898	13-Nov-1982	16-Nov-1928	17-Nov-1932	19	OXBRD: Oxford	Law	Class III	Student	Oxford	Europe: France	White - French	Military (Navy officer)		Unknown	Unknown		
208	Inner Temple	Green	Doris May Salkeld	1-Jan-1909	22-Sep-1929	17-Nov-1928	Not Called	19	LDN: LSE			Student	Hampstead	UK - England	White	Legal: Barrister, writer and first Vice-Chancellor of the University of Delhi and Sagar University	Wife	No	No		
209	Inner Temple	Gour	Agnes Swaroop Kumari	29-Jan-1911	9-Dec-1976	1-Jan-1929	Not Called	22	LDN: King's College	Law			London	India	Asian - Indian	Public Service: Consular (deceased)		Yes (1937)	Yes (4)	1 Paper Buildings (1930)	
210	Inner Temple	Willis [Edwards]	Elfreda Margaret	18-Dec-1904	2-Apr-1990	9-Jan-1929	10-May-1933	25	OXBRD: Cambridge	History	Class III	Student	Cambridge	Asia: China	White - British	Business (Director)	Wife	Yes (1942)*	No	2 Garden Court 15 Old Square	South East
211	Inner Temple	Davies [Moses]	Irene Grace Ruth	25-Jul-1909	1-Mar-1994	12-Jan-1929	17-Nov-1931	20	Unknown		Class III	Student	London	UK - England	White		Wife	Yes (1934)*		24 Somerset Street, Bristol 3 Oxford Mansions	
212	Middle Temple	Jelleyman [Tyhurst]	Phyllis Laura	7-Apr-1903	20-Jan-1993	15-Jan-1929	8-Jun-1932	25	Unknown		Class II		Kidderminster	UK - England	White	Business (Manufacturer)	Wife	Yes (1932)*			Western
213	Inner Temple	Barker [Malik]	Elsa Care	19-Jul-1905	1-Jun-2005	25-Jan-1929	17-Nov-1933	23	OXBRD: Cambridge	Lang: Language	Class III	German teacher at Girton 1932-5	London	UK - England	White	Other: Composer and conductor (deceased)	Other: Widow + Leading conductor at the Carl Rosa	Yes (1929)-	Yes (1)		
214	Lincoln's Inn	Wong	Beng Sim	26-Mar-1905		16-Apr-1929	Not Called	17	None				Malaysia	Asia: Malaysia	Asian: Chinese	Business: Mine and plantation owner		Unknown	Unknown		
215	Inner Temple	Battivala [Manstall]	Bhicoo	13-Oct-1910	10-Oct-1983	23-Apr-1929	8-Jun-1932	18	None		Class III		Wimbledon	India	Asian - Indian	Business (Merchant)		Yes (1939)			
216	Middle Temple	Yusuf	Nur Jehan Mohammad			11-Jul-1929	Not Called	26	LDN: LSE					India	Other - Middle Eastern/Asian	Business: Landowner		Unknown	Unknown		
217	Gray's Inn	Taber	Mary Ruth	7-Oct-1907	1-Feb-2002	10-Sep-1929	17-Nov-1932	21	OXBRD: Cambridge	Mathematics	Class II	Student	Essex	India	White - British	Public - civil service		No	No		
218	Middle Temple	Reeves [Philpott]	Marjorie Isabel	22-May-1908	14-Jun-1905	1-Oct-1929	28-Jun-1933	21	LDN: University of London		Class III	Student	London	UK - England	White	Business: Financial Railway Chief Clerk	Wife	Yes (1945)*			

219	Middle Temple	Notcutt [Horne]	Audrey Phyllis	6-May-1909	14-Nov-1984	10-Oct-1929	8-Jun-1932	28	LDN: University of London		Class II		Cricklewood	UK - England	White	Business (Merchant - deceased)	Widow	Yes (1935)*	No	1 Garden Court (1934)	
220	Lincoln's Inn	Bahadurji	Peroja Jamshed	25-Mar-1906		1-Nov-1929	26-Jan-1933	18	LDN: UCL	Law	Class III	Student	London	India	Asian - Indian	Medical (Doctor)		Yes (post call)	Yes (2)		
221	Inner Temple	Corbet [nee Mansell]	Freda Kunten	15-Nov-1900	1-Nov-1993	1-Nov-1929	8-Jun-1932	29	LDN: UCL	History	Class II	Teacher	Balham	UK - England	White	Business (Commercial Clerk)	Activist (political)	Yes (1925) +	No		
222	Middle Temple	Quee [Jackson]	Lily Evalina Tie Ton	13-Sep-1908	12-Jul-1991	2-Nov-1929	17-Nov-1933	21	OXBRD: Cambridge	Law	Class III	Student	Kingston, Jamaica	West Indies: Jamaica	Asian - Chinese	Business: Businessman		Yes (1936)*	Yes (2)	Overseas	
223	Middle Temple	Newell	Ursula Bridgett Constance	25-Mar-1905	4-Jun-1937	2-Nov-1929	17-Nov-1932	18	None		Class III		Derbyshire	UK - England	White	Legal (Judge)		No	No		
224	Lincoln's Inn	Eyre	Christabel Sybil	8-Mar-1890	22-Apr-1974	4-Nov-1929	Not Called	38	LDN: University College London	Medicine: B.S.		Hospital	London	UK - England	White	Clergy		Yes (1934)	No		
225	Gray's Inn	Neal	Dorothy Nina	27-Jan-1905	19-Feb-1980	5-Nov-1929	Not Called	24	OXBR: Oxford (St Hugh's)	Arts: English		Secretary		UK - England	White	Business (Merchant)		Yes (2) (1932/1956)	No		
226	Lincoln's Inn	Morrice [nee Hunt]	Alice Greta	20-Jul-1889	18-Mar-1963	6-Nov-1929	17-Nov-1932	40	Unknown		Class III		London	UK - England	White	Business (Merchant)	Wife	Yes (1911) +	Yes (1)		
227	Middle Temple	Slevens	Enid Angela	18-Jun-1909	27-Mar-1937	9-Nov-1929	Not Called	20	LDN: LSE					UK - England	White			No	No		
228	Middle Temple	Rodrigo	Helen Winifred Marguerite	7-Feb-1907		13-Nov-1929	Not Called	22	OXBRD: St Hilda's Oxford					India: Ceylon	Asian - Indian	Education: Historian		Yes (1935) - -	Yes (3/7)		
229	Gray's Inn	Farquharson [nee Banes]	Loveday Shackell	30-Nov-1889	26-Aug-1976	16-Nov-1929	26-Jan-1934	40	ENG: St Mary's Medical School	Medicine	Class III	Doctor + surgeon	Acton	UK - England	White	Business: Financial: Accountant	Business: Sweet confectionary dealer	Yes (1919) +			
230	Inner Temple	Pease	Miriam Blanche	22-Aug-1887	30-Jan-1965	16-Nov-1929	Not Called	42	Unknown			HM Inspector of Factories		UK - England	White	Public Service: MP		No	No		
231	Middle Temple	Wariker	Anna Karema	2-Jan-1911	1-Jan-1982	19-Nov-1929	Not Called	26	LDN: LSE					UK - England	White	Medical		Unknown	Unknown		
232	Middle Temple	Joshi	Chakulavani Balkrishna	9-Jun-1906		20-Nov-1929	Not Called	23	Unknown					India	Asian - Indian	Legal: Barrister		Unknown	Unknown		
233	Middle Temple	Thomas [Marke]	Stella Jane	6-Sep-1906	20-May-1984	2-Dec-1929	10-May-1933	23	Unknown		Class III		Lagos	Africa: Nigeria	Black - African	Business (Merchant)		Yes (1944)*	No	Overseas	
234	Lincoln's Inn	Jones	Mabel Matilda Mary	1-Apr-1893	21-Apr-1988	2-Dec-1929	10-May-1933	35	Unknown		Class II	Post Office (clerk)	Chislewick	UK - England	White	Public Service: Traffic Inspector (deceased)	Widow	No	No		
235	Gray's Inn	Watson [Hobley]	Elsie	2-Apr-1910	1-Mar-2001	16-Dec-1929	28-Jun-1933	19	LDN: UCL	Law	Class III	Student	Surbiton	UK - England	White	Business (Merchant)	Wife	Yes (1935)*	Yes (2)		
236	Inner Temple	McIlraith	Joan Urey	9-Dec-1908	15-Aug-1984	31-Dec-1929	Not Called	21	OXBRD: Oxford (St Hilda's)	Law: Jurisprudence				Australia: New South Wales	White - Australian	Business: Merchant		Yes (1941)	No		

## Appendix B:

Family, friends or acquaintances of the first women admitted to  
the Inns of Court between 1919 and 1929

Name	Woman Barrister Link	Relationship	Month/Year of Contact	Comments
T Malik	Elsa Care Barker (Malik)	Grandson	-Nov-2019	Email about his memories of his grandmother and her obituary
J Warren	Nora Gipson	Son	-Nov-2019	Email about his memories of his mother and her sent her unpublished memoirs
R Andrews	Doris May Salkeld Green	Family acquaintance via his grandfather	-Nov-2019	Email about Doris and attached photos
A. Cooper	Robina & Noel Stevens	Granddaughter	-Dec-2019	Messaged via Ancestry and email
S. Sabin	Margaret Prothero	Daughter	-Dec-2019	Email exchange about Margaret.
M Terrell	Winifred Packard Shyvers	Grandson	-May-2023	Message via Ancestry
Daphne	Enid Angela Stevens	Aunt	-May-2023	Messaged via Ancestry: she was a toddler when she died so did not know her or much about her; Enid's Her older sister also died young.
T Hoahing	Kathleen Hunter Hoahing (sister of Ella Hoahing), first Chinese woman solicitor	Granddaughter of Isaac Hunter Hoahing (younger brother of Kathleen and Ella Hoahing's father Benjamin)	-Jun-2023	Met in Singapore; she did not know much about Ella but had memories and information about Kathleen
J Keilthy	Dorothy Last	Wife's 3rd cousin twice removed	-Jul-2023	Message via Ancestry
Jean	Doris Pickering	3rd cousin of wife's great-uncle	-Jul-2023	Message via Ancestry
J. Macintyre	Mary Frances Macnaghten	Granddaughter	-Jul-2023	Phone call and email
R McLean	Ella Violet Hoahing	Grandson	-Jul-2023	Email about the family
J. Philips	Deena Kaikhushroo Kooka	Distant relative	-Dec-2023	Message via Ancestry
J. Gifford	Leila Mabel Thomas	Granddaughter	-Jul-2024	Message via Ancestry and WhatsApp - granddaughter had no idea she entered the Inn
M. Turner	Elizabteh Schuster		-Jul-2024	Message via Ancestry
P. Surran	Gladys Eileen Sarran	Gladys was his aunt	-Jan-2024	Message via Ancestry

## Appendix C:

### A Champagne Night at the Old Bailey Article



# Daily Mirror

ESTD  
DEC. 19  
1947

ONE  
PENNY

FORWARD  
WITH THE  
PEOPLE

No. 13,722

Registered at G.P.O. as a Newspaper.

## NO - STAR 2 48 SLIP "THE PEOPLE ARE MAGNIFICENT"

Cripps tells of progress in 1947, calls for renewed "win through" effort next year

### SHE MAY FLY HERE FOR SON

"I'm going to be like an oyster," said Mr. Robert Montgomerie-Charrington, refusing to talk when he landed at Shannon Airport last night with his son Robin, aged six, after his flight from his American wife's home in Virginia.

When his wife was told he had landed she said: "If necessary I'll fly to England. I'll put the case in the hands of my solicitors there at once."

SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS, adding up the national balance sheet for 1947 in the Commons last night, declared: "The people have been magnificent."

"So far as our own efforts are concerned," he said, "we can face next year with a quiet confidence based upon the experience of the last few months. Now we can see clearly the steps forward that our country has already taken."

### "To Ever-Growing Volume"

"Our people have responded magnificently on all sides to the demands that have been made upon them. I see no reason short of some catastrophic or unforeseen happening why we should not progress steadily to an ever-growing volume of production."

"But we must remember that we are by no means at the end of the road. Our progress, satisfactory as it is, is no more than an approach to the level of production that we must achieve."

Sir Stafford said that the dollar deficit still gave great cause for anxiety.

"This is a long up-hill struggle which, with the help of our friends overseas, we can and shall win through."

He said that if coal output can be improved, we can get a "really satisfactory export programme next year and nothing will help food and raw material supplies more."

We have done "exceedingly well" in STEEL, but scrap must be mobilised without delay.

There is a "really encouraging increase" in TEXTILES.

Locomotives up, railway wagons up, hoistery machinery up, farm tractors up—"the foundations of a most important new export industry."



Mrs. Lloyd Lane.

### A CHAMPAGNE NIGHT AT THE OLD BAILEY

THE Old Bailey went gay last night. The Lord Chief Justice (Lord Goddard), the Master of the Rolls (Lord Greene), the Attorney-General (Sir Hartley Shawcross) and many judges were there.

So, too, were about sixty British women and others from India, France, Rumania, China, Jamaica and Dominica—all barristers.

There were also three dozen bottles of champagne, brought by three French women barristers.

### Women's Anniversary

The party was held to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of women being allowed to be called to the Bar.

Organiser was Mrs. Helena Normanton, senior British woman barrister, whom a prisoner she defended once described as "the lady with the twinkling eyes."

Mrs. Ethel Lloyd Lane, who defended dancer Elizabeth Marina Jones in the "Cleft Chin" murder case, was present.

### DON'T WED YET, MICHAEL TOLD

King Michael's A.D.C. said at Lausanne, Switzerland, last night that the Rumanian Government is not opposed to the King's proposed marriage but does not consider the present time "very propitious."

Advertiser's Announcement

## Bevan scheme doctors will be in top-pay class

By BILL GREIG

DOCTORS will be the best-paid professional workers in this country when the new National Health Service comes into operation next July.

This is revealed today by the publication of their "pay scale," offered by the Minister of Health.

Mr. Bevan has issued details in a memorandum addressed to the individual doctor, telling him exactly what terms he will get in the new service.

Doctors who have already seen them are so much attracted that about 90 per cent. of the practitioners in the country are expected to join.

The scale, well above that earned by the average doctor today, is based on the number of people who decide that they will use the free service. A doctor with 1,000 panel patients will get a gross income of £1,058. Other scales are:—

With 2,000 patients £1,816  
3,000 patients £2,574  
4,000 patients £3,332

These incomes are exclusive of any private fees a doctor may earn from patients who do not want to use the State scheme, maternity work, and so on.

In addition, pensions will be provided, and though the Minister has refused to listen to the B.M.A. outcry against stopping the sale of practices, the compensation to practising doctors for the loss of this right will cost £66,000,000.

Aim of the scheme will be to set 4,000 as the maximum number of patients for a doctor, but there is no rigidity in this.

Mr. Bevan makes it clear that doctors cannot be directed anywhere, despite the B.M.A. agitation on that point. And will be de-

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Back Page

## Police block London roads



A C.I.D. officer looks under the tarpaulin of a lorry during the check.

### QUIZ DRIVERS IN BLACK-MART MEAT CHECK-UP

HUNDREDS of police blocked the main roads leading into North London last night and searched all cars and lorries for black market poultry, meat, and liquor. The drivers had to get out while police, with flash-lamps—and searchlights trained from squad cars—examined the insides of the vehicles.

Lorries and cars waiting to be checked between Hatfield and Barnet just before midnight formed a line a mile long.

Suspicious-looking trucks were driven to nearby police stations for further inquiries. Drivers allowed to pass received buff "O.K." forms.

### "We Know Gangs"

One inspector told the *Daily Mirror*: "We're looking for anything 'black.' We know of certain gangs working the London-to-the-North routes, and we've a good idea some of them will be netted now."

And several motorists were trapped when detectives asked them: "Where did you get petrol for this trip?"

The police were briefed at their district stations just before the check-up began. Every man received gang identity pointers.

Then squad cars, vans, and motor-cycles roared out to vantage points.

In case word of the operation got out and drivers tried to by-pass the main routes, constables in pairs watched narrow, out-of-the-way country roads.

Even officers in Service cars were stopped, and questioned for several minutes.

Police from nearly every division in North London took part in the check-up, the biggest yet.

Co-operating with them were constables from Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire.

## EX-WIFE WON'T PAY HIM—HE CAN'T SEE WHY



Mr. Tomkins

MR. Stanley Tomkins, 62, told the *Daily Mirror* last night of his hunting-field romance and marriage with the daughter of a wealthy biscuit manufacturer that ended in her paying him £5 a week when he left her.

"My former wife could well afford the money," he said, "and as it was at considerable sacrifice to myself that I left her I couldn't see why she should stop paying it when I married again."

In the Divorce Court yesterday his ex-wife was released from the agree-

ment to pay the allowance, which was tax free.

Her counsel suggested that it might have been agreed on to protect the husband from other women. But last night Mr. Tomkins, sitting beside his present wife, denied this.

"It was made when I left her because she wanted me to live away from her home," he said. "There was nothing in writing for seven years."

"I met her when we were members of the South Berks hunt."

"She is a niece of Lord Palmer, brother of Sir

Charles Eric Palmer, chairman of Huntley and Palmers.

"We lived happily for years, but eventually disagreed, mostly about how our two daughters were to be brought up."

Said the former Mrs. Tomkins, who lives at Ashburnham-road, Eastbourne: "It really could not go on indefinitely."

Mr. Tomkins, who lives in Beaufort, gardens, Knightsbridge, W., is the inventor of a double-striking match and claimant to the vacant title of the Earl of Desart.

I can taste  
the CHOCOLATE  
mummy!

**FRY'S COCOA**  
The family food drink with the REAL chocolate flavour  
7d qtr lb • 1/1d half lb • 2/1d lb