

Hannah Guilford MBE 1839-1936

School board member, Education Committee member

Chair of High Pavement Chapel Council

Hannah was baptised at St Leodegarius in Basford though her 2 sisters Ann and Sarah were baptised at St Mary's in Nottingham. Her father had been a druggist on Long Row and the family lived on Low and then High Pavement - then he joined his father in law's lace business before becoming a wine merchant. He also speculated on property and on his death in 1851 the family had large debts and the sisters moved to live on Regent Street with their Aunts. Their mother died in 1865 and Hannah with her sister Sarah moved to 60 Lower Talbot Street. By 1879 they had moved to 23 Lenton Avenue in the Park where Hannah lived until her death.

In 1892 Hannah was elected to the School Board — on the school Board she supported the special education needs work of Emily Scott Thornton at Bath Street Girls School. She defended non-secular education against religious dogma and doctrine being more concerned about behaviour and manners – she was President of the Guild of Courtesy. When the City Council took over from the School Board Hannah was co-opted onto the Education committee working with Jane Roadknight the school's inspector.

She took over as President of the Ladies Sanitary Association in 1894 from her sister Ann. The Association joined with the school of cookery to form a Technical School for women at 63 Long Row to train teachers of cookery, laundry, dressmaking, millinery, hygiene and sick nursing – it closed in 1898.

Hannah and her sisters attended High Pavement Unitarian Chapel where Hannah also taught with Ann at the Sunday School. Hannah was elected as the first woman Chairman of the Chapel Council in 1904, a role normally occupied by men – and was present at the unveiling of the Burne-Jones window and she presided in 1906 when a Sunday school window was unveiled (about half way down on left side). In 1938 there was a plaque installed at the chapel to the three Guilford sisters but when the chapel moved to Plumtre Street it was damaged. It commended all three sisters saying 'They were messengers of courage, unselfishness, kindness and joy.'

During WW1 she was involved in the National Kitchens and in 1918 she was awarded an MBE for this work, the first woman to receive this award. She had a school named after her in Basford.

Her grave is in the General Cemetery next to other family members.

