

## **Dr Frances (Fanny) Gray LDS, BDS (1884-1958)**

Frances Blanche Gray was born February 29, 1884 in Dorchester, England and was baptised at St Cuthbert's in Shepton Malet, Somerset in March of 1884.<sup>1</sup> At the age of five, the family moved to Victoria, Australia, where she spent her childhood with her three siblings, Amy, Walter and Cyril. On 21 December, 1904 she was awarded a Licentiate of Dental Surgery (L.D.S.) and was formally registered to practice dentistry on the March 25, 1905.<sup>2</sup> Frances became the first female graduate of the University of Melbourne's Bachelor of Dental Surgery (B.D.S.) in 1907. Whilst studying she met fellow student, Martha Burns, who went on to have an illustrious dental career.<sup>3</sup>

Frances practiced dentistry primarily from *Professional Chambers* at 110 Collins Street, alongside female colleagues like Ada Tovell, herself the first female the first woman to take the degree of M.A.C.D. at the Australian College of Dentistry in 1900.<sup>4</sup>

Frances left dentistry upon her marriage to Guy Innes on December 11, 1913.<sup>5</sup> The following year the couple welcomed their only child, Geoffrey Gray Innes. Guy served as editor-in-chief of the *Herald* (1918-1921) and in 1922 the family moved to London when Guy joined the Australian Newspapers Cable Service. She was one of a handful of women dentists to attend the both the 1909 and 1912 Australian Dental Congress, alongside Burns and Tovell.<sup>6</sup>

She returned to dentistry briefly to assist with the war effort in World War I.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Births, Deaths and Marriages, Shepton Mallet, Vol 5C, p.481

(<https://www.freebmd.org.uk/cgi/information.pl?cite=JkjdQNeR3em2GBdLXbV%2Fw&scan=1>)

<sup>2</sup> *The Age*, December 22, 1904, p.7

(<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/189436753?searchTerm=bachelor%20of%20dental&searchLimits=l-state=Victoria|||-decade=190>); *Victoria Government Gazette* No 14, January 31, 1907: 'The Dentists' Register for 1907', p.609

([http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au/view.cgi?year=1907&class=general&page\\_num=603&state=V&classNum=G14&searchCode=5222359](http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au/view.cgi?year=1907&class=general&page_num=603&state=V&classNum=G14&searchCode=5222359))

<sup>3</sup> *The Brisbane Courier* June, 25, 1932, p.21 (<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/21988351>)

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*; *Victoria Government Gazette* No.17, January 25, 1909: 'The Dentists' Register for 1909', p.355 and p.364

([http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au/view.cgi?year=1909&class=general&page\\_num=349&state=V&classNum=G17&searchCode=5222359](http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au/view.cgi?year=1909&class=general&page_num=349&state=V&classNum=G17&searchCode=5222359)); *The Age*, January 25, 1901, p4

(<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/196066997?searchTerm=ada%20tovell&searchLimits=l-state=Victoria|||-decade=190>)

<sup>5</sup> Births, Deaths and Marriages Victoria, Registration no.9091/1913 (<https://my.rio.bdm.vic.gov.au/efamily-history/5d1d9a9d8dc5e322f1091452/record/5c6562ac4aba80ac310bd624?q=efamily&givenName=Frances%20Blanche&familyName=GRAY>); *Punch*, January 1, 1914, p.27

(<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/129696290?searchTerm=Guy%20Innes&searchLimits=l-state=Victoria|||-decade=191>)

<sup>6</sup> *Punch*, November 4, 1909, p.28

(<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/176029331?searchTerm=dental%20congress%2C%20gray&searchLimits=l-state=Victoria>); *The Herald*, June 26, 1912 p.7

(<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/241645696?searchTerm=dental%20congress%2C%20gray&searchLimits=l-state=Victoria>)

<sup>7</sup> *The West Australian*, February 25, 1932, p.3

(<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/32658188?searchTerm=mrs%20guy%20Innes&searchLimits=l-decade=193>)

Frances, later known as Dorothy, was an active member of the executive of the British Commonwealth League (England), the Lyceum Club in London and a writer in her own right. She represented the Australian Press Association at the 1929 Women Suffrage Alliance Conference in Berlin, where she was one of fourteen women who formed the Australian delegation and reported on the event.<sup>8</sup> A great supporter of women, she penned articles for newspapers in Australia relating to events she including a dinner hosted by the Women's National Press Club, where she met President Harry S. Truman and his wife.<sup>9</sup>

She kept strong connections with Australia, returning to visit her remaining family in 1932, Walter having passed on the frontlines in France, WWI.<sup>10</sup> Thereafter she proceeded on lengthy tour of the country, attending social events and reuniting with her old classmate, Martha Burns in Brisbane. She made great efforts to support Australians and the arts in London, opening her Holland Park home to them, including to Florence Austral. Her dental career remained a passion and in 1950 she founded an annual prize for conservative dental surgery at the University of Melbourne.<sup>11</sup> Guy passed away in 1953, but she continued to travel extensively, attending a triennial conference of the Country Women of the World in Colombo, Sri Lanka in 1958. She continued onto Nairobi, Kenya where she had been visiting her son Geoffrey, when she fell ill and on January 5, 1958 she passed away aged 74.<sup>12</sup>

Images:

**Dr Frances (Fanny) Gray LDS, BDS (1884-1958) in mortar and graduation gown, 1907**  
photograph  
14.0 x 8.5 cm (oval)  
Williams family collection

**Dr Frances (Fanny) Gray LDS, BDS (1884-1958) and dental students c.1906**  
photograph

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<sup>8</sup> *Sunday Perth Times*, February 28, 1932, p.5

(<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/58658377?searchTerm=mrs%20guy%20innes&searchLimits=>); *The West Australian*, February 25, 1932, p.3

(<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/32658188?searchTerm=Guy%20Innes&searchLimits=>); *The Sydney Morning Herald*, July 28, 1929 p.8

(<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/16559478?searchTerm=Suffrage%20Alliance%20Congress%2C%20Innes&searchLimits=l-decade=192|||year=1929>); *News*, August 23, 1929, p.4

(<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/128895947?searchTerm=Suffrage%20Alliance%20Congress%2C%20Innes&searchLimits=l-decade=192|||year=1929>)

<sup>9</sup> *The Advertiser*, May 19, 1950, p.13

(<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/44923146?searchTerm=mrs%20guy%20innes&searchLimits=>)

<sup>10</sup> *The Herald*, August 15, 1916, p.1

(<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/242376116?searchTerm=cyril%20wentworth%20gray&searchLimits=l-state=Victoria>)

<sup>11</sup> University of Melbourne: Lesser awards detail - UTR6.72 (<https://www.unimelb.edu.au/gifts-bequests/find-trust-records/UTR6/lesser-awards/detail>)

<sup>12</sup> *The Times* (London), January 7, 1958, Issue 54042, p.1.

(<http://gdc.galegroup.com.ezproxy.slv.vic.gov.au/gdc/artemis/NewspapersDetailsPage/NewspapersDetailsWindow?disableHighlighting=false&displayGroupName=DVI->

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(<https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=MDQ-90e3GGUC&dat=19580107&printsec=frontpage&hl=en>)

22.5 x28.0cm (image)

33.5 x 38.5cm (mount)

Williams family collection