

HENRY PORTSMOUTH

Relieving Officers, Schools Inquiry Officer, Vaccination Officer
and Inspector of Nuisances

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Henry's Early Life

Henry Portsmouth (1843-1895) was baptised in Shalford on 23 April 1843,^{1,2} (the birth was registered in Hambledon district, about 6 miles away – GRO Ref: 1843 2Q Hambledon Union 4a 169, MMS: Evershed), the son of Benjamin, a tanner, and Mary Ann Portsmouth. He had an older brother, William, bp. 16 August 1840, also in Shalford.³

Henry's father, Benjamin Portsmouth was baptised 10 August 1806 in Albury, the son of James and Sarah Portsmouth;⁴ and his mother, Mary Ann Evershed was baptised 17 December 1801 in Godalming to Edward and Ann Evershed.⁵ Benjamin and Mary Ann married at the Parish church of St Peter & St Paul, Godalming after Banns on 9 June 1839. The register confirming Benjamin as a tanner, son of James Portsmouth, labourer, and Mary Ann as a servant, daughter of Edward Evershed, labourer. Both Benjamin and James signed their own names.⁶

In 1841, Benjamin Portsmouth (30), still a tanner, was listed in Shalford, with Ann Portsmouth (35), 11-month-old William, and Edward Evershed (70).⁷

In 1851 the family was living in Shalford and Benjamin (43) was now recorded as a labourer,⁸ with his wife Ann (43), and sons William (10) and Henry (6), both scholars. They were still there Shalford, in a dwelling described as 'cottage' in 1861⁹, with Benjamin (56) an Ag Lab and Henry (18), a carpenter.

Brother William had left home by then, and in 1861, age 20, was a groom and indoor servant in the Bramley household of Gilbert Money, a Bengal Civil Servant.¹⁰ He had moved to St Leonards, Hastings, and was working as a coachman by the time of his marriage to Mary Ann Boyce on 25 October 1868 (although the marriage ceremony took place in St Martin in the Fields, London).¹¹ The couple had a daughter, Mary Leynett Portsmouth, in Hastings the following year. By 1871 (age 30), he had moved to Hayes, Kent, living at the Rising Sun working as a coachman and domestic servant with his wife Mary (35), and daughter Mary (2).¹² In 1881 he and his wife were working as Coachman and Cook respectively in the household of the Rector of Winterbourne, Gloucs.¹³ Their daughter Mary (12) was boarding with the Carpenter family in the same village. In 1882, wife Mary Ann died, age 46, (1Q 1882, Westminster, 1a 41), and he was recorded as living in Bethnal Green, when as a widower he married widow Margaret Catherine Parfitt on 25 October 1882, at the parish church of St James the Great, Bethnal Green. His occupation was still coachman. They might be the William Portsmouth (60) and Margaret (50) living in St Helen St, Clerkenwell in 1901, with William's occupation now as General Labourer.¹⁴

At some point after 1861 Henry moved out of his parents' home, as he was residing in Guildford at the time of his marriage in 1863. His mother, Mary, died in 1868, and was buried at St Mary the Virgin, Shalford 16 February 1868, age 67.¹⁵ His father continued living in Shalford, and as a widower (age 68) living alone was recorded as a road labourer living at Shalford Lodge in the 1871 Census; and as a farm labourer (age 77) living on Shalford St, on the 1881 Census.^{16,17} He died early in 1891, aged 87, and was buried in the same churchyard as his wife on 23 January 1891.¹⁸

Henry's Married Life

Henry (21) married **Jane Champion** (26) at Christchurch, Gally Hill (district of Crookham and Ewshott) on 20 September, 1863. He was listed as a carpenter residing in Guildford, and Jane was a spinster of Ewshott, daughter of Henry Champion, labourer.¹⁹ Jane was baptised, 19 March 1837, in the parish of Crondall to Henry and Mary (née Page) Champion. Henry was then a labourer, living in Dippenhall.²⁰

Jane was the fifth of eight siblings - : Mary Anne (1827-1882, m. John Phillips); (William) James (1829-1917) m Mary Hurdle (1829-1905); John (1832-1906) m Jane Winter (1833-1907); Anne (1834-1900) m John Woods (1830-1896); Jane (c. 1837-1888); George (1839-); Martha (1842-1919) m William Soane (1840-1887); Henry James (1845-1903) m Harriet Keen (1851-1933).

Just prior to marriage, the 1861 census listed Jane as being a house servant for John Cooke, a Grocer and Provision Dealer, of Portsmouth Rd, Guildford.²¹

Henry and Jane's first son, **William**, was baptised, 23 March 1864, at St Mary, Guildford (GRO: 1Q 1864, Guildford, 2a 60, MMS: Champion), with Henry recorded as a carpenter living in Castle St.²²

By the time the next children were born the family had moved to Stoke, and the baptisms were at St John the Evangelist (**Emily Florence**, bp. 28 January 1866 (GRO: 1Q 1866, Guildford, 2a 53, MMS: Champion), **Alfred**, bp. 2 August 1868 (GRO: 3Q 1868, Guildford, 2a 64, MMS: Champion), and **Alice Jane**, bp. 2 October 1870 (GRO: 4Q 1870, Guildford, 2a 53, MMS: Champion)). In each Henry was recorded as a Carpenter.^{23 24 25}

The **1871** census²⁶ listed their address as Josephs Lane, Stoke, Guildford, and Henry (29) was with wife, Jane (34) b. Crondall, Hampshire, and their 4 children, William (7), b. Guildford, Emily Florence (5), Alfred (2) and Alice Jane (7 mo), all born in Stoke. Henry was working as a Joiner. Their house was the 7th enumerated in Joseph's Lane, going in the direction towards Woodbridge Hill, so he was living very close to the parish church of St John's, Stoke, and his neighbour was the Parish Clerk. By comparing the location of Joseph's Lane on the 6" OS map published 1873, Joseph's Lane is now Joseph's Rd.



STOKE COTTAGE, JOSEPHS RD. WOULD HAVE BEEN NEAR WHERE HENRY PORTSMOUTH LIVED



ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST CHURCH, STOKE

In July 1871, one of the Guildford relieving officers died and the officer at Woking, Mr Potter, applied to be transferred to his position (*West Surrey Times* 22 July 1871). The Woking position (which comprised the parishes of Woking, Send and Ripley, Ockham and Wisley), was advertised in August 1871 (e.g.: *Daily Telegraph & Courier (London)*, 9 August 1871, *Surrey Advertiser*, 12 August 1871), and the conditions of the job were stated as: '..able to keep accounts, reside in Woking...'. The salary was £80 12s 6d p.a. and £5 as Inspector of Nuisances, but the successful applicant was required to enter into a bond, with two sureties, in penalty of £100, for 'the faithful performance of such duties'.

There were 15 applications and 6 of these were entered into the election, including Alfred Root, schoolmaster at the Guildford Union. On 19 August 1871 (*West Surrey Times*), after reducing the number of candidates to two, Henry Portsmouth of Stoke Next Guildford received 12 votes, beating John Stickley of Weybridge by 3 votes. The Inspector of Nuisances duties were added in 1873.

A Poor Law Conference reported by the *West Surrey Times*, 25 November 1871, which discussed the inadequate supervision of outdoor relief, showed several attendees saying that current relieving officers were often not fit to perform their duty, and that there should be more appointed, and if they were paid better the role might attract a better class of candidate! The Kingston Union stated they paid their officers £110 p.a., whilst Hambleton's remuneration was £80.

Daughter **Millicent Mary** (GRO: 4Q 1872, Guildford, 2a 50, MMS: Champion) was baptised 6 November 1873, like the previous children at St John the Evangelist, Stoke next Guildford, with Henry's occupation listed as Relieving Officer, but they were living in Woking.²⁷

Henry was ill in spring 1874 and appointed someone to do his duties. A suggestion at the Board of Guardians meeting to award him £5 was turned down. In contrast, at the same meeting, a Mr Higgins was appointed as a stand-in for Mr Potter, the Guildford relieving officer, and paid £2 per week (*Epsom Journal*, 12 May 1874). As Mr Potter's condition worsened, the Local Government Board agreed a payment to Henry Portsmouth of £5 for acting on his behalf (*Surrey Advertiser*, 27 June 1874). Potter subsequently died on 3 July. The Guardians took the decision not to advertise the post as they had a suitable candidate already and moved that Henry be appointed Relieving Officer of Guildford district, and Mr Higgins replace him as Woking Relieving Officer (*Epsom Journal*, 7 July 1874). The *Surrey Advertiser* of 25 July 1874 reported:

'In accordance with notice given at the last Board, the Chairman moved that Mr. Henry Portsmouth be elected relieving officer for the Guildford district, formerly held by Mr. Potter; and that Mr. J. B. Higgins succeed Mr. Portsmouth as relieving officer of the Woking district. – Mr. Baker seconded, and the motion was agreed unanimously'.

However, this took a while to happen. The *West Surrey Times* of 22 August 1874 reported that no order had been received from the Local Government Board regarding these appointments, so Mr Portsmouth and Mr Higgins would continue in their existing roles in the meantime. It added that Henry had not yet succeeded in finding a house in Guildford. His appointment was confirmed and reported in the same publication a week later (*West Surrey Times* of 29 August 1874).

By the time his next child was baptised, **Edith Kate** (GRO: 2Q 1875, Guildford, 2a 67, MMS: Champion), on 6 August 1875 at St John the Evangelist, Stoke Next Guildford, Henry had moved back to Guildford, and his abode was listed as Stoke, occupation - Relieving Officer.²⁸

The couple's last daughter **Charlotte Maud** (GRO: 1Q 1877, Guildford, 2a 74, MMS: Champion) followed a couple of years later, and was baptised on 16 February, 1877, again at St John the Evangelist, Stoke. Henry was recorded as a relieving officer.²⁹

So, was the move to Guildford good careerwise and financially? At the time his predecessor, Mr Potter, had requested the move from Woking to Guildford, the Chairman of the Board of Guardians had described the Guildford as being a larger sphere than Woking, and the office [of Relieving Officer] there as '*not one of the highest in the Union, but the duties were of an exceedingly arduous character, and required in their discharge the exercise of discretion and discrimination*'.

The salary when Henry took office in Guildford was not recorded, but at a meeting of the Board in 1889 a letter from Henry requesting a salary increase was discussed. Henry stated that he had held his appointment since 1871, and never applied for an increase although the population and his workload had greatly increased during that time. Henry's application stated how the expenditure for out-relief had decreased from £36 to £9, and how his work on removals had saved hundreds of pounds, though he had needed to incur some extra expense in the

discharge his own duties. The Guardians agreed that '*Mr Portsmouth was quite unsurpassed in the way he had discharged his duties, and he was of great assistance to the Board in his knowledge of the law*'. They further described how extra work he had performed during the previous 2 years on removals had save ratepayers significant sums of money and stated that his district comprised of 8 parishes, with a population of over 17,000 people, which was nearly twice the size of the next largest district. His salary at that time was £133 as relieving officer, plus c. £20 p.a. for vaccination fees, and £10 as an inquiry officer. They agreed his services were so valuable they should increase the relieving officer salary, and despite suggestions of £140 and £145, they settled on £150 p.a.! (*West Surrey Times, Epsom Journal* 26 March 1889).

By 1881³⁰ the family had moved closer to town - Stoke Road, Stoke, next to a Bakers Shop. These premises were between the Stoke Hotel and the Prince Albert Pub (#s 103 and 85 Stoke Road today, #s



93 STOKE ROAD



95 STOKE RD



PRINCE ALBERT PUB, STOKE RD



THE STOKE PUBLIC HOUSE, STOKE RD

41 and 48 in the 1891 census). Henry (38) was now listed with the role of Relieving, Vaccination and Schools Attendance Officer. Son William was not present, daughter Emily (15) was working as a milliner, and in addition to Alfred (12) and Alice (10, both scholars, there was Millicent M (8), Edith Kate (6) and Charlotte M (4).

At that time Guildford, in addition to some industry, was a dormitory town, with people commuting to London for work (the railway arrived in 1845). Guildford had a gas supply from 1821, with gas streetlights. In the 1860s, the council paved the streets, but drains and sewers were not constructed until the 1890s. Stoke Park became a recreation ground in 1889.³¹

The contracts and costs of road and paving upkeep were reported in the local papers, and following on from a description congratulating the contractors, Messrs. Hobman, on having completed their contract for tar paving, including re-topping the old work in the Stoke Road in a most '*liberal and satisfactory manner*', was a query about a nuisance at a Mr Loveland's house in the Stoke Rd caused by a rain-pipe discharging water across the footway, which would be dangerous in winter, and '*in front of Mr Portsmouth's house, the contractors for the tar paving, in carrying out their work, had stopped up the escape pipe, and Mr Portsmouth had been obliged to make a passage through the tar paving to prevent his house from being flooded!*'! (*West Surrey Times*, 8 September 1883).

Henry was evidently eligible for jury service (??property qualification), and in July of 1883, he was recorded as the foreman of a jury at a coroner's inquest into the death of John (or William) Beck of Ashford, Kent, a 15-year- jobbing boy working at the excavation near Cross Lanes (appears to be on the route of the New Guildford Line) who was killed just 2 days into the job, when he came between a coal truck being pushed by other labourers and the steam navvy (a steam digger/excavator). He died of a punctured lung caused by crushing of the ribs. A verdict of accidental death was agreed (*West Surrey Times*, 21 July 1883, *Surrey Advertiser*, 23 July 1883).

On 24 September 1888, Henry's wife Jane died at their home in Stoke Road (GRO 3Q 1888, Guildford, 2a 46, age 49), (*West Surrey Times*, 28 September 1888). She was buried in Stoke Cemetery, plot C#/216³²



In July 1890 the Guardians decided to ask Henry Portsmouth to be temporary master of the Guildford Workhouse until the newly appointed master and mistress, Mr & Mrs McDonald, could start (the previous incumbents resigned shortly before). The Local Government Board approved this in August, and in October the House Committee recommended a gratuity of £10 10s be paid to him for the extra services rendered.³³ During his time in this role he was reported to have secured and impounded a large number of packs of cards (*Surrey Advertiser*, 16 August 1890). '*Noone was disposed to own them (laughter)*' and the Board of Guardians thought they should be destroyed as '*that was a kind of luxury they did not allow the inmates to indulge in*', and contravened Local Government Board rules. It seems that at least 12 packs

or part packs had been found, some of them quite filthy, and the card playing seems to have been prevailing for some time. It was thought that a couple of the packs were gifts from the late matron. Men had been found playing cards at 4 o'clock in the afternoon '*when they ought to have been at work*' and sitting up late at night '*when they ought to have been in bed*'. The men apparently did have other games to play, including dominoes, but card games were forbidden (including cribbage), and the conversation proceeded to gambling: '*I suppose they don't gamble*', '*Oh, don't they! (laughter)*', but the Guardians thought it could not be for very high stakes!

This new master fell ill the following year and Henry was again asked to step in as temporary master of the workhouse. The master resumed duties at the end of May, and in June it was determined to award Henry a gratuity of £10 for '*services rendered by him in assisting management of the workhouse during the 9 weeks in which the master was incapacitated by illness*', and an additional £2 18s for out-of-pocket expenses incurred by him as a consequence of his increased duties.³⁴

The 1891³⁵ census listed the Portsmouth's address as 43 Stoke Road, Stoke, and Henry (48) was a widower described as a Relieving and Vaccination Officer. Comparing the neighbouring properties with the 1881 census, they are in the same property, so would have been at #43 in 1881 too. (Other sources in 1891 list Henry Portsmouth at 2 Fawcett Villas, Stoke Rd, so perhaps these are the same). Unmarried daughters Emily (25) and Alice (20) were still at home, but with no occupation listed, as were Edith (16) and Charlotte (14), both scholars.

The 1891 Kelly's directory entries for Guildford Union included Henry Portsmouth as the Relieving, Vaccination and Inquiry Officer for Guildford No. 1 district, living at 2 Fawcett Villas, Stoke Rd. (The Medical Officer for No.1 District was Henry's thorn in the side, Henry Sharp Taylor, FRCS Eng, Quarry St, Guildford). Alfred Portsmouth, his son, was listed under the Isolation Hospital, Woodbridge, as clerk to the committee.³⁶

Henry was recorded, at the Lady-tide Vestries Meeting for the Stoke parish in 1892, as appealing to the newly elected Parochial Assessment Committee to give some relief to the local residents whose rates had increased over the past year. He cited his own residence as an example, where he had appealed the increase on the basis of there having been no improvements to the premises, but was unsuccessful. Other residents complained of the inconsistent charges for properties with the same rateable value. Mr John Loveland (a close neighbour of Henry Portsmouth) claimed that the assessments were altered in Messrs. Smallpieces' office after having left the Committee, but would not provide his source of the information!

Henry died, aged 51, on 3 Jan 1895³⁷ , (GRO Ref: 1895 1Q Guildford 2a 69, age 51), still living at 2 Fawcett Villas, Stoke Rd, Guildford, and was still a Relieving Officer. He was buried at St John the Evangelist, Stoke Next Guildford, on 9 January (plot C/#/209), near his wife.³⁸ There is no tombstone on his plot. Probate³⁹ was granted on 25 Feb to his son Alfred, a solicitor's clerk, with effects of value £434 0s 1d. Alfred soon after posted a notice (*Surrey Times and County Express*, 26 Jan 1895) requested all persons having claims against the estate to make them known by 2 February, after which assets were to be distributed.

His obituary appeared in local newspapers (The *Surrey Advertiser, County Times* Saturday, 5 Jan 1895) read:

'We regret to record the extremely sudden death of Mr Henry Portsmouth of Stoke-road, Guildford, who has for many years past been relieving officer in the employ of the Guildford Board of Guardians. Mr Portsmouth, who was to all appearances a strong and healthy man, had recently suffered from

influenza, and for this reason was absent from the last meeting of the Board of Guardians. He had, however, recovered and resumed duty, and on Thursday was out almost the whole day. He returned home shortly before 11 o'clock, and went almost immediately to bed, but soon after was seized with sudden illness, and though he was able to ask his daughters to send for a doctor, he expired before Mr Schollick arrived. Mr Portsmouth, who was about 52 years of age, was formerly apprenticed in the town as a carpenter, and took up the position of relieving officer on the death of Mr Harper, about 1871, so that he had seen over 20 years service under the Guildford Board. Mr Portsmouth, who was a very efficient officer, and we believe has never been a day absent from duty since his appointment except through illness, was extremely popular. He leaves two sons (one a clerk in Messrs Smallpiece and Sons' offices) and five daughters. Inasmuch as Mr Schollick, who is the borough coroner, is able to certify as to the cause of death, no inquest will be necessary.'

The same publication, a week later (Saturday 12 Jan 1895) carried news of his funeral:

'FUNERAL OF THE LATE MR H PORTSMOUTH – The funeral took place on Wednesday morning at the Stoke Cemetery of the late Mr Henry Portsmouth, relieving officer of the Guildford Union. The service was conducted by the Rev W. E. Peters (St Saviour's). Amongst those present at the graveside were Mr W. Portsmouth and Mr A. Portsmouth (sons), Mr J. Martin (son-in-law), Mr H. Daws, Mr W. R. Daws, Mr Clement Gaines, Mr H. M. Weston, J. P., C.C. (chairman of the Board of Guardians), Mr J. Bullen and Mr A. Wells (members of the Board), Mr W. S.V. Cullerne (clerk to the Board), Dr Wellington Lake (medical officer of health), Mr T. J. Schollick (borough coroner), Superintendent Worlock, Messrs C. H. Adams. W. Titley, P. Dewar, J. W. Collins, and Henry Moore. The coffin bore the following inscription: - "Henry Portsmouth, died January 3, 1895, aged 51 years". Amongst the wreaths sent was one, consisting of tea roses, from the Guildford, Hambleton, and Farnham Poor Law Officers Association. The arrangements for the funeral were carried out by Mr T. Swayne, Stoke-road'.

The Board of Guardians was officially notified by a letter from his son Alfred, which was read at their first meeting of 1895. His demise was lamented, describing him as '*one of their most able relieving officers...[who]... for many years had carried out his duties admirably, and had succeeded in the attempts to satisfy both the Board and the ratepayers. His death was undoubtedly a very great blow to the Board' and 'an officer on whom they could rely – especially in his great knowledge of the Poor Law..... Mr Portsmouth had done his duty thoroughly well for more than 20 years'* (*Surrey Times & County Express* 12 January 1895), and that '*in all respects they could rely upon him to do his duty faithfully and well'* (*Surrey Advertiser & County Times*, 12 January 1895). They agreed to send a letter of regret to the deceased's family.

The salary to be offered to his successor, Mr Murrell, was reduced by £20, to £125 p.a., with 15% upon the amount collected by him as collector to the Guardians, and 1s for each case of successful vaccination. (*Surrey Times*, 26 January 1895).

Mr Murrell was previously the Godalming relieving officer. Mr Gilliam, the Woking relieving officer (who had requested a change of district) was moved to Godalming (which paid £20 p.a. more and also included vaccination and school attendance duties), and the post at Woking was advertised (*Surrey Times & County Express*, 26 January 1895).

[Henry's Working Life Progression](#)

Henry first entered the employ of the Guildford Board of Guardians in 1871, as Relieving Officer for **Woking**. The role of Inspector of Nuisances was included in the same job advert as that of the Relieving Officer, but the role was not added by the Guildford Union Rural Sanitary Authority until 1873. When it was proposed Henry, along with the relieving officers for Guildford (Mr Potter) and Godalming (Mr Morris) all replied that '*the extra duties involved would be more than they could discharge, but if the Board thought fit to cast the duties upon them, they would do their best*' (*Surrey Advertiser*, 25 January 1873). Mr W G Lower was Inspector of Nuisances for the Urban Sanitary Authority. For more about his duties as [Relieving Officer see section below](#).

However, as early as 1874, Mr Henley, the Inspector of the Local Government Board, was voicing his objections to the two roles being performed by the same officer, saying the duties were antagonistic, and of all the Unions in his district, Guildford was the only one not to appoint independent sanitary officers (*West Surrey Times*, 25 July 1874).

When Henry was appointed as relieving officer for **Guildford** in August 1874, he was also appointed Inspector of Nuisances there, despite objections, this time from Mr Bray (of the Rural Sanitary Authority), that the two offices should not be combined (*West Surrey Times*, 29 August 1874). For more about his role as [Inspector of Nuisances see section below](#).

Part of the role of Relieving Officer in both Woking and Guildford, was to act as Vaccination Officer (against smallpox), and Henry listed this as part of his Occupation description in the 1881 and 1891 censuses. For more about his role as [Vaccination Officer see section below](#).

In 1876, he (and Mr Norris of the Farncombe district) petitioned the Rural Sanitary Authority for extra remuneration to cover their expenses in pursuit of their duties. Henry was awarded £10, and Mr Norris and the other two inspectors in the district, £5 each (*Epsom Journal*, 21 March 1876).

Henry, with a wife and 6 children to support, appears to have been an ambitious man, and the reports below show the various concurrent roles he fulfilled. He was also not shy about seeking better remuneration, and in 1877 gave thought to taking up the position of relieving officer for the Cookham Union [*I did wonder whether this might be Crookham, rather than Cookham, but could find no Crookham Union or workhouse. There was one in Cookham*]. The *West Surrey Times*, 10 November 1877, reported his request for a Certificate of Efficiency or Testimonial from the Guildford Board. This body were not keen for him to move on as '*during the six years of Mr Portsmouth's service, under the Guildford Board, he had by his exertions, in great measure, reduced the sum of out-door relief by something close upon £3000!*' They requested he continued his services for them, and offered to raise his salary. However, he again wrote to the Board requesting a testimonial as he was seeking a more lucrative appointment with another Union. The Guardians agreed it would be a great loss if he was successful, but granted the application (*West Surrey Times*, 28 January 1888).

In 1878, School Attendance Officer duties were added to his role (with an additional salary), following legislation changes requiring school attendance (see [School Inquiry and Attendance Officer Section below](#)).

In August 1880, Mr Higgins the Relieving Officer for Shere and Albury was suspended by the Board of Guardians on grounds of excessive consumption of alcohol, rendering him incapable of performing his duties adequately as noted by the numerous 'oversights' and mistakes in his books (both those in his capacity as relieving officer, and those as Registrar of Births &c.), and also his deportment before the Board (*West Surrey Times*, 28 August 1880, *Epsom Journal*, 21 September 1880). Henry Portsmouth and

Mr Frye were temporarily assigned his duties during the suspension and subsequent investigation. Mr Higgins had failed to record cases requiring permanent relief, and had not handed over his books to Henry, instead only providing him with a copied 'relief list'. In early October, after Higgins resigned, the Board started considering whether to reassign boundaries so that the Union consisted of 3 rather than 4 relieving districts (although one member felt the existing officers were already overworked), and Henry agreed to continue managing the Shere district for another month (*Epsom Journal*, 19 October 1880). Interestingly, to an objection that '*it would cause inconvenience and difficulty to delegate a man to do the duty who resided out of the district*' it was observed that two relieving officers had already been granted permission to use a vehicle in some journeys rather than having to get a lift in the baker contractor's cart! Reports showed that the Guildford Union areas were smaller in acreage and lower in population than other Unions' areas, and the concern about the additional burden of Inspector of Nuisance duties was overridden on the basis that it was thought changes to this were due the following spring, so it was proposed (to save costs) that Shere, Albury and Merrow be transferred to the Guildford district and the Clandons and Horsleys to Woking. However, Henry Portsmouth and Mr Frye turned down the suggested uplift to their pay (of £25 and £20 respectively) for taking on the extra areas, as they thought they should be paid the same as Higgins. The Board objected, in that to pay them more would not result in any money savings, but eventually it was agreed to offer them £30 and £25 extra salary, open to revision at Lady Day (*West Surrey Times*, 6 November 1880). The *West Surrey Times*, 18 December 1880, reported that the Local Government Board agreed to trial this unconditional arrangement of reassigning Mr Higgins duties (but only up to Lady Day, 25 March), and Mr Portsmouth and Mr Frye were to be paid £160 and £105 12s 6d p.a. respectively.

The Guardians discussed the relieving officer districts again in February, prior to the limit placed on the temporary arrangement. A study of other Surrey districts, showed the cost of relieving officers (£5 per 1000 acres and £10 per 1000 head of population) was comparable with the Guildford costs (£10 and £10 15s respectively) so it would cost no more to have four relieving districts. Despite enquires showing that the vacated district had been managed more efficiently in the interim than it had been under Mr Higgins, and a suggestion that by paying Mr Portsmouth £185 p.a. and removing his school attendance duties they would save £40 p.a., they decided to appointing a relieving officer for the Albury and Shere district, and it was to include the roles of Vaccination Officer and Registrar of Births &c. (which Mr Higgins had resigned from these in February). However, after discussion as to the spread-out nature of that district, it was decided to transfer Merrow into the Guildford district, and pay the Guildford relieving officer (Henry) £8 for the extra responsibility. (*Epsom Journal*, 22 February 1881, 8 March 1881).

In addition, at that meeting of the Guardians on December 18 1880, it was reported the Local Government Board would not permit Relieving Officers to act as Inspectors of Nuisances after Lady Day (25th March). The motion to action this was carried at a special meeting of the Rural Sanitary Authority the following January, with one of the members saying '*for a man like a Relieving Officer to hold the two offices was absurd. First he went into a cottage reeking with fever, and then into another to distribute relief*'. They agreed the salary of the Inspector of Nuisances to be £130 p.a. Although this was more than the current payments to their 4 relieving officers for these duties (each paid £15 p.a. plus expenses, costing the Board a total of c. £70 p.a.), the Local Government (Central) Board would contribute half, so overall the cost to the rate-payer would be less. (*Epsom Journal*, 18 January and *Surrey Mirror*, 22 January 1881). The same meeting (after much discussion) also passed another recommendation from the Local Government Board, that medical officers should no longer discharge the duties of Medical Officer of Health, and that there should be one Medical Officer of Health for the whole district, and he should not be in private practice (due to potential conflicts of interest).

The Guildford Union Rural Sanitary Authority placed adverts for both these posts (*Epsom Journal*, 1 March 1881), citing the Guildford district as being an area of 65, 046 acres, and a population (in 1871) of 21,871. The salary for Inspector of Nuisances was £130 p.a. (to include all travelling and other expenses). The requirements for the post were knowledge of duties of Inspector of Nuisances, as prescribed by the Local Government Board and Public Health Acts, with a preference for candidates acquainted with surveying, levelling and construction of buildings, and able to carry out Bye-Laws made under Urban Powers.

GUILDFORD UNION.—RURAL SANITARY AUTHORITY.

APPOINTMENT OF INSPECTOR OF NUISANCES.

The SANITARY AUTHORITY of the above Union are desirous of appointing an INSPECTOR OF NUISANCES for their district, containing approximately an area of 65,046 acres, and a population in 1871 of 21,871, at a salary of £130 per annum (to include travelling and other expenses).

Applicants must possess a thorough knowledge of the duties of Inspector of Nuisances, as prescribed by the Local Government Board and the Public Health Acts, and preference will be given to a person who is acquainted with surveying and levelling and construction of buildings, and able to carry out Bye-Laws made under Urban Powers.

The appointment will be made for one year only, and will be subject to the approval of the Local Government Board. The duties to commence at Lady-day next.

The person appointed will be required to reside in Guildford, Godalming, or the District, and to devote his whole time to the duties of the office.

Applications to be made by letter only, in candidate's own handwriting, stating age, experience, and present employment, accompanied by not more than three testimonials of recent date, and to be sent (prepaid) to me on or before WEDNESDAY, the 9th MARCH next, and selected candidates will have notice to attend on the 12th March next, when the election will take place.

By order of the Authority.
MARK SMALLPEICE, Clerk.

Guildford, 10th February, 1881.

There were 60 applicants, and a special meeting of the Rural Sanitary Authority on 12 March 1881 selected a Charles Pugh, aged 38, the Sanitary Inspector of Mortimer from a shortlist of 6 (*Epsom Journal*, 15 March 1881).

Unfortunately, Mr Pugh died suddenly, of congestive apoplexy (? a stroke) in early August that year at his residence in Dapdune Rd. He had been held in high esteem for the quality of his work, and board members felt his death might have been due to being too zealous. The surgeon put it down to overwork and exposure to the sun. He was said to have come from Shropshire (*Epsom Journal*, 13 & 16 August 1881). The Board asked Henry Portsmouth to assist with sanitary matters in the meantime (*Surrey Advertiser*, 15 August 1881). A fund for Mr Pugh's widow raised £21 3s 6d, and her friends in Kidderminster raised £6 more (*Epsom Journal*, 11 October 1881). His post was readvertised at the end of August. From a choice of 74 applicants, a Mr Thomas Rees (49) of Swansea was selected at a salary of £130 p.a. (*Epsom Journal*, 13 September 1881). He was the Inspector of Nuisances at Kidderminster, and a friend of the late Mr Pugh (*Surrey Advertiser*, 12 September 1881).

In July of 1884 the Godalming relieving and vaccination officer, Mr Norris, was ill and the Board request the Guildford relieving officer to take on his duties (*Surrey Advertiser* 7 July 1884). Later in the year he claimed remuneration from the Guildford Union for the 11 weeks he performed these duties until a

successor for Norris was appointed. He stated expenses of £5 14s 2d for railway fares, horse hire, etc. The Board agreed payment of this and proposed a payment to him of 30s per week for his extra labours. Henry objected on the basis that Mr Norris would have been paid more, and the Board then discussed whether they or the Godalming relieving officer should make the remuneration. It was eventually agreed that remuneration should be made as a lump sum, and that in future cases if a relieving officer was ill he should pay the expenses incurred by his substitute. Henry was paid £22 to include everything. (*The Surrey Advertiser, County Times*, 18 October 1884).

Did the pressures of being relieving officer drive them to drink? In 1885, a recommendation was made for Mr C P Frye, the relieving officer for Woking, to resign for appearing before the Board of Guardians in a state of intoxication ('*and not for the first time*'!). His pleas for clemency because he had an ill wife and 6 children to support were not successful, and he was suspended for 2 weeks while the Board awaited a reply from the Local Government Board. Henry Portsmouth was asked to take on Mr Frye's duties in the interim. (*Epsom Journal (Supplement)*, 1 September 1885). In March 1886 (*Surrey Mirror*, 6 March 1886) the Local Government Board approved a payment of £33 to Henry Portsmouth '*in connection with the duties of Mr Fry, late relieving officer of Woking*'. [Mr Frye must have regained some of his positions, as in 1891, whilst a School Attendance Officer and vaccination officer for the parishes of Ockham, Send and Ripley, and Wisley, he was reported as having become insane and was removed to Brookwood. *Board of Guardians minutes: BG6/11/23 25 July 1891, Surrey Advertiser 3 Aug 1891*]

It was noted above that the Board had also found Mr Higgins to be remiss in his duties as Registrar (although he was not employed by them in this role), with many of the Registers not being completed correctly. Perhaps Henry also helped with this aspect, as in February 1877 he had applied to be Registrar of Births and Deaths in Guildford, following the death of late incumbent, Mr Bond or perhaps because the details collected by the Registrar were a vital input to the work of vaccination officer). The position was also contested by Mrs Jane Bond, wife of the late officer, and Mr C P White, the Deputy Registrar. In the final vote, Mrs Bond won over Henry by a single vote (*The Surrey Advertiser & County Times*, 5 February 1887).

Also in February 1887, the Board of Guardians approved the formation of a committee to examine the cost of providing out-relief. Although they agreed that they found no fault with the officers (of the Union), and that the Relieving Officers salaries were the same as 12 years previously, they thought the cost of administration of relief and the working expenses had increased (*West Surrey Times*, 19 February 1887).

The same year, after the resignation of Mr Law, the assistant relieving officer of vagrants, the Guardians considered Henry Portsmouth would make a good replacement. However, despite noting that the salary for that position (which had stood at £20 for the past 20 years), and saying that was not too much '*under the circumstances*', and having already noted that the numbers of vagrants were increasing (in January that year 38 had been relieved, whereas at the time of their April meeting, the number was 142), the Guardians voted to reduce the salary to £15. Henry turned the position down, saying it would interfere with his other duties, although the Guardians minutes reported him as saying he '*could not entertain this offer*'⁴⁰ However, in July, having considered three candidates who would perform the duty for the advertised fate (and one even offered to take less) and considered them unsuitable, they proposed offering the position to Henry again, but at a salary of £20. However, one guardian objected on the basis that it would take him away from his duties as School Board officer, and suggested the position be offered to a porter, the going salary being £5. There would be greater efficiency as tramps would not need to go into town to gain an admission order. The porter, Mr John Thomas Mansfield, was duly appointed at £5

p.a. (*The Surrey Advertiser & County Times*, 25 April 1887, 1 August 1887, 29 August 1887; *West Surrey Times & County Express*, 23 July 1887).

In 1888 at the meeting of the Rural Sanitary Authority, the Hospital Committee proposed that '*Mr Portsmouth should be appointed collector for the Authority*' at a commission of 5% (*West Surrey Times*, 18 August 1888). As Henry was relieving officer for the Guildford Rural area, it's likely that his duties would have covered the area required. The Public Health Act 1872 allowed the overseers of a parish to collect an additional rate (in addition to the poor rate) to contribute towards the general costs of meeting the requirements the Act. The officers generally employed to collect the poor rate could also be used to collect this additional rate, and paid remuneration.⁴¹ Possibly the role of Collector was one that was regularly re-appointed, as in 1893 Henry Portsmouth and his fellow relieving officers (H Mursell, E F Pantry, W Collins) were appointed collectors of the Guardians of the Union, at a remuneration rate of '*£15 per centum*', and were required to find surety of £50 each.⁴²

When Henry first applied to be a Relieving Officer he had also been required to provide a surety, and had only recently (earlier in May of 1893) he reported to the Guardians the death of one of his sureties, and nominated Mr W Daws (of 47 Honeywell Rd, Wandsworth Common), in place of Mr Hoffgaard Shoobridge (deceased).⁴³

The beginning of 1893 called for Henry Portsmouth (again) and Mr Mursell (relieving officer of Godalming) to fill in duties of the relieving officer of Shere and Albury. The relieving officer of that district, Mr Collins had been moved to Woking as it's relieving officer, Mr Laker, had been called upon to resign following a complaint (of being drunk on duty, *West Surrey Times*, 28 January, 4 February 1893). Henry Portsmouth and Mr Mursell were each awarded £5 for the extra duties they performed during the 3 weeks it took to find a replacement relieving officer for Albury.⁴⁴

What was the work like?.....

As a Relieving Officer

The duties of the relieving officer are described in a separate document (*Role of Relieving Officer Vaccination Officer.docx*), but much information about what the day to day work entailed, and what he would have witnessed performing it appeared in the newspapers, as he frequently appeared in court providing information against one person or another that the Guardians were pursuing for reimbursement of payments incurred by the parish for their, or their dependents care. His name made appearances at nearly every meeting of the Board of Guardians during his office, and he was also sometimes mentioned in the newspaper reports of the Guardians' meetings.

It seemed it was normal for people seeking a workhouse admission order to visit Henry at his home, and also for relief payments to be made from there. Henry must have felt this was getting too much, as the Guardians minutes in March and April 1892 show him requesting that the Guardians would provide premises other than his residence for a Relief Station and an office for the relief of the poor by 24 June. The Guardians partially acceded to his request despite being of the opinion that they '*did not consider it advisable or expedient to make provision for the relieving officer's office being at any other place than his residence, and that if he desires it provision might be made for the Relief Station being elsewhere*'. He repeated the request for removal of the Pay Station by midsummer in May.⁴⁵ By June there was a motion for the removal of the Pay Station for distribution of relief to paupers in parishes of Friary, Holy Trinity, St Mary, St Nicholas and Stoke, from Henry Portsmouth's house to three separate pay stations, one of which was to be at the workhouse (at the vagrants relieving station), with the relieving officer visiting each Pay

Station every Tuesday, for 30 minutes or 1 hour, to distribute relief. It seems that despite Henry wanting this function removed from his home, he still felt some responsibility and raised an objection to the Pay Station being located at the workhouse. However, the Guardians responded to this saying that the Vagrants Receiving Room '*had been cleaned up*'.⁴⁶ It seems he was not the only person with concerns, as in June 1893 the Clerk of Guildford enquired whether the room used for the Pay Station at the workhouse was the same as that used for vagrants/casual paupers. In response the Guardians agreed to relocate it, and in the meantime to use separate rooms. The Guardians also referred a letter that Henry Portsmouth wrote regarding the relocation of the Pay Station to a committee [no further details were mentioned].⁴⁷

After the removal of the relief Pay Station from his house, Henry Portsmouth appeared before the Guardians for making a charge of 10s to the Union for rent of a room in his house that he used for workhouse business (*West Surrey Times*, 14 January 1893). He explained that payments of relief and other things had been made from his house for a period, for which the Union paid him 15s. Now the Guardians had moved the payment of relief elsewhere, but '*he had still the charge of the books*', and people came to his house to apply for medical and funeral orders, and for orders to the workhouse etc., but as the 'traffic' had decreased by about one third, he had reduced the charge he made accordingly, to 10s. However, the Guardians said they could only pay if his house was used as a '*relief pay-station*', and not pay any part of a relieving officer's rent. They added that '*under his engagement he was liable to have people come to his house at all hours of the day and night, and it was part and parcel of his duty to take care of the books*'. They refused the payment.

So, people still called at his house for assistance – sometimes to attend a sick person, sometimes asking for admission to the workhouse (and then having to determine whether they were eligible). In one reported instance a disgruntled 'customer' returned and broke his windows.

- The *Surrey Advertiser, County Times* of 13 December 1893 and *Surrey Times and County Express* of 16 December 1893 carry the report that a labourer, Charles Sherlock, of Bell Fields, Stoke, went to Henry Portsmouth's house at 43 Stoke Road, believing that in his capacity as a relieving officer he could grant a pass for the workhouse, claiming that he was out of work and had not eaten all day. Henry refused on the basis that Charles was drunk and was just asking for an order for himself, but not his wife and family (although Charles admitted he had made no provision for them), and told him to go home. A few minutes later Charles threw a stone through his front room window. Pleading guilty, Charles was sent to gaol for one month with hard labour.

Much of the time, the relieving officer duties took him all over his district. There were reports of dire poverty, with people living in falling down houses with no glass in the windows, furniture limited to a mattress on the floor, children clothed in rags and infested with vermin, and desperately hungry; cases of men deserting their wives and children, or abandoning their children on the streets; he had to investigate reports of supplies (mainly bread) of insufficient quality being supplied to paupers; attend the police station to assess cases found by the constabulary. As can be seen below, he could be in contact with people with infectious and contagious diseases, but managed not to contract them himself.

Some examples are as follows (with further instances listed in Appendix 1):

- the *Surrey Advertiser, County Times* of 14 August 1875 reported that Ellen Saunders had given her child of a few weeks of age to a Jane Phares to look after, promising to pay 5s a week, but that after 4 weeks the payments had stopped and Ellen 'disappeared'. Jane deposited the child at the Union house, and it had been there 15 weeks since, accruing a debt, according to Henry Portsmouth, the

relieving officer, of £2 12s 6d. Ellen had been apprehended in Nottingham, where she had found been in service for the past 5 weeks. Ellen said she intended to pay as soon as she was able, but the Mayor did not believe her and sentenced her to a month in prison, after which the child would be returned to her.

- At a meeting of the Urban Sanitary Authority in March 1877, Henry Portsmouth received high praise, in his capacity as relieving officer (he not being an Inspector of Nuisances for the urban district), for the help he gave to the medical officer in the removal of a man with smallpox to the workhouse infirmary. The man had walked in overnight from Leatherhead station, and slept in a relative's house. The officers (in the absence of the Urban district Inspector of Nuisances) had had the bedding destroyed and arranged the disinfection and whitewashing of the room in which he had lain. They were now requesting reimbursement of expenses (*West Surrey Times*, 10 March 1877).
- The relieving officer not only referred people for relief, or prosecuted them, but also looked after the welfare of those on relief. The *Local Journal* of 4 June 1878 reported that his complaint to the Guardians that bread supplied to out-door paupers was of very inferior quality and underweight, resulted in the baker's contract being cancelled.

It seems the practice was common over the years, as in 1893 a baking contractor, Mr T Stone, complained to the Board of Guardians that Henry had had his contract cancelled, and had harassed him in other ways, setting the weights and measures officers onto him, and even accused Henry of bribery. Two of the Guardians said that they had seen bread from that contractor that paupers had complained about, as being unfit to eat. Mr Stone cited a case where Henry had objected to a loaf he was supplying, obliging it to be changed for other bread, but in the evening had sent a woman for bread. He had run out of bread, but she pleaded her desperation, so he had given her the reject loaf. Henry had then taken that loaf from the woman and used it as evidence against him. The general tone was that he felt he had been tricked, and felt his treatment unfair; but as he could provide no evidence of bribery, the Board dismissed his complaints, but said they would send a copy of his letter to Henry Portsmouth (*West Surrey Times*, 25 February 1893). They also empowered Henry to obtain bread for out-relief elsewhere.⁴⁸

- In April 1882 (*Surrey Advertiser, County Times* of 8 April 1882), Henry was a witness (having visited the household) at the Guildford County Bench where Ellen Walker of Bell-fields, Stoke was accused of terrible mistreatment of her 15-year-old sister, Louisa, who suffered from fits, and allowing her to live in deplorable, vermin infested conditions. The girls' father did not see any problem!
- On 16 May 1891 the *Surrey Advertiser, County Times* reported Henry in court again as relieving officer, in the case of William Fricker, charged with neglecting to maintain his wife. This case provides considerable insight into what Henry's work involved. On Good Friday, Henry had spoken to a less than sober William who had called at his house. Henry had heard William's wife and child were in a '*neglected condition*', and said it was William's duty to provide for them, and if taken into the Workhouse William would be liable. William claimed he did provide for them, but said his wife could be admitted and he would keep the child! William left after Henry told him to provide properly for his family. Three weeks later Henry visited William's wife, Sarah Jane Fricker, to find her sitting in a chair, so weak she could not get up. She had very little clothing on and was very dirty. He reported that the house had only a mattress on the floor, a box, and a broken bedstead by way of furniture, and another witness said the house was '*one of the dirtiest and most wretched he had seen for many years, and the stench from the upper room was awful*'. There was only a small piece of dry bread and a small piece of butter. The woman said that any meat her husband brought home could not be eaten as it was bad. A neighbour reported that she had taken some food round, and had to remain with the wife while she ate it, otherwise the child would take it. Henry called the Guildford Medical

Officer, Dr Schollick who thought she might not last the night, being very ill and malnourished with bones nearly coming through the skin, and ordered her admission to the workhouse. The woman did recover in the workhouse, but with comments from authority figures that William's neglect amounted to '*slow manslaughter*' and '*starvation*', he was sentenced to one month with hard labour (and with comments that they regretted the law would not allow more).

- Some cases caused considerable public interest. One such was the elopement of Henry Nash (an ex-constable) and widow Rebecca Davenport, reported in the *Surrey Advertiser, County Times* of 2 May 1892 (and repeated 4 May), and caused a large crowd to be gathered in the High St prior to and during the sitting (remaining in the hope of seeing the prisoners taken away). Nash was charged with deserting his wife and 5 children, and Rebecca of deserting 3 of her children. Henry Portsmouth reported that the abandoned wife had applied for relief after the 4s 6d her husband had left her ran out, and he gave an order for the workhouse; and in the case of Rebecca's children (aged 10, 9 and 5), an 18-year-old sister had brought them to him, but he delayed their entry to the workhouse for a day as there was still sufficient food for the current day. The guilty couple were apprehended in Jersey under the name of Mr and Mrs Hill. Nash was sentenced to 2 months imprisonment with hard labour, and Rebecca to 1 month with hard labour.

The same publication, on 7 May, further reported the discussion at the Guildford Board of Guardians meeting, about Henry Portsmouth's actions relating to the case. In addition to expenses of pursuing the suspects, the police were applying for the '*usual reward for arrest of the persons against whom a warrant is by the Guardians*'; and the Board were unaware of having issued a warrant. Henry explained that he had issued it without waiting for the board to meet, as he was concerned that if he had not the couple would never have been caught. In the end he was praised for his swift action, and the board approved the reward.

Another task was to accompany people to and from the Brookwood Asylum. Those brought back had to be interviewed to ensure a satisfactory onward destination. One of these actually went on to commit murder shortly afterwards.

- In a report on the murder of Jessie Warwick and attempted murder of her mother, near Alton (reported in the *Surrey Gazette and Advertiser*, 12 July 1879), Henry Portsmouth's unfortunate involvement in his official capacity as relieving officer was mentioned. The perpetrator, James Lancelot Rock who had previously been a Hampshire police constable and a warden at Winchester gaol, had, 2 months prior to the offence been taken into custody at Guildford for travelling on the train without a ticket. The Police Surgeon pronounced him insane and recommended he was sent to Brookwood. Henry Portsmouth, as Relieving Officer, took him to the workhouse for a couple of days prior to his removal to Brookwood. On his release (the day before the murder) from Brookwood, and whilst he was with the Relieving Officer (he had no money so some was found for him) he produced a photo of his sweetheart (the deceased) from his pocket and said he was going to Alton using the money provided, to see her. He was allowed to go (presumably by Henry) having specified a destination, with the reported tragic result.

If the call to accompany a 'lunatic' came at short notice, he would still have to ensure his other commitments were covered, often by employing a temporary assistant. In November 1892 he sought permission from the Guardians to claim expenses of 5/- for using an assistant to pay the poor in the parishes of Worplesdon and Pirbright in just such a circumstance.⁴⁹

Another of the duties was to manage the procurement of coffins for burial of paupers. The clerk of the Guildford Sanitary Authority, Thomas Russell, placed an advertisement in the *West Surrey Times* on 28

April 1877 inviting tenders for supplying coffins and conducting funerals, and Henry Portsmouth was to supply information and Tender forms.

Later, in 1881, Henry Portsmouth (as relieving officer of Guildford) was called to provide information before the Board of Guardians regarding a query about who was responsible for the funeral expenses of those dying in the County Hospital whose friends were unable to bury them. He reported that his process was to first determine whether the person belonged to the Guildford Union, and if so, then satisfy himself there were no friends able to pay for the funeral, and finally give orders for the burial. If the person was from another Union, he would make contact with the relieving officer there, and would often be requested to procure a coffin for the deceased, with costs sent to the receiving parish. (*Surrey Advertiser*, 27 June 1881).

Presumably some issues with the treatment of dead bodies continued [maybe caused by delays in waiting for approval for each from the Guardians], as in 1893 the Guardians authorised relieving officers of the Union to be able to bury any dead bodies found within their district (at the expense of the poor rate), and those of any paupers in receipt of poor relief at the time of their death, if occurring between meetings of the Board. Vouchers for the expenses were to be submitted at the next Board of Guardians' meeting.⁵⁰

The role of relieving officer required a lot of local knowledge, of the comings and goings of people (in case they were not entitled to claim in the district), of who was related to whom, and where relatives who could be called upon to support a pauper might be, or have gone to. This must have been quite time consuming. A number of examples of the cases that Henry investigated were listed in the Board of Guardians minutes, and include:

- In June 1889, Henry was requested by the Board to find the husband of a pauper lunatic in Brookwood who was costing the parish money. They were also being charged by West Ham Union for the costs of the appeal against the Order of Adjudication for said pauper.⁵¹
- In October 1891, he investigated an order from Holborn Union for removal of Charles Frances to Guildford, and concluded that his place of legal settlement was Holy Trinity of the Guildford Union.⁵²
- In November 1891, he reported on the approval of the resettlement of Adam Sherlock from Wandsworth & Clapham to Woking, but was requesting details of the claim from Clapham of £50 for maintaining the lunatic until then, and why adjudication was not sought earlier.⁵³
- December 1891 brought the report from Henry that the father of a lunatic at Brookwood had been traced, and had offered to contribute to the cost of his son's maintenance.⁵⁴
- Henry informed the Guardians, in May 1893, that he had succeeded in recovering £20 from the estate of the late Emily Ellis, who was in receipt of relief when she died. He asked the Guardians to compensate him for services rendered! They referred the request to the finance committee and he was awarded £2.⁵⁵

He was also called upon to provide information on those applying to be on the voters list. For example, the *West Surrey Times* of 13 October 1877 reported that the Liberals were objecting to a Frederick Aylng being on the Voters List on the basis he was in receipt of parish relief, and Henry Portsmouth, as relieving officer, had to state whether this was the case or not.

Henry acted as executor/administrator of some estates, although it is not clear whether this was in a personal capacity or as a relieving officer. In 1887, The *West Surrey Times* gave notice, on 29 January and 5 February, that claims or demands against the estate of Mrs Louisa Howard, late of Sussex Cottage, Stoke

Road, Guildford, (who had died the previous April) should be made to Henry Portsmouth of Guildford, Relieving Officer, and William Daws of High Street, Battersea, Surrey, baker. They had also proved the will. And the *Surrey Advertiser, County Times* of 6 December 1879 reported that he and a Caroline Gill were executors in administration of the estate of a Mrs Jane Warner, who was burnt to death in a fire at the Cottage, Stoke-road, the conflagration being visible from North Street. In Jane Warner's entry in the Probate Search index, Henry's address was given as 40 Stoke Road, Guildford. The extensive report of the Coroner's Inquest in the *West Surrey Times* 22 November 1879 said that Henry had known the deceased well (she was housekeeper to the former owners), and had to identify her body (which he did by means of her false teeth!, as there were very little of the charred remains left). He also commented on possible circumstances which may have led to the fire. [As he was living in Stoke Road at these times, were these neighbours? (as both had a will, neither would seem to be paupers, but the way the first death was reported in the inquest, it seems likely Henry was executor in his official capacity. in the case of Louisa Howard, the other executor, William Daws was one of Henry's sureties, also attended Henry's funeral, so may have been a friend]

Relieving Officer work involved travelling around the district, so he was not always available when people needed to contact him. He had to chase around ensuring official orders (often from the medical officer) were applied for and then received before he could sanction relief, removals or other action. There were also some local regulations enacted by the Guildford Board of Guardians that caused difficulty and confusion in the execution of his duties. This all resulted in disagreements with other officials, delays to relief, and complaints being made.

[**Henry's 'Feud' with Dr Taylor \(Medical Officer\) and other complaints**](#)

Many of the complaints arose from Dr Taylor, the medical officer. It seems Henry was not the first to be the subject of his displeasure, as the *Epsom Journal* of 22 June 1874 had reported '*unpleasantness has existed in the relations of Relieving officer Potter and the medical officer (Mr Taylor) for a considerable time. Mr Potter has now been laid up for some time, and Mr Higgins has been appointed as a substitute – Mr Taylor and Higgins do not seem to get along better than Potter did*'.

The *Epsom Journal* of 24 September 1878 carried two reports of Henry Portsmouth being questioned about his actions. The first was the sad case of John Jackson, age 13, of Castle St, Guildford, who died of Scarlatina, after treatment was delayed, essentially by red tape. The medical officer, Dr Taylor, reported that although Beef tea and wine were ordered at 10:30am (to be provided by the relieving officer), they were not obtained until 6:30pm, by which time it was too late. Henry provided a written response (giving an address of Markenfield Rd, Guildford), that in fact the mother had come to him the day before the child's death asking for a parish order as Dr Taylor would not see the boy without one. Henry ascertained that she was able and willing to pay, so did not need parish relief, and suggested she get another doctor, but Mr Sells son would not come as Dr Taylor had refused to go, and Mr Schollick was attending another case. After this Henry issued the order (with proviso that she should repay the Guardians), but by the time the certificate for nutrition (for 2lbs beef and 1½pts wine) was issued the next day he had left home to perform duties in Worplesdon and Pirbright, returning home at 5pm. Once the medical certificate arrived at 5:45pm (previous attempts at delivery had found him not in) he fulfilled it immediately.

The second reported the results of a request for an inquiry by the Local Government Board into the conduct of the relieving officer for the first district, Guildford, Mr H Portsmouth, regarding the case of alleged death by neglect of Charles Barker. The full story, detailed in the *Surrey Advertiser and County Times*, 17 August 1878, described how Charles had been diagnosed as seriously ill and delirious, with an inflamed lung, and a message was sent to obtain an order for the workhouse infirmary, but as Henry was

out on duties, and delivering a patient to Brookwood, the message was left with his wife, and Charles condition was described merely as *delirium tremens* (ie: worse for wear with drink). While waiting for the workhouse order, Charles had escaped, to be subsequently detained by the police and taken to the police station. Dr Taylor, the medical officer, had attended him there and written a note for Henry again requesting the infirmary order, and specified Charles should be transported in a 'covered conveyance' (but this detail was only added on the back of the note. When Henry finally received this note, quite late at night, he had walked him from the police station to the workhouse (as no conveyance was available, and the duty police officer deemed Charles able to walk), where he subsequently died of pneumonia several days later. It was alleged the exertion of walking contributed to his demise. The Guardians maintained that their officers were entirely blameless, but were not so sure if Henry had acted correctly, and thought he should have detected the pneumonia although this had never been mentioned to him. There was also an intimation, from one of the witnesses, of some animosity towards Henry from Dr Taylor, who reportedly, pressed for the Inquiry and wanted him '*removed from his situation*'. The Board found insufficient grounds for an Inquiry by them.

The *Surrey Gazette and West Surrey Times* of 14 December 1878 carried a lengthy report of '*The Treatment of the Sick Poor – Important Poor Law Inquiry*' involving Medical Officer, Mr H Taylor and Relieving Officer Henry Portsmouth, with complaints of withdrawal of nutrition from sick persons receiving outdoor relief, to the detriment of their health. The case of a Mrs Derritt, who had tuberculosis, was examined at great length, but seemed to hinge round a resolution of the Guardians in 1871 that medical relief should only continue for 14 days, unless the medical officer certified that the person was unfit to be sent to the Workhouse. If so certified further orders for meat and/or milk could be given. When the 14 days of medical relief expired (and there being no certificate) Henry felt bound by the Guardians' resolution not to renew the order for medical relief, but to bring the case before the next meeting of the Board of Guardians (which could be over a week away), although in Mrs Derritt's case he had given her a grace week, based on a neighbour saying she was unfit to be sent to the workhouse. By turn, Mr Taylor said that he did not think he needed to complete the certificates that Henry was requesting, that it was just a formality, and that Henry should be able to send people to the workhouse without a certificate in extremis. Also, although Mr Taylor had approved milk rations, orders for the milk had not been issued as Mrs Derritt was unable to go to the Union to collect it. Henry said if he had been made aware of this he would have made arrangements for the milk collection himself. Other cases of a similar nature throughout the past couple of years were cited, where nourishment was not approved in time for it to be of use, or where medical attendance ceased after 2 weeks, and both Henry and Mr Taylor said they were simply carrying out the 'resolution of the Board'. Mr Taylor had even queried the Board as to whether the 14-day limit applied just to the 'extras' (meat/milk) or to his attendance as well, although he felt that without the extra nutrition there was not much point in his attendance. He thought the purpose of the resolution was to drive persons into the Workhouse.

The British Medical Journal summarised the essence of the Inquiry '*the board of guardians in 1871 adopted the following resolution.... That no medical relief can be given by the relieving officer out of the house for more than a fortnight, unless a certificate be given from the medical officer to the effect that the patient cannot be removed.... The majority [of district medical officers] accepted it without reservation; not so Mr Taylor. During the 7 years which have elapsed since its adoption, he has repeatedly. In the column of the medical relief book devoted to observations, drawn the attention of the guardians to the fact that, in accordance with their resolution, he had ceased to attend the case, notably as the relieving officer, in obedience to his instructions, had declined to carry out his recommendation for medical extras'*'. The article went on to say that the guardians have apparently taken little notice until recently when Mr

Taylor had '*made himself obnoxious to certain of the guardians*'.⁵⁶

Bloor's paper on the History of General Practice⁵⁷ explains that it was within the doctor's power to order 'extras', such as special diets, meat, beer, porter – according to a table prescribing which conditions merited such items (which did not include malnutrition, but for which doctors were often guilty of making order), but that Boards of Guardians were very cost conscious, and this led to constant friction. The Poor Law Board's advice that doctors should be free to order what they thought necessary had no force in law, as the Guardians controlled the money.

The same case, reported in the Epsom *Local Journal*, 17 December 1878, and *West Surrey Times*, 21 December 1878, indicated the 1871 resolution had been passed by the Guildford Board of Guardians to reduce costs – citing that between March 1870 and October 1871 the Medical Officer had ordered 'stimulants and nourishments' in 736 out of 969 cases. The cost of stimulants at Michaelmas 1871 was over £229, while at Michaelmas 1875 it was only around £65. They thought it did not affect the sick, as the '*death rate of the Union was the lowest in the Kingdom*'. However, medical officers and guardians from Worplesdon, Godalming, Woking and Shere thought the resolution had had a harmful effect. The Chairman of the Board, Francis Scott, stated it was not the intention to deprive nutriments to those who needed them, even if not admitted to the House, and that the Medical Officer should do as he saw fit, leaving the responsibility of enacting the resolution to the relieving officer; and that the other seven medical officers in the district had no problems with this, just Mr Taylor!

A report from the Inquiry was submitted to the Local Government Board, and the *West Surrey Times*, 29 March 1879, reported that the verdict returned absolved Henry from wrongdoing, whilst criticising Mr Taylor, but stating that the 1871 Resolution verged on illegality, was subject to misinterpretation, and should be rescinded immediately.

Again in 1888, it seems Dr H S Taylor, surgeon had complained to the Local Government Board about the conduct of Henry Portsmouth, relieving officer, in the case of persons reported to be insane and the system which allowed them to be seen by medical men other than those who had previously attended them. Specifically, this related to a married woman of Stoughton, who Dr Taylor and his partner (Dr Morshead) had reported to the relieving officer, but Henry had not visited her for some days. The Board had said he had acted '*within his rights*' but required him to provide an account of his actions (*West Surrey Times*, 21 April 1888, *Surrey Advertiser*, 23 April 1888). It seems he had not received Dr Taylor's letter until late that Wednesday evening, and was already fully occupied with work the next morning. He was already familiar with this case, and did not deal with it until the following day, when he took pains to find a magistrate (Major Tredcroft) who would be able to visit her. As it was not deemed urgent, they arranged to visit on Monday, although Henry did check on the woman on Saturday. It was the magistrate who had the power to select the medical person to attend (not the relieving officer, as stated by Dr Taylor in his complaint), and Major Tredcroft had chosen Dr Schollick. They had not deemed the woman needed to be admitted to an asylum, although she had since been sent to Brookwood. Henry presented his '*exhaustive report*' at the next meeting of the Board of Guardians in May 1888. They recommended it be sent to the Local Government Board, and recorded an opinion that Henry Portsmouth has acted throughout in strict accordance with the law (*West Surrey Times*, 11 May 1888).

The *Surrey Advertiser*, *County Times* of 5 Oct 1891 reported the circumstances of the Local Government Board Inquiry at the Guildford Workhouse examining complaints made by Dr. Taylor, medical officer of the Guildford Union, about orders given by Henry Portsmouth as the Guildford Union Relieving Officer for the admission of certain persons to the workhouse. The concern was that Henry had not satisfied himself

as to the condition of the persons, and whether they were in a fit state to be removed to the house. The Guardians had recommended that Dr Taylor's complaint and Henry Portsmouth's explanation of what was described as an '*Out Relief Scandal*' be sent to the Board back in April (*Epsom Journal, 7 April 1891*).

Two examples were cited:

- The first was reported by nurse, Ann Padwick, who had been nursing an Ann Courtenage at home in South Street, Guildford in November 1890. She had requested that the children be admitted to the workhouse to provide some relief to the mother, who was ill, but Henry Portsmouth had issued an order for the whole family saying the children could not go without the mother. This despite the mother saying she would '*rather die in the gutter than go to the house*'. Mrs Padwick said that Henry did not ask any questions about Ann Courtenage's condition, although in her opinion she was too ill to be removed. Other witnesses were Mrs Courtenage's sister, and Dr. Taylor. Henry gave a different version of what he had been asked for saying '*he gave all he was asked for and had no reason to believe the woman was too ill to go to the house*' and '*it was his duty to visit as soon as possible after an application for relief, he did not consider it his duty to visit after an order for the house had been given, as he expected them to avail themselves of the order*'.
- The other case related to the 3-year-old child, Edith Cassell, daughter of Ellen Etherington (formerly Cassell), who died. Ellen asked Henry Portsmouth for an order for the (parish) to attend, but on questioning told him that a doctor (Dr Gabb) had already seen the child. She reported that Henry had said the child's father must pay for the doctor, but he could give her an order for the [work]house. Henry reported that she did not tell him the child might be dead before she got back (it died 3 days later), or that Dr Gabb would not come again, so he thought a doctor was already in attendance, and only offered the house order on that basis.

The inquiry closed, and the Local Government Board sent their findings to Henry, and also a copy to the Guardians, which found him to have been remiss in his duties: '*they are of the opinion that in both of the cases in question you acted improperly, and they fear that in the case of Ann Courtenage your neglect of duty was attended with results that are much to be regretted..... it was your duty, in accordance with the Article 215 of the General Consolidated Order, forthwith upon receiving the applications for relief in these cases, to have examined into the circumstances of the cases by visiting the houses of the applicants. The provisions of the article referred to apply in cases where an application is made for an order for admission into the Workhouse, as much as in cases where the application is for out-relief, whether medical or other; and in no case would you be justified in giving an order for admission into the Workhouse without satisfying yourself that those for whom the order is granted are in a state to bear removal. The Board request that in future you will carefully observe the provisions of the above-mentioned Regulation, and they trust you will give no further cause for complaint as to the manner in which you discharge your duties*'. (*Surrey Advertiser, 21 November 1891*).

It seems Henry Portsmouth did not waste an opportunity to get back at Mr H S Taylor, as in January 1892 he sent a letter to both the Board of Guardians and the Local Government Board regarding Mr Taylor's vaccination register, saying that the register had been scarcely touched by Taylor during the past year (the vaccinations being performed by Taylor's partner, who also completed the register entries), yet Taylor took all the fees. The Guardians thought it '*a great pity Mr Portsmouth should have written to the Local Government Board. IF he had any complaint to make he should have written to that Board [the Guardians]. It was a great pity to be continually opening up an old sore*'. The Local Government Board

Inspector had found that Mr Taylor was old and deaf, needing an ear trumpet to hear what was said to him, that he was '*nearly past work*'. The Guardians discussed whether Mr Taylor should continue in the post, but some felt that they should not get rid of him just because of Mr Portsmouth, and that since the Inspector's report, Mr Taylor had attended to duties himself (*Surrey Advertiser*, 30 January 1892).

However, Mr Taylor must have recognised his difficulties, as in March 1892, he requested the Guardians appoint his partner, Mr E A Morshead, as Deputy Vaccination Officer for his district. The Guardians declined, and he was obliged at the next meeting to ask them what their plans were for providing the public vaccinations due in April if he continued to be ill. They decided to wait to see if he got better! But by early April they agreed to a substitute to perform the task.⁵⁸

An unrelated complaint was received by the Guardians later in 1892, this time accusing Henry Portsmouth, relieving officer of neglect of duty and insolence. The complaint, issued by the Vicar of Pirbright, the overseer there, and the landlord of the pub, concerned the burial of a James Alderton who had been accidentally killed in Pirbright on Saturday 10 December. The expectation was that the body would be buried immediately following the Inquest the following Wednesday, but this was not possible because there was no coffin, the latter not arriving until Friday. The pub landlord was aggrieved because the body had laid in his premises all week. The overseer, having determined the man was destitute had written to Henry on the Tuesday notifying him of the requirement for a coffin, and when none was there on Wednesday wired Henry saying '*Why have you not done your duty...*', which prompted a rather 'cheeky' response from Henry (hence the charge of insolence). Henry, in fact, had visited Pirbright on the Monday and made it known that if no relatives came forward to take responsibility for the burial, that after the inquest the Coroner's warrant should be forwarded to him for procurement of the coffin. He heard no more until the overseer's telegram arrived, and when he returned to Pirbright on Thursday he found that the overseer had actually prevented the constable from sending the warrant, and was still in possession of it. Once Henry obtained the required document he arranged for the coffin, thus allowing the burial on Friday. The Guardians unanimously found the overseer to be at fault, although Colonel Tredcroft thought that Henry's response to the telegram was inappropriate for a person in public office (*Surrey Advertiser*, 31 December 1892). The Vicar of Pirbright subsequently wrote to the Guardians to thank them for their thorough inquiry, and was happy with the actions Henry Portsmouth had taken. He did suggest that instructions should be provided to overseers as to their duties, as there was such high turnover in this role (*West Surrey Times*, 14 January 1893). The overseer had also requested to appear before the Guardians, but they wanted to put the matter to rest, so he wrote a letter to the paper

essentially refuting everything Henry had testified, and saying that the Vicar was the only person in the parish who thought the relieving officer was not at fault! (*Surrey Advertiser*, 21 January 1893).

As an Inspector of Nuisances

The Inspector of Nuisances was like an early environmental health inspector, monitoring for and working to alleviate conditions likely to cause harm to public health, reporting to the local authority and district Medical Officer of Health.⁵⁹ From 1881 the Local Government Board insisted that a separate Inspector of Nuisances was appointed for the whole area (IofN duties were until then divided between the 4 relieving officers). Guildford was one of the later unions to remove the duties from the relieving officer, and until that date Henry was responsible for performing those duties in the part of his district covered by his relieving area. The role of the Inspector of Nuisances is described further in a separate document (*Role of Inspector of Nuisances.docx*), but a summary of the sanitary work achieved by Mr Rees who was the Inspector in 1883 (*West Surrey Times*, 10 May 1883) gave a nice summary of the work and by implication showed the type of work that Henry Portsmouth could have been involved within his part of the district. It seems that not as many 'Nuisance' cases progressed to court as relief or vaccination cases, and thus less was recorded of Henry's activities in that capacity.

While Henry was performing the role he was recorded dealing with a number of unfit housing drainage and sewage, and unfit foodstuff cases. There did also seem to be overlap with Relief Officer duties:

- September 1874, before the County Petty Sessions, in his capacity of Inspector of Nuisances for Woking district of the Rural Sanitary Authority (although he had recently been appointed to the Guildford district), testifying that the premises occupied by labourer, James Birchett and his wife and 6 children, in St John's, Woking, were unfit for human habitation, being little more than a mud hut! with no flooring, no privy, no water supply; one window was covered with a sack, and another had rags stuffed in it. As a result, he had had to remove the family to the workhouse (*Epsom Journal*, 8 September 1874). It was ruled the owner of the property should make it good.
- West Surrey Times*, 21 July 1877, as giving evidence at the County Court regarding some ditches he had inspected in February 1876 (in

SANITARY WORK.	
At the monthly meeting of the Guildford Rural Sanitary Authority, on Saturday, Mr. T. Rees, the Inspector of Nuisances, presented a return of work done, inspections made, &c., during the year 1883. The following figures were found in his	
STATISTICAL REPORT.	
Number of premises and places visited and inspected under section 92 of the Public Health Act, 1875, and the Public Health (Water Act), 1878	541
Nuisances discovered and reported to the Rural Sanitary Authority, the Farcombe, Charterhouse, and Crown Pits Committees	429
Notices served for the abatement of nuisances (by order of the Rural Sanitary Authority and the above Committees)	152
Nuisances abated after notices served, and verbal notice given	387
Nuisances in course of abatement, and in which the time of the notices have been extended at the request of owners and others	28
Nuisances unattended to	14
Houses visited by the Inspector of Nuisances, for infectious diseases	87
In the particulars and classification of the nuisances, and of water samples taken and analysed, we find the number of houses damp, dirty, or otherwise in such a state as to be a nuisance, or injurious to health, which were visited was 57; number of houses with defective roof, and that are dilapidated, and need speedy repairs, or are dangerous as structures or unfit for human habitation, section 97 of the Public Health Act, 1875, 51; number of houses supplied with water, samples of which have been taken by the Inspector, and analysed, 51 by Dr. Smith and 72 by Dr. Jacob (and some of which were found bad, suspicious, and doubtful), 128.	
Under six other heads, there were visited 320 other houses and premises in want of proper drainage, and with unventilated drains, or otherwise in an unsatisfactory condition.	
PARTICULARS OF WORK.	
Number of houses that have been whitewashed, dampness remedied, and otherwise made clean and habitable	49
Number of houses that have been closed as dilapidated, or have been repaired, or are now undergoing repair	38
Number of houses with improved water supply, also including number of urinals and privies altered, and proper cesspits provided, or repaired, or converted into earth closets, and cut off from any connection with ditches, streams and watercourses, and foul pools of sewage and refuse waters, ditches, gutters, pig styes and poultry pens cleared, and foul accumulations removed	267
Number of new drains laid, and dumbwells, cesspools, or other sewage receptacles made, and sinks severed by gratings and traps from direct connections with sewage drains and cesspools, and other drains diverted from polluting streams and watercourses	159
Number of premises from which animals and poultry (improperly kept) have been removed	9
Number of houses that have abated overcrowding	5
Number of houses and contents that have been disinfected, under section 120, by owners and occupiers	9
Number of houses and contents that have been disinfected by the Inspector of Nuisances 78, being one after small pox, 48 after scarlet fever, 19 after diphtheria, 9 after typhoid, and 1 after typhus	78
Number of cases in which legal proceedings have been taken	8

his capacity of Inspector of Nuisances) in Gomshall Marsh, regarding a neighbours' dispute on drainage and sewage.

- the *Epsom Journal*, 23 September 1879, requesting advisement from the Rural Sanitary Authority regarding work he had requested owners of properties at Pitch Place, Worplesdon, to perform on their properties, which had been completely disregarded. It seems these owners had also been absent from a Vestry meeting to discuss drainage in the area. Some members of the Authority thought that drainage should not be done in a piecemeal fashion, and that a defined system was required to achieve a sanitary effect, and despite the Chairman stating that there was nothing wrong with the old earth closet system [!!], it was decided to set up a committee to further review the offending properties.
- further reports in 1879 (e.g. *West Surrey Times*, 25 October 1879 *Epsom Journal*, 21 October 1879) regarding sewage from Stoughton Barracks contaminating Britton's Pond (despite the War Office saying the drainage defect had been corrected). Henry commented that '*the stench was something awful*', and also attributed the recent death from diphtheria of a boy living nearby to this pollution.
- the *West Surrey Times*, 22 May 1880, as Sanitary Inspector, before the Board of Guardians, reporting on steps being taken to remedy '*foul and deficient cesspools*' in Gravatt's Lane, Worplesdon, which had caused several cases of typhoid.
- 1880 for seizing diseased and decomposing sheep from a slaughter-house in Woodbridge Hill, which he suspected were destined for human consumption (*Epsom Journal*, 10 February 1880).
- In May 1880 he was asked to produce a detailed written report on a case of typhoid at a cottage in Worplesdon, arising from bad drainage, which was taking time to remedy due to the type of subsoil (*Surrey Advertiser*, 22 May 1880).
- In August 1880, Henry (still listed in the press as Rural Sanitary Inspector), appeared at the County Bench, listed as Rural Sanitary Inspector, to give evidence against Edward Harbord, a butcher of Stoughton Terrace, accused of selling unsound meat. Henry testified he had visited the premises with Mr Pugh (Inspector of Nuisances, shortly before his sudden death), found a cow carcass, in 17 parts, spread all around the premises, all in an unfit state, and smelling bad. The meat had been sold to a man in Chertsey, supposedly intended as cat food, but the court dismissed this argument as meat is not cut into joints for cat meat. They seized the meat and the Medical Officer of Health, Joseph Smith, declared it diseased and unfit for human consumption. It was ordered to be buried at once (*Surrey Advertiser*, 29 August 1881, *Epsom Journal*, 30 August 1881).
- Similarly, the experiences of dealing with households harbouring infectious diseases stood him in good stead for assisting the subsequent Inspector of Nuisances, as in the case reported in the *Surrey Advertiser*, 27 October 1883. His actions in conjunction with the then Inspector of Nuisances, Mr Rees, helped prevent an outbreak of scarlet fever. Henry became aware of a family in a small cottage in Worplesdon, where several members had scarlet fever, but the children's grandmother had spent 48 hours in the diseased household nursing the family, washing the clothes and tidying the house. Henry notified Mr Rees, and together they tracked the grandmother and her husband to a public house at Stoughton amongst a crowd of customers. Henry called them out and forbade them to re-enter. He found the lady took in washing from '*respectable families*', so he tracked these customers down, told them not to send more clothes, and those clothes she had already received were sent to the workhouse for disinfection. The Rural Sanitary authority commended the officers for their prompt action which prevented the wider spread of the disease.

As a Vaccination Officer....

The Vaccination Act of 1871 made it mandatory that Poor Law Authorities (who were already responsible for delivering smallpox vaccinations) should appoint vaccination officers to enforce vaccination. The

Vaccination Officer was required to implement the provisions of the Vaccination Acts of 1867 and 1871, and his duties are further described in a separate document (Role of Relieving Officer Vaccination Officer.docx). Prior to this last Act, there were often people in the role of vaccination officers, but were they not being paid, thus the uptake of vaccinations was fairly patchy. Indeed, the Clerk of the Board of Guardians (R Thorne Thorne MB) wrote a letter in May 1871 complaining of this, and suggesting that the Board '*reconsider the method of payment to the vaccination officers. If inducements were held out to them to make systematic enquiry into defaults as they arise...*' and continued to also suggest a small fee of 6d per vaccination registered (*West Surrey Times*, 13 May 1871). Interestingly, the same article also commented that the lower population levels of Woking and St Johns rendered frequent vaccination sessions impractical as there were insufficient attendees to successfully operate the arm-to-arm inoculation method, and therefore recommended vaccination sessions every 6 months (which would have been counter the new Act's stipulation that every infant should be vaccinated within 3 months of birth). The 1871 Act became law from the start of 1872.

Probably as the roles were fairly complementary the Vaccination Officer role was considered integral with that of Relieving Officer, and often were also combined with the role of Registrar of Births and Deaths. The value of prompt information from the Registrar could be why Henry applied to become one, when a vacancy arose in Guildford in 1877.

Although the advertisement for Woking Relieving Officer in 1871 did not mention the role of vaccination officer, it must have been included or added shortly thereafter as his name was listed against the Vaccination Returns of 1873, when Mr H Portsmouth, Relieving Officer for the Woking district reported that out of 90 births, 80 were successfully vaccinated 6 died and 4 were removed (*West Surrey Times* of 22 August 1874).

Henry was thus working as a vaccination officer from the outset of it becoming a compulsory position within the authority, and sometimes the payments were reported in the press. For instance, in 1874 in the Woking and Merrow districts, a rate of 6d per vaccination, and 2s 6d per conviction was mentioned (*West Surrey Times*, 4 April 1874), and in 1875, following a Local Government Board complaint that the Guildford vaccination districts were not arranged per '*the Statute*' thus making it difficult to tabulate the vaccination returns, it was decided to move the parishes of Pirbright and Worplesdon from the Guildford district to the Woking district, and this would (to the apparent amusement of the Guardians) '*increase the emoluments of Mr Higgins £2 10s per year, and reduce those of Mr Portsmouth, the Guildford district officer, in a like amount (Laughter)*' (*West Surrey Times*, 6 March 1875). Also, as previously cited, Henry Portsmouth was receiving £20 p.a. for vaccination fees in 1889; and when his position was advertised in 1895, a payment of 1s was offered per successful vaccination.

Union Expense Reports included the costs of vaccinations. The *Surrey Advertiser and County Times* of 18 October 1884 reported the half-year costs for vaccination up until Lady Day 1884 were £68 10s 4d.

The Vaccination Officer had to ensure that all children received all their vaccinations. When births were registered, a certificate was given to the parents, which had to be returned signed by a doctor once the child had been vaccinated. The vaccination officers compared the certificates received with the lists of births and infant deaths supplied by the Registrar, and then chase up the parents that did not comply.

FORM M									
<i>Vaccination Officer's Report</i>									
UNION.					Vaccination Officer.				
1	Consecutive Number in this Book								
2	Birth Registration District								
3	No. on Birth Register								
4	Name of Child								
5	Date of Birth								
6	Address of Parent								
7	Date or Dates of Personal Inquiries								
8	Date of Certificate								
9	By whom given								
10	Cause for which it was Postponed								
11	Date to which Postponed								
12	Case not Found or Parent Removed out of District, and where								
13	Date of Notice to Public Vaccinator to visit Home of Child								
14	Case duly accounted for, and entered in 'Vaccination Register.'								
15	Date of Notice sent in case of Default								
16	Note of any Proceedings taken								
17	REMARKS								

VACCINATION OFFICER'S REPORT: DANBY PALMER FRY, ARTHUR FREDERICK VULLIAMY, FRY'S LAWS OF VACCINATION; PUB: KNIGHT, 1899; [HTTPS://WWW.GOOGLE.CO.UK/BOOKS/EDITION/FRY_S LAWS_OF_VACCINATION/GZEAAAAAYAAJ?HL=EN](https://www.google.co.uk/books/edition/Fry_s_Laws_of_Vaccination/GZEAAAAAYAAJ?hl=en)

They also had to be aware enough of the goings on in their district to notice unregistered births, and families with infants moving in to the area, and check their vaccination status. The vaccination officers were required to provide twice yearly reports on the vaccination numbers vs births, and these were then reported at meetings of the Board of Guardians. A report of the vaccination return summary for the Guildford Union stated that in 1881 of 1257 births registered, 1169 were successfully vaccinated, and in the first 6 months of 1882, 653 births were recorded and 599 successfully vaccinated (*West Surrey Times*, 24 February 1883).

People gave various excuses for defaulting, but generally a fine was incurred. If the fine was not paid, the court was petitioned for a Distress Warrant, which allowed possessions to be seized to the value of the fine.

The Vaccination Act allowed for the Guardians to give authority to the vaccination officer to prosecute offenders (and it appears the process was that the officer reported the names of the defaulters to the Guardians, who then gave instruction to the vaccination officer to prosecute (*West Surrey Times*, 17 September 1897). The officer also appeared in court to provide evidence, and thereafter needed to monitor whether or not fines were paid and the untreated children vaccinated. Further visits to court

were required to request Distress Warrants (for which approval of the Guardians also needed to be sought).

APPENDIX 2 – HENRY PORTSMOUTH AS VACCINATION OFFICER IN THE PRESS lists some examples that Henry was involved with. The case of William James Smith (described therein,) illustrates some of the extra work involved. Having pursued Smith regarding the non-vaccination of his child it appears Henry obtained a Distress Warrant when perhaps he had not been given permission. Smith took this to the Guildford District Anti-Compulsory Vaccination Society, and Mr H J Piggot of the said Society complained to the Guardians. As a result, all vaccination officers in the district were asked to report their default cases, the fines not paid, and the distress warrants issued. It was found that no special instructions had been given to Mr Portsmouth to proceed with the case against Mr Smith.⁶⁰ (Ironically, later in the year, Henry issued a Distress Warrant against H J Piggott for an unpaid fine under the Vaccination Act).⁶¹

This matter also led to a query into a point of law relating to the issuing of Distress Warrants. Under Section 29 of the Vaccination Act (1867)⁶² only one penalty could be inflicted, and in a Resolution made by the Guardians in November 1889, they agreed that there should be only one summons/conviction under this rule, and if there was no compliance, only one conviction under Section 31 of the Act. They deemed it '*not expedient*' to repeat proceedings.⁶³ This was not rescinded until 9 July 1892. Thus, in 1891 the Clerk was asked to investigate whether the issue of a Distress Warrant could be considered a repetition of the proceedings under Section 31 of the Vaccination Act (as referred to in the November 1889 resolution). The Clerk's response was that in his opinion it was the duty of the vaccination officers to apply for the distress warrants if fines were not paid, and the enforcement of the distress warrant was NOT a repetition of proceedings under Section 31.⁶⁴

This would all have required time and effort, particularly as it seemed a number of parents were repeat offenders, and their cases could stretch over long periods of time (especially when they were anti-vaccinationists, and often stated they were awaiting the outcome of a Royal Commission which was examining whether people could opt out on moral grounds), particularly towards the end of the 1880s and the early 1890s. Indeed, in October 1891, in response to a letter received from the Guildford District Anti-Compulsory Vaccination Society protesting the prosecution of conscientious objectors whilst the subject was under consideration by the Royal Commission, Henry was asked by the Guardians to provide them with a full report on the proceedings taken by him for recovery of penalties under the Vaccination Acts.⁶⁵

Obviously chasing every parent who did not vaccinate their children with a view to prosecution, and then chasing those who refused to pay the fines, obtaining distress warrants etc. was a lot of work, and with people waiting for the outcome of the Royal Commission into vaccination, many Boards of Guardians were ceasing to pursue prosecutions, but not in Guildford - a motion to rescind the order to prosecute conscientious objectors was defeated in January 1891, and again in June 1892.⁶⁶ Those cases that did reach court were often unsuccessful. The Royal Commission findings were published in 1896, recommending that penalties for not vaccinating were abolished, but as late as 1897 the Guildford Guardians were still insisting on pursuing one conviction under each of Section 29 and 31 of the Vaccination Act (as reported in the *Surrey Times* of 17 September 1897). There were about 100 defaulters in Guildford at that time. A Vaccination Act in 1898 included a clause allowing for conscientious objection. However, this was too late for Henry as he had died several years earlier.

As Schools Attendance and Inquiry Officer

A brief history of education during the latter half of the 19th century, outlining when education became compulsory and when charges for elementary education ceased, together with an outline of the duties of the school inquiry/attendance officer are found [in a separate document \(Role of School Attendance Officer.docx\)](#).

Following the Elementary Education Act of 1876, the *Surrey Advertiser* (12 August 1876) reported a Town Council discussion regarding a notice received from the Education Department. This said that unless the Council could supply an additional 96 school places within the following 6 months, then they would need to form a School Board. The Council considered a School Board would be '*a most expensive luxury*' and favoured continuing with the current voluntary arrangement which they felt worked well. However, subsequent discussion showed that at least two schools they thought provided places had closed (the subterranean school at the Wesleyan Chapel in North Street, and another school by the Catholic Chapel), and one councillor further added that their great difficulty was '*the number of children who did not attend any school in which respect he thought Guildford showed worse than any other town that he knew of, as he would he would undertake to say that a dozen youngsters might be found in nearly any backstreet, playing about at any hour of the day*', and that if steps were not taken to enforce attendance, the government would certainly implement a School Board.

By the following year there was an elected School Board, and a School Attendance Committee was in place. The numbers of children of school-going age in the Union (as compiled by the chairman from the last census) amounted to about 1/6 of the population (*West Surrey Times*, 16 June 1877).

<p>of such cases." He (the Chairman) would read, for the information of the Conference, a table of statistics he had caused to be prepared. The first column of figures showed the population of each place in the Union, as taken at the last census; the second gave the estimated number of children (one-sixth of the population) of a school-going age; and the third represented the number of children on the school books of each parish, viz. :—</p>				
Pirbright	768	128	113	
Worplesdon	1771	295	231	
Compton	484	80	62	
Albury	1164	194	217	
Shere	1660	276	274	
<p>(not including Infant School).</p>				
East Clandon	300	50	44	
West	312	52	44	
East Horsley	262	47	38	
West	330	55	89	
Merrow	453	75	72	
Send	881	146	130	
Ripley	881	146	237	
Ockham	680	113	84	
Wisley	221	36	35	

The *West Surrey Times* of 21 July 1877 also carried an article which gave information as to the numbers attending some of the voluntary schools, further highlighting the numbers of children living in the area. Reporting on Sunday School outings, it listed 250 children of the Tagley Sunday School, plus around 50 children from the Workhouse, marching in procession to Wonersh for gun and games, tea and cake. A further 150 children of the Wesleyan Sunday Schools were welcomed to the grounds of Merrow Grange, for sports etc. Parents and spectators also attended the latter. In addition, around 400 children from the National Schools of Holy Trinity went to "Fairyland" on the Downs. The youngest children for the Merrow and Downs outings were taken in vans lent by Guildford tradesmen.

In June 1877 the Guildford School Attendance Committee, together with the Parochial Education Committees of the Guildford Union held a Conference and voted to appoint a paid Attendance Officer, although it was urged that the relieving officer should not discharge this duty. Neither did the clergy want the responsibility with comments saying they '*had already sufficient unpleasant duties to perform*' and that parochial work would not allow for making of house-to-house enquiry as to attendance of children at school, especially as some parishes (like Worplesdon) were spread over a large area. They also described it as a '*necessary but thankless task*' and that there had been scanty gratitude for their exertions in the interests of education up to that point! (*Epsom Journal*, 12 June 1877, *Surrey Advertiser*, 16 June 1877). At this time there was no consensus as to whether the Attendance and Inquiry roles should be combined. However, the opinions of this conference could only be put as a recommendation to the School Attendance Committee, and was not binding.

The Committee did not think that the Attendance Officer should act as the Inquiry Officer, but it later was voted that the duty of Inquiry Officer should be taken on by relieving officers, as the fees for children whose families could not afford to pay had to be paid from parish relief, *Epsom Journal*, 3 July 1877. It seems this had been happening for a while, as at a Conference of Surrey Poor Law Guardians and Officers in 1871 (*Surrey Advertiser*, 25 November 1871), a Rev G. R. Portal reported that Guildford Union was doing this, per Denison's Act. Relieving Officers were already being asked to check the school attendance of paupers receiving out-relief (*West Surrey Times*, 10 June 1871), and so were thought to be best placed to enquire as to the other 'poor's' ability to pay school fees.

The decision was made to assign Inquiry Officer duties to the relieving officers for a trial period of 3 months, at a rate of 25s per quarter (noting that an adjacent union only paid £1 for the same) (*West Surrey Times*, 7 July 1877).

However, not everyone was happy with this decision and at the meeting of the Guardians a couple of weeks later, letters were read from Henry Portsmouth and Mr Norris, relieving officers for Guildford and Goadalming, declining to accept the duties of Inquiry Officer. Henry, having compared the rate with other districts, stated the proposed salary was '*altogether inadequate*'. The Guardians thought that Portsmouth and Norris had misunderstood the nature of the duties and workload it entailed and (having voted against an amendment to increase the salary to £10) said that the salary would be reviewed at the end of the 3 months if the duties exceeded the expectations of the Board (*West Surrey Times* 21 July 1877). In September 1877, at a meeting of the Board of Guardians, the Local Government Board was reported as approving the '*appointment of Messrs. Fry, Norris and Higgins, Inspectors of Nuisances, to the Enquiry Officerships of their various districts, at salaries of £5 per annum each*'. Henry Portsmouth should have been among these first School Inquiry officers appointed but he '*declined absolutely to do so*' and had, by the beginning of August sent a letter of resignation from the Inquiry Officer position, on the grounds that he was: fully occupied with his role as Inspector of Nuisances, that the remuneration being offered to him for this additional role was not comparable with that received by the Albury & Godalming, and Woking officers (Mr Higgins and Mr Fry) who were paid at a rate of £1 5s and 14s 3½d respectively per 1000 of the population, whereas he was only being offered 7s 8½d, and therefore the salary insufficient. As a result, the Inquiry Officer responsibilities for his area were divided between the borough and one of the aforementioned officers (*West Surrey Times* 4 August and 1 September 1877).

As predicted in the earlier discussions about school attendance officers, the duties could be onerous, and in February 1878, Mr Underwood, the Woking school attendance officer, resigned '*owing to the impossibility of his carrying out the work thoroughly at the present salary in a parish so extensive*'. He offered to continue if they increased the salary to £30, in which case he would give up his office as tax

collector. The School Board decided to accept the resignation (*Surrey Advertiser*, 16 February 1878), but it took a considerable time to fill the position.

However, in March 1879 (*West Surrey Times*, 29 March 1879) when the Board of Guardians made proposals (based on recommendations from the School Attendance Committee) that the duties of School Attendance Officer should be added to those of relieving officer (and with Wanborough parish moved from Godalming to Guildford district), with an additional sum of £40 p.a. to be paid as travelling expenses (to allow occasional use of a horse and cart), Henry Portsmouth agreed give it a 6-month trial (and the existing officers of the affected districts were dispensed with). The Committee felt that the relieving officer would be in a far better position to ascertain the circumstances of the parents, and the reasons for a child not attending school.

The Guardians reviewed how the officers were coping with the additional school attendance duties in October that year, and deciding it was working well recommended to continue these arrangements for Mr Portsmouth and Mr Higgins for a further 6 months, and that they be paid for the last half year (*Surrey Advertiser*, 11 October 1879).

It appears Henry may have started the school attendance officer duties before the official 'paperwork' came through. At the Board of Guardians of 22 November 1879, the Local Government Board confirmed Mr Higgins in that role for the Albury district, but did not assent to Henry Portsmouth for the Guildford district, as the parish of Wanborough was in his given school district, but not in his relieving district, and this would take him out of the district where his relieving officer duties were discharged. The Guardians decided to remove Wanborough (which had only been added in March) from his district. Mr Halsey, one of the Guardians, complimented Henry of the manner he performed his duties, but indicated that no salary had been paid him for these duties as the clerk had not provided notification of the appointment agreed in March! (*West Surrey Times*, 22 November 1879). A letter from the Local Government Board approving Henry Portsmouth's appointment as School Attendance and Inquiry Officer, with a salary of £18 and £5 respectively, was received by the Guardians at their first meeting in December (*Epsom Journal*, 2 December 1879, *West Surrey Times*, 6 December 1879).

The appointment of Henry Portsmouth, Mr Higgins and Mr Fry as School Attendance Officers was reported at the Board of Guardians at the first meeting of 1880 (*Surrey Advertiser*, 3 January 1880). (Note: there was a separate Schools Attendance Officer for the Borough of Guildford, appointed by the School Attendance Committee, rather than the Guardians. From February 1880, this was Mr H W Copus (*Surrey Advertiser*, 14 February 1880)).

In May 1880, the Board of Guardians discussed the extra duties that the Elementary Education Acts had cast upon them, but congratulated themselves that with the appointment of School Attendance Officers, the rate of absenteeism (without reasonable cause) was down to 1 in 1000, and the average school attendance throughout the Union was better than any other district in the UK (*West Surrey Times*, 8 May 1880).

At the meeting of the School Attendance Committee in March 1881 (of whom, Mr E J Halsey was Chairman), the re-appointment of school attendance and inquiry officers was discussed. Henry Portsmouth at that time was being paid £30 and £10 respectively for the roles, and it appears the positions (covering Pirbright, Worplesdon, Stoke, St Nicholas, and Merrow) were offered to him again (*Surrey Advertiser*, 7 March 1881).

In 1882 the schools' attendance officers (re)appointed were Henry Portsmouth (Guildford), salary £30; Mr Mursell (Shere), £15; Mr Fry (Woking), £10; Mr Honey (Puttenham), £10; and Mr Brown (Godalming), £10 (*Epsom Journal*, 21 March 1882).

Duties included filling in children's ages, giving attendance forms to schools to fill in, making fortnightly or monthly reports to the Guardians on reasons for irregular attendance (not always the fault of parents – in summer 1882, he reported the Pirbright school was closed due to an outbreak of diphtheria (*West Surrey Times*, 24 June 1882)), and completing school census.

The process for taking the school census was described by a Mr James (a school attendance officer appointed by the Guildford United School Board [seems to have been the urban part of Guildford, under control of the Council] in 1883) involved visiting every house in the area. He collected the numbers of children between 5 and 14, and the numbers under 5. Mr James' area was the extra-municipal part of Stoke, and Stoughton (although the children in the barracks came under control of the Government and not the School Board). Collecting from gipsy encampments was a challenge, as they kept moving! (*Surrey Advertiser*, 30 June 1883). Although this was a slightly different area to Henry, it is likely he encountered similar challenges.

Gathering the numbers of school age children was important for ensuring there was sufficient school accommodation for all children. For example, the 1883 census for the Urban district showed a deficiency of almost 650 school places in the Holy Trinity, St Mary and Friary, the Stoke Municipal and the Stoke extra-Municipal areas (*West Surrey Times*, 8 September 1883), despite there being empty places at some schools caused by continual absence, whilst other parents were constantly enquiring where they could find places (*West Surrey Times*, 24 November 1883).

Interestingly, a report on the activities of the Chertsey School Attendance Committee (*Surrey Advertiser*, 14 June 1879) specified that it was the officer's duty to inform parents that their children should attend school whenever the school was open, as it seemed that some parents were under the misapprehension that a child need not make more than 250 attendances per year. Probably the same was the case in the Guildford district.

As with his relieving and vaccination officer duties, the school attendance role also required some cases to be taken to court:

- At the County Bench in November 1879, Henry gave evidence against John Harding of Pirbright who had been summoned for the failure to send his child to school, that the child, aged 10, had not attended since October. Harding pled poverty and stated that although he had sent his son to the school with 2d for school fees, they wanted 6d. The school responded that once a certain number of attendances were attained, the fee was reduced and, in this case, would have amounted to around 2d/week. Harding was accused of being obstinate (he had also claimed that his son learned nothing at school), and fined 5s (*Epsom Journal*, 11 November 1879, *West Surrey Times*, 15 November 1879).
- The *Epsom Journal*, 18 January 1881, reported that in agricultural districts the Local Government Board had sanctioned that children between 10 and 13 who had passed the 4th standard could be employed. Half-timerers were also provided for. Presumably the criteria were not met in some of the cases below.
- In 1881 Henry proved a case against Albert Searle for not sending his children to school. Searle was fined 5s (*Surrey Advertiser*, 9 May 1881). Similarly, Thomas Crooks, a Worplesdon farmer,

was fined 5s for keeping his child at home to nurse his sick wife. He thought it an outrage that he was not allowed to do this. Henry Portsmouth proved the case at the County Bench (*Epsom Journal*, 17 May 1881). Albert Searle was back in court in December, and fined 10s, for not sending his 2 children to school.

- In addition, in what was billed a 'An important case under the Education Act', Henry Portsmouth made cases against Albert Wixen and George Styles, because their sons had missed school on some days in November. The boys' attendance was normally good (327 and 385 times out of 407), but they had been allowed to go cover beating by their parents. Wixen was let off with a caution, but Styles was fined 2s 6d, as Portsmouth had previously warned against letting the child take the job (*Surrey Advertiser*, 5 December 1881). Henry also proved the case against George King, gamekeeper for Earl of Onslow, for employing the two boys (who were under the age of 13), saying he had repeatedly warned King that it was against the law to employ the boys as beaters (*Epsom Journal*, 6 December 1881).
- Not everything was clear cut. A case before the County Bench in May 1882 in which Henry Portsmouth gave evidence that William Gaff had employed his son, who was under 14, and not sent him to school, disputed whether education of children between the ages of 13 and 14 could be enforced (based on a case heard at the Queen's Bench Division, which came to the conclusion it could not, unless the child was '*habitually wandering or consorting with criminals*'). The magistrates adjourned the case, while awaiting results of an appeal (*Surrey Advertiser*, 22 May 1882).
- In January 1883, Henry Portsmouth proved a case against George Day, master builder of Merrow, saying that Day had twice previously been fined. He was sending his children to a private school, but the Bench found this was not a '*certified, efficient school*', and he was ordered to send them to the Merrow National Schools (*Surrey Advertiser*, 12 January 1884).

In 1884, the School Attendance Committee accepted Henry Portsmouth's resignation from the post of School Attendance Officer, as he did not consider the remuneration sufficient (*Surrey Advertiser*, 12 April 1884, *West Surrey Times*, 12 April 1884). A Mr J R Rainbird was elected to the position in June.

Henry continued to fulfil the role of School Inquiry Officer, which was a position reappointed annually, and he is recorded as receiving £10 pa in the years 1887 – 1892. The Board of Guardians voted that from Lady Day (25 March) 1892 the role of Inquiry Officer was to be dispensed with as the 1891 Education Act made elementary schooling free for children between the ages of 3 and 15. The Local Government Board initially objected as they were worried about what responsibilities would devolve to them.⁶⁷

Henry's Children

William Portsmouth (1864-1933)

William was baptised, 23 March 1864, at St Mary, Guildford (GRO: 1Q 1864, Guildford, 2a 60, MMS: Champion), with Henry being recorded as a carpenter. He was listed living with the family in the 1871 census. On 2 September 1876, the *Surrey Advertiser* carried a report that a 12-year-old boy, William Portsmouth, had been charged in the magistrate's court with stealing 1s 6d from the till of William Berry, a Bootmaker in the High Street, where he had been working about a week. The sentence was a night in prison and then 6 stripes of the rod (*Surrey Advertiser*, 9 September 1876) It is not clear whether this was him or the other William Portsmouth. [There was another William Portsmouth, bp. 1865 Guildford, from a different branch of the Portsmouth family, who went on to work for the railways in Brentford. It is likely to be this William who, in 1878 worked for just over 6 months as an office boy (with a wage of ½d) for

the London and South Western Railway at Guildford station.⁶⁸]. In another possible 'sighting', The *Surrey Advertiser, County Times* of 30 March 1878 reported, as a witness ('*William Portsmouth, a lad*') in the prosecution of George Keen, a baker, of High Street, Guildford, for selling underweight bread.

He moved from his family home sometime before the 1881 census, where he was listed as a boarder in Portsea, working as a telegraph clerk. In 1882 he appeared as a witness in the case of an early scam fraud, where as a telegraphist he identified the culprit who had wired third parties for funds, claiming to be a relative or customer known to them (*Portsmouth Evening News*, 25 September 1882). The Post Office pension records⁶⁹ show that he started work for them in February 1881. He remained working for the Post Office in Portsmouth for 42 years 10 months, and by 1911 had become an Overseer in the telegraph office. He retired in 1924. He married Helen Louisa Soane (1864- Feb 1941) in Oct 1892. She was his cousin, as Helen's mother was Martha Champion, Jane Champion's sister. The 1901 census shows the couple living in Pains Rd, Southsea, Portsmouth and were still there at the time of William's death in August 1933, leaving effects of £1162 15s 7d to his widow. They had no children. Censuses 1871 Stoke, Guildford, 1891-1911 Portsea/Portsmouth.

Emily Florence Portsmouth (1866-1910)

Emily Florence was baptised 28 January 1866 (GRO: 1Q 1866, Guildford, 2a 53, MMS: Champion) at St John the Evangelist, Stoke next Guildford. She was with her family in the 1871 and 1881 censuses, in the latter recorded as a milliner, age 15. In 1891 she was still at home, with her widowed father and younger sisters, Alice, Edith and Charlotte. No occupation was listed for her.

She married Charles Doubell (1866-1917), a clerk, on 23 October 1897 at ChristChurch, Woking. He was son of William Doubell, accountant. His address was given as 26 Stoke Rd, Guildford, and Emily's as Goldsworth Rd.⁷⁰ Charles was from Hawkhurst, Kent and worked for the post-office. As an assistant clerk he moved from Caterham Valley to Guildford in the mid-1880s, and eventually rose to be an overseer in the postal department.

In 1901, the Charles and Emily, both 35, were living at 29 Testard Rd, in the St Nicholas area of Guildford, with 2 daughters, Beryl (2) and Doris (5 mo), and Emily's sisters Millicent (a Drapers' Assistant) and Charlotte (living off own means).⁷¹

Emily died, age 44, in 1910. Her death notice stated she died 21 August 1910 at Malvern Villa, Farnham Rd, after a long and painful illness (*Surrey Advertiser*, 27 August 1910). She was buried on 24 August 1910 at St Nicholas church, Guildford (her address being listed as 24 Farnham Rd).⁷² This left Charles, a widower, with 3 young children, son Eric having been born in 1902. By 1911, Charles was an Overseer at the Post Office, and his sister Kate Doubell (57) was living with the family at 24 Farnham Rd,⁷³ presumably to help with the house and the children.

After his retirement in 1914 due to ill-health,⁷⁴ he became manager of the Central Hall Picture Palace. He died, age 50, in 1917 from pneumonia. His obituary stated that his wife, the daughter of the late Henry Portsmouth of Guildford, had died about 6 years previously (*Surrey Advertiser*, 29 January 1917). He was also buried at St Nicholas, Guildford.

Of the couple's children:

Beryl Kate (1899-1965) never married, and in 1939 was listed as a Draper's Assistant living in Hastings. She died in 1965 in Paignton, Devon,⁷⁵ but appears to have been interred in Honor Oak Crematorium in Southwark.⁷⁶

Doris Marjorie (1900-1920) appears to have died young in the Greenwich registration district (4Q 1920, Doubell, Doris M., Age 20, Greenwich, 1d 937).

Eric William (1902-1959) Doubell was listed in the 1921 census, age 19, as working as a textile warehouseman for Cook, Son & Co of St Paul's, which '*specialised in Woollen, Linen, Silk, and Cotton Goods, and all made-up articles connected therewith. The firm are wholesale dealers in these goods, doing a very large home and export trade; are also manufacturers of Men's Clothing, chiefly for colonial export, also of Blouses and Skirts of C.S. Pattern*'. His place of work was listed as 22 St Paul's Churchyard, and Grace's Guide describes the 1914 premises as '*one of the largest warehouses in the whole wholesale textile trade. Four main blocks, opening on eight streets and connected by eighteen bridges and four tunnels*'.⁷⁷ He was living in a Boarding House with 42 other young men (all working at Cook's) at 1 Bennett Mews, Southwark (Proprietor: Mrs Barratt).⁷⁸ He (age 26) married Ethel Beatrice Ricks (age 24, 1903-1992) on 22 Oct 1928 at St Barnabus, Dulwich. At that time his residence was 18 Beauval Rd, East Dulwich, and his occupation was Wholesale Salesman. She, the daughter of Peter Nathaniel Ricks, a Dairyman, was living at 166 Landells Rd, East Dulwich.⁷⁹ In 1939 he was a Manager and Buyer, Wholesale Textiles, and living with Ethel at Wendy Ridge, Dunclair Park, Plymouth. He died in early 1959 in Plymouth (GRO: 1Q 1959, Plymouth, 7a 802, age 56) but appears to have been interred in Camberwell New Cemetery.⁸⁰

[**Alfred Portsmouth \(1867- 1923\)**](#)

Alfred was baptised on 2 August 1868 at St John the Evangelist, Stoke next Guildford, (GRO: 3Q 1868, Guildford, 2a 64, MMS: Champion). The Portsmouth family were living in Stoke and father, Henry, was a carpenter. Alfred was included in the Portsmouth family household in both the 1871 census when there were living in Joseph's Lane, and the 1881 census at (probably #43) Stoke Road.

Possibly he was the Mr Portsmouth Jnr. who stood for election as honorary secretary of the Guildford Volunteer Fire Brigade. (His brother, William, was living in Portsmouth by this time). He was narrowly defeated by Horace Folker, auctioneer (*The West Surrey Times*, 29 October 1887).

He was possibly the Mr Portsmouth appointed Porter of the House and Assistant Relieving Officer by the Board of Guardians in June 1889 (*West Surrey Times*, 22 June 1889), following the resignation of Harry Barnby of Hungerford who, after less than 1 month in the position, said he had unexpectedly been offered a better appointment, and requested the return of his testimonials (*West Surrey Times*, 23 May 1889).

In this role he received thanks for his part in helping the master and matron with the Workhouse Christmas meal in 1889, which fed 204 inmates with 292lb beef (supplied by Mr Terry of Aldershot) and 225lb plum pudding. Each inmate was also given 1 pint of beer, followed by tobacco and snuff for the adults and sweets and oranges for the children (*West Surrey Times*, 28 December 1889). And, in January 1890, the workhouse laid on an evening of tea and entertainment for the children of the schools attached to the Guildford Union. A room was decorated, and a piano lent. After tea, Miss Spottiswoode distributed prizes and gifts to the children (dolls and toys), and participating in the entertainment that followed was Mr A Portsmouth, who gave a humorous rendition of 'Killaloe' and 'Shakespeare's Seven Ages' (*Surrey Advertiser*, 4 January, 1890).

Also in 1890, he was involved in a case prosecuting a William Wady for failure to vaccinate his child (*Surrey Advertiser*, 2 August 1890).

In 1889, Alfred was also Secretary of the Guildford and District Mutual Building Society, which may have been a part-time roles, as the newspaper advertisement showed it was only open every Monday evening (between 8 and 9pm). It listed his address as Fawcett Villas, Stoke Rd.

Electoral rolls show Alfred renting a bedroom and joint use of living room from his father at Fawcett Villas, Stoke Rd for 6s/week in 1889 and 1890, and living back at 43 Stoke Rd (described as a Freehold House) in 1896 – 1900. This was the Portsmouth family home in 1891 (and probably earlier), but Alfred was elsewhere then. In 1893 he was renting 2 rooms in Bury St from Emily Turner for 10s/week and continued there until he moved back to Stoke Rd in 1896 (his father, Henry, died in 1895).

In 1890, Alfred in a capacity of Secretary of the Isolation Hospital, was receiving applications (at 138 High St, Guildford) from married couples for the positions of Superintendent and Matron (at a salary of £60 p.a., including furnished accommodation). (*Surrey Advertiser*, 12 July 1890). In 1892, Alfred was recorded as assistant clerk at the Isolation Hospital (*Kelly's Directory* of 1891 listed him as clerk to the committee for the Isolation Hospital at Woodbridge).⁸¹ He had to appear at the coroner's inquest of the death of an infant, Ethel Heilbron, from diphtheria at the hospital. It seems there was some problem obtaining a skilled nurse to assist, and Alfred had managed to procure one where the superintendent of the institution had failed (*Surrey Advertiser*, 24 December 1892).

His clerk duties also extended to assisting with elections. In 1890 he assisted Mr E Bonner, the poll clerk, in an election for the assistant overseership of Stoke (*Surrey Advertiser*, 14 August 1890); whilst in November 1892 at the Municipal elections, Alfred is recorded as assisting Humphrey Smallpiece at the Ward St Hall Polling Station (*Surrey Advertiser*, 2 November 1892).

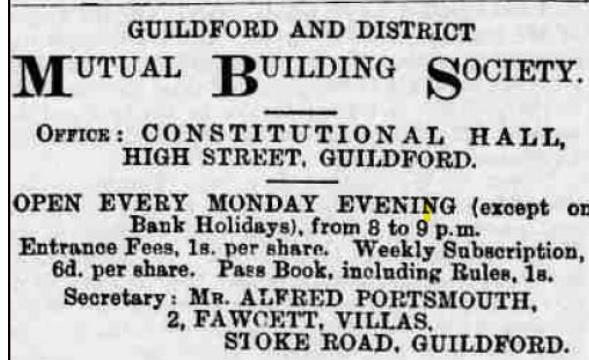
Alfred appeared to enjoy cycling, and his name appeared several times in association with Guildford cycling clubs, including the Stoke club, which had 30 members (*Surrey Advertiser*, 20 September 1897).

In 1899 Alfred, as assistant clerk to Mr Humphrey Smallpiece was thanked by the outgoing Mayor and Chief Magistrate, Mr C Wrist (*West Surrey Times*, 10 November 1899).

From 1900 he lived in Pymhurst, Semaphore Rd, Guildford (and was listed there every year until 1927 in the electoral registers). This was his residence when at age 32 he married 23-year-old Lillie Kitchen on 19 June 1900, in Holy Trinity Church. Lillie resided at 25 High St, Guildford and was daughter of James Frederick Kitchen, a Wine and Spirit Merchant.⁸²

In the 1901 census Alfred was described as age 32, a Solicitor's (Law) Clerk, and was with his wife Lillie (age 24, b. Bow), an 8-year-old niece, Ivy M Hill (b. Brighton), and a general domestic servant.⁸³

In 1902 he was described as Clerk to the Governors of Trinity Hospital, Guildford, and was receiving tenders for the supply of Blue Cloth for making cloaks and gowns, at 138 High St, Guildford (*West Surrey*



FROM WEST SURREY TIMES, 19 JANUARY 1889

Times, 13 December 1892). The Trinity Hospital seems to have been what is better known as Abbot's Hospital. *The Imperial Gazetteer of England & Wales* 1870 described this institution as 'Trinity hospital, at the head of High street, was founded, in 1619, by Archbishop Abbot; is a Tudor edifice of red brick, with stone dressings; forms a quadrangle of 66 feet by 73, with square entrance tower, and turrets at the angles; contains a hall, a chapel, a library, and apartments for 12 men and 8 women; and has an endowed income of £664'.⁸⁴ (<https://parishmouse.co.uk/surrey/guildford-surrey-family-history-guide/>). He seems to have continued this role for some years, as in 1913, the Charity Commissioners advertised some land for sale in Merrow, adjacent to the Churchyard, belonging to "The Hospital of the Blessed Trinity, Guildford", stating particulars could be obtained from Mr Alfred Portsmouth, Esq. of Guildford (*Surrey Advertiser*, 20 September 1912).

By 1911, living at Pymhurst, Alfred (42), a Solicitors Managing Clerk, and Lillie (34), had had two children – Alfred Percy Kitchen, age 9, a school-boy, and Mollie, age 4. They also had a cook and a housemaid (domestic). The census recorded the house having 8 rooms.⁸⁵



Pymhurst is an attractive red-brick Victorian villa set in an elevated position on a prime residential road within Guildford town centre.

The property is typical of its time with tall ceiling heights, original sash windows, original fireplaces in most of the bedrooms and generous room proportions throughout.

The property has been used for several years as a residential care home but now presents a wonderful opportunity to upgrade and extend to create an impressive family home subject to the usual planning consents.

The main access is from Pewley Bank, a private road where there is an extremely large driveway providing parking for ample cars. This space would lend itself well for a triple bay garage with a studio/home office above (subject to planning). You can also access Pymhurst from Semaphore Road via foot.

The rear garden is level and a generous size for the town centre. The garden is south-east facing and bordered by mature hornbeam trees.



Pymhurst 11 Semaphore Road

Guildford | Surrey | GU13PS

An attractive Victorian Villa presenting a wonderful opportunity.

Entrance hall
Downstairs Living room
Kitchen
Bathroom/Cloakroom
Two stores
Five bedrooms
Separate cloakroom
Lift
Ample off street parking

[HTTPS://CONTENT.KNIGHTFRANK.COM/PROPERTY/GLD012136465/BROCHURES/EN/GLD012136465-EN-BROCHURE-992F613A-4B2F-40EA-ABC3-91CE90E53E86-1.PDF](https://content.knightfrank.com/property/GLD012136465/brochures/EN/GLD012136465-EN-BROCHURE-992F613A-4B2F-40EA-ABC3-91CE90E53E86-1.pdf)

He took an interest in local affairs. In 1915 he applied to be a member of the Board of Guardians for Christchurch ward, but was unsuccessful (*Surrey Advertiser*, 17 November 1915). In November 1918 he was thanking people for their support in his candidature for a seat on Guildford Town Council for the Stoke Ward (*Surrey Advertiser*, 30 November 1918). The candidates each submitted 'letters' to the electorate in the local press. This was Alfred's letter (*West Surrey Times*, 16 November 1918):

**'MUNICIPAL BY-ELECTION, STOKE WARD
TO THE BURGESSES OF THE ABOVE-NAMED WARD**

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

At the request of a large number of Electors of the Ward I have mentioned, and in which I resided for many years, I have consented to be nominated for the seat to be rendered vacant by the election of Councillor G. W. Franks to the Aldermanic Bench of the Town Council. To the majority of the electors I am undoubtedly known, having lived in Guildford practically all my life, and by the fact that for over 30 years I have been engaged in the public affairs of the town, that is to say in Poor Law, Municipal, Magisterial, Charitable

Institutions and other matters of importance. In the near future many important matters will have to be dealt with by the Town Council, amongst which I might mention the most important of all, the Housing of the Working Classes. Following upon this will be many matters which of necessity owing to the war, have been compelled to remain in abeyance. To pull up these arrears much time will need to be spent and I have the necessary time at my disposal, and am prepared to place it at your service. I, therefore, appeal with confidence to the electors for their support and if elected they will find that I shall be a conscientious and reliable Councillor, an enemy of cliquism, with a fearless mind, and with one object only in view, namely the interests of the ratepayers.

I am, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Yours Obediently

ALFRED PORTSMOUTH

Pymhurst, Semaphore Road,

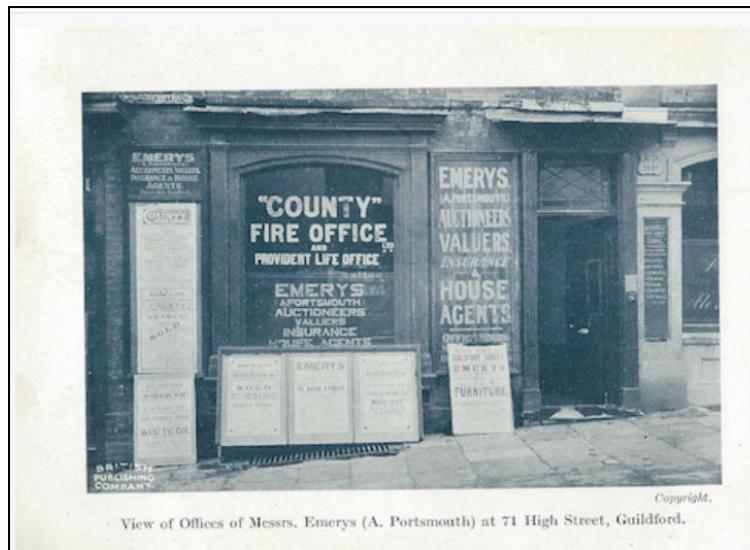
Guildford

5th November 1918'

In fact, there result was called '*A Walk-over in Stoke*'. Alfred challenged the validity of his rival's nomination papers, on the basis that in all the papers that had been lodged, the signatures did not correspond with the names on the burgess roll. Therefore Alfred being the only remaining candidate was elected (*West Surrey Times*, 23 November 1918).

In 1920, following the death of the Solicitor, Humphrey Smallpiece, Alfred received a substantial bequest from him: '*£5000, an oil painting, 'Millmead by Moonlight', and the chiming clock in his billiard room to Alfred Portsmouth, "my faithful friend and companion for many years past"*' (*West Surrey Times*, 19 June 1920).

Alfred and Lillie were still living there in 1921, where Alfred (52) was a Secretary – in particular, a Private Secretary for Miss Alice Smallpiece, spinster of Warwick's Bench, Shalford, and also for Lowys St Boat Builders of Guildford. He worked from home. Their daughter, 14-year-old Mollie was full time at school. They also employed a cook and a housemaid.⁸⁶



View of Offices of Messrs. Emerys (A. Portsmouth) at 71 High Street, Guildford.

The booklet features a photo of Emerys office in the High Street. This is where later Clarke Gammon & Emerys (later still Clarke Gammon) was based. To the right was then a branch office and depot of Maidstone brewers Fremlins. The stonework surround with a date of 1889 remains to this day and is now the High Street entrance to Phoenix Court.

GUILDFORD & SURROUNDING DISTRICT

ESTABLISHED OVER A CENTURY

EMERY'S

A. PORTSMOUTH

Auctioneers, Valuers, Surveyors & Estate Agents

SALES of Properties, Furniture, etc.
VALUATIONS for Probate, Mortgage,
Insurance and other purposes.
RENTS collected.
ESTATES & PROPERTY managed.
INVENTORIES made and checked.
SURVEYS Plans prepared.
INSURANCES effected.

Emerys (A. Portsmouth) will be pleased to receive instructions from OWNERS desirous of SELLING or LETTING their properties and respectfully beg to announce that they specialize in the following branches of the profession, viz:—

BUSINESS PREMISES, FIRE
ASSESSING, RATING.

Offices: 71 HIGH ST., GUILDFORD, SURREY
TELEPHONE: 306
TELEGRAMS: "EMERY'S GUILDFORD."

A page in the booklet gives details about Emerys. It appeared to have been founded in the early 19th century and in 1923 was owned by someone by the name of A. Portsmouth. Note under the services offered: 'rents collected'. This would be 'letting agents' today.

: he lived there). It's unlikely this was Alfred's son, Alfred Percy, who was born in 1Q 1902, so would not have been old enough to vote in 1922. (Also Alfred Percy was always listed as either 'Alfred Percy' or 'Alfred P' on later electoral registers and other documents, and his 2nd mates certificates listed him as serving overseas on a merchant vessel from September 1921 to February 1923). The owners of 71 High St were William L P Mark-Wardlaw and wife, Florence Emily. William Lambert Penrose Mark-Wardlaw (1857-1931) was at the time of the 1921 census listed as a Major and Honorary Lt. Colonel and Special Reserve of Officers (Retired) of the 3rd Battalion North Staffordshire Regiment. From the above advert, it seems 71 High St was the business address of Emery's.

Alfred died at home on 1 September 1923 (GRO: 3Q 1923, Guildford, 2a 111) aged 55. He was buried on 4 September 1923 at Holy Trinity Church, Guildford, the funeral being attended members of the Town Council and various other public bodies.⁸⁸ The notice in the press stated that

In 1922, Alfred Portsmouth took on the Auctioneer, Valuation and Estate Agent business of William Harvey Emery and his brother, after those gentlemen filed for bankruptcy. This business in Guildford High Street was continued under the name of "Emery's". Only a few months later, William Emery had a seizure on his way to The Playhouse, died (*Surrey Advertiser*, 15 April 1922). In 1923, Emery's issued a complimentary guide to Guildford, hoping to attract those seeking to relocate there. The business was later merged with Clark Gammon Estate Agents (est. 1919). The business premises were located at 71 High Street (on the north side, next to the entrance of today's Phoenix Court).⁸⁷

Note: the screenshot on left is lifted directly from the Guildford Dragon article in last reference, so permission should be obtained from David Rose before using it.

In 1922 and 1923, Alfred Portsmouth was recorded in the Electoral Registers at 71 High Street, Guildford, listing his home address as Semaphore Rd, with eligibility to vote in local (but not parliamentary elections) by virtue of occupation (ie

'he had been a member of the Town Council since 1918he had been very ill for the last two months, and latterly little hope had been held out of his recovery. He was 55 years of age, two years ago he took over an old-established auctioneer's and estate agent's business in the High Street...' (West Sussex Gazette, 6 September 1923). Probate of £5580 18s 6d was granted to his widow Lillie.⁸⁹

From press advertisements, Emery's, the estate agent business started being listed as Clarke, Gammon and Emery's in July 1926.

Electoral registers show Lillie continuing to live at Pymhurst, first with son Alfred Percy. He emigrated in 1928, and the rolls from 1929 - 1937 list her at Pymhurst with Mollie Portsmouth and Emily Marie Grinstead. All three were included there on the 1939 register, where Mollie's occupation was given as Private Secretary (Doctor), and Emily's as Domestic Servant. In addition, there was a Patricia M Havelock (b. 1925, occupation 'A S') and two redacted entries. Annotations indicated that Emily Grinstead's surname later changed to Portsmouth (1943), and Patricia Havelock's to Tomblin (1949).

Lillie died, still living at Pymhurst, on 9 February 1943, leaving effects of £12815 5s 1d.⁹⁰

Of Alfred and Lillie's children:

Alfred Percy Kitchen Portsmouth was born in 1902 (GRO: 1Q 1902 Guildford, 2a 94, MMS Kitchen) and baptised at Holy Trinity Church, Guildford on 12 March 1902. Father Alfred was listed as a Registrar of Marriages, and the family were living at Pymhurst, Semaphore Road.⁹¹ He was a schoolboy, living with his parents and sister at Pymhurst in the 1911 census.

In 1917 he became a seaman in the Merchant Service, and in 1921 was working for the Royal Mail Steam Packet Co. (a shipping company) who, in September that year sent him Canada. He travelled there on the *SS Minnedosa* [probably arriving at St John, New Brunswick, as sources such as

https://everything.explained.today/SS_Minnedosa/ indicate this was the Minnedosa's route, but Ancestry details suggest Quebec. The Incoming passenger form doesn't specify), and onwards by rail to Halifax to

join the *RMSP Chignecto* as a Cadet.⁹²

In May 1923 he passed his 2nd Mate's certificate in the Merchant Service, for '*Foreign-going steamships only*'.

The details listed of his service at sea to that point were:

"Worcester"	20 Sep 1917 – 21 Jul 1919
"Narenta"	18 Mar 1920 – 10 Apr 1921
"Sabor"	11 Apr 1921 – 28 Aug 1921
"Chignecto"	26 Sep 1921 – 11 Feb 1923



[HTTPS://SHIPSTAMPS.CO.UK/FORUM/DOWNLOAD\(FILE.PHP?ID=1024&SID=DD2CF739CA300CA73160EACD064A8AE0](https://SHIPSTAMPS.CO.UK/FORUM/DOWNLOAD(FILE.PHP?ID=1024&SID=DD2CF739CA300CA73160EACD064A8AE0)

His position was as a Cadet on all these, and they were all steam except the *Worcester*, which appears to refer to the Incorporated Thames Nautical Training College, *HMS Worcester* (ITNTC) in London.⁹³

Alfred Percy was described as being 5ft 9in, with fair hair, fair complexion and blue eyes.⁹⁴

He returned home from Canada on board the Cunard steam ship *Andania*, which departed from Boston and Halifax, arriving in Liverpool on 21 February 1923. His occupation was listed as mariner.⁹⁵

Maybe when his father became ill he returned home, as he was listed in the electoral registers at Pymhurst living with his mother, Lillie, from 1923-1928.

In Autumn 1926 he married a Gladys M Gill (GRO: 4Q 1926, Newport Market, 11a 395), and she was recorded (age 29) as travelling with him to Sydney, Australia on board the White Star line *Themistocles* leaving from Liverpool on 15 September 1928. Their address was listed as Weymouth House, Greenbank Rd, Ashton Gate, Bristol (Gladys' parents were in Greenbank Rd in the 1901, 1911 and 1921 censuses). Alfred Percy's occupation was 'Traveller'.⁹⁶

It appears that they settled in Australia for a few years, and appear in the Albury, NSW electoral rolls, in 1930 in Fallon St, Albury, NSW, in 1932 at 313 Norfolk St, Alfred Percy listed as a Labourer.⁹⁷ However, in 1933 Gladys Mildred Portsmouth died, age 33, The death (suicide) was widely reported in the Australian press, for example the *Corowa Free Press*, 9 June 1933 stated: '*On Wednesday morning the body of Gladys Mildred Portsmouth, wife of Alfred Percy Portsmouth, a railway employee at Albury, was found hanging from the foot of her bed in Smollett street. She was 33 years of age, a native of England*'. The report of the Inquest included in the *Albury Banner and Wodonga Express*, 16 June 1933, showed that she had barricaded the bedroom door with a trunk and then used the cord from Alfred Percy's dressing gown to hang herself. Alfred Percy, returning from work very late the previous evening and not being able to open the bedroom door, had fallen asleep in an armchair and discovered her body the next morning. He said she suffered from nerves, and had frequently expressed desire to return home to England, but had not indicated she was suicidal. A grave marker was erected by her work colleagues at the Albury Woollen Mill (<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/266006903/gladys-mildred-portsmouth>).

Electoral rolls showed Alfred Percy living at 519 Swift St, Albury, NSW in 1934, and in 1935 and 1936 at 560 David St, Albury, NSW, still a Labourer. Perhaps after his wife's death he could not settle, and returned to life as a merchant seaman, as in 1937 he was recorded as an Able Bodied seaman, arriving in Honolulu on board the RMS Niagara, coming from Sydney (November), Vancouver (December), and in 1938 from Sydney (January), Sydney (4 March), Vancouver (23 March), Suva (April), Vancouver (May), Bangor (June), Sydney (August), Vancouver (September). He had served 21 years at sea on his 1937 records but only 16 in 1938!. His weight was listed as 149lb in 1937 and 160lb (11st 6lb) in 1938.⁹⁸

He married Emily M Grinstead towards the end of 1943 (GRO: 4Q 1943, Surrey South Western, 2a 969). From the 1939 register, Emily's date of birth 18 Dec 02; and she appears to be the Emily Maria Grinstead, b. 1902 in Rudgwick, Sussex to George and Clara Grinstead.

Alfred Percy is recorded in electoral registers at Sydenham Rd in 1945, and with wife Emily at Littlecroft, Tylney Grove, Jacobs Well, Guildford from 1947- 1962. The couple lived there until their deaths, Alfred Percy on 24 October 1969 (GRO: 4Q 1969, Surrey South Western, 5g 1215), age 68, leaving £5150; and Emily on 22 September 1978 (GRO: 3Q 1978, Surrey South Western, 17 1241), age 76, leaving effects of £25,815.

Mollie Portsmouth was born 19 September 1906 (GRO: 4Q 1906, Guildford, 2a 91, MMS: Kitchen), and baptised on 16 November 1906 at Holy Trinity Church, Guildford, daughter of Alfred and Lillie. The family were living at Pymhurst, Semaphore Rd, and Alfred's occupation was recorded as Registrar of Marriages.⁹⁹ She was living with her parents and brother at Pymhurst in the 1911 and 1921 censuses. She was also recorded at Pymhurst from 1928-1937 in the electoral rolls [possibly she lived there all along, and appeared when electoral regorm took place].

In summer of 1939 she married Ernst Grinsted (GRO: 3Q 1939, Surrey South Western, 2a 2085). He was born in Eltham, Surrey, in 1914 (GRO: 3Q 1914, Lewisham, 1d 2182, MMS Elsmann). His father, William

Herbert Grinstead was a Telephone Engineer working for Siemens in Woolwich in the 1921 census, and his mother Vera was German, born in Berlin. He appears to have been a twin, with sister Marguerite. As a child he spent some months in Canada when his father was posted there for work in 1923.

Electoral registers show the couple living at 16 Longdown Rd, Guildford in 1945, and at Pymhurst in 1946 - 1953, (but this Pymhurst was in New Park Rd, Cranleigh). In 1955, 1956 they were at Lodge Farm, Loxhill, Godalming.

Mollie died, aged 87, on 6 April 1994 (GRO: Apr 1994, Horsham, 36C, 7831). She was living at Field Cottage, Lynwick St, Rudgwick, Horsham West. Probate listed assets of £163, 298,¹⁰⁰ and Ernst died in 2006. They had 3 children (from Ancestry trees, and the summary of the Obit from the Telegraph extracted from newspapers.com by Ancestry).. (How were they so rich? May be a coincidence, but in the late 1940s and 1950s, there was a firm of Auctioneers, Estate Agents in Woodbridge Rd, Guildford called Weller, Sons and Grinstead).

[Alice Jane Portsmouth \(1870- 1952\)](#)

Alice Jane was baptised 2 October 1870 (GRO: 4Q 1870, Guildford, 2a 53, MMS: Champion) at St John the Evangelist, Stoke next Guildford. She remained living in the family home through the 1871, 1881 and 1891 censuses. At age 22, on 3 June 1893, she married John Martin (25b. Horsell), a schoolmaster of Stoke, at St John the Evangelist, Stoke next Guildford. John was the son of James Martin, a nurseryman.¹⁰¹ John Martin was appointed Relieving Officer and collector for Woking district in February 1895 (*West Surrey Times*, 23 February 1895), having previously been serving as acting relieving officer for Guildford [possibly following the demise of his father-in-law] (*West Surrey Times*, 23 February 1895). In 1897 he was also appointed the Registrar of Births and Deaths for Ripley (*West Surrey Times*, 29 May 1897) In 1898 he petitioned for an increase in pay on the grounds that his duties had increased, 529 houses having been added since 1895, and the population has increased from 9776 in 1881 to 14679. The Guardians approved an increase in salary from £100 p.a. to £110 p. a. (*West Surrey Times*, 30 April and 25 June 1898). In the 1901 census John was listed as a local Relieving Officer, and they were living in The Lindens, York Rd, Woking, with 4-year-old daughter, Doris Ida, and Alice's sister, Edith.¹⁰²

In 1911 the family, John, Alice, Doris Ada (now 14) and sister-in-law Edith Portsmouth were living at Gilnockie, York Rd, Woking. The house was described as having 6 rooms. John was still a Relieving Officer.¹⁰³ In 1921, John, Martin and Doris were living at 105 York Rd, Woking, and John was still a Relieving Officer for the Woking district. Doris, 24, was working from home as a Costumier on her own account.¹⁰⁴

In 1933, Doris (36) still residing at 105 York Rd, Woking married Victor Ernest Blaxall (37), a garage proprietor, residing at Rosedean, Tolleshunt D'Arcy. Doris' father, John, was listed as a retired [at last] relieving officer, and Victor was son of Ernest Blaxall, a retired licensed victualler. The wedding took place at St Mary of Bethany church, Woking.¹⁰⁵

In 1939, Doris and Victor E Blaxall (now a taxi-proprietor) were living in Essex, at a house called 'Dunroam'[?ing], North St, Tolleshunt D'Arcy, Maldon. John (listed as a relieving officer and registrar of births and deaths on a sup[erannuation]) and Alice Martin had moved to Essex to be with them.¹⁰⁶

John Martin died in 1942 in Tolleshunt D'Arcy, and Alice in 1952 at the Manor Nursing Home, Danbury, Essex (Source: Turner and Rollason Ancestry trees – but no attached records). Alice's death may be that

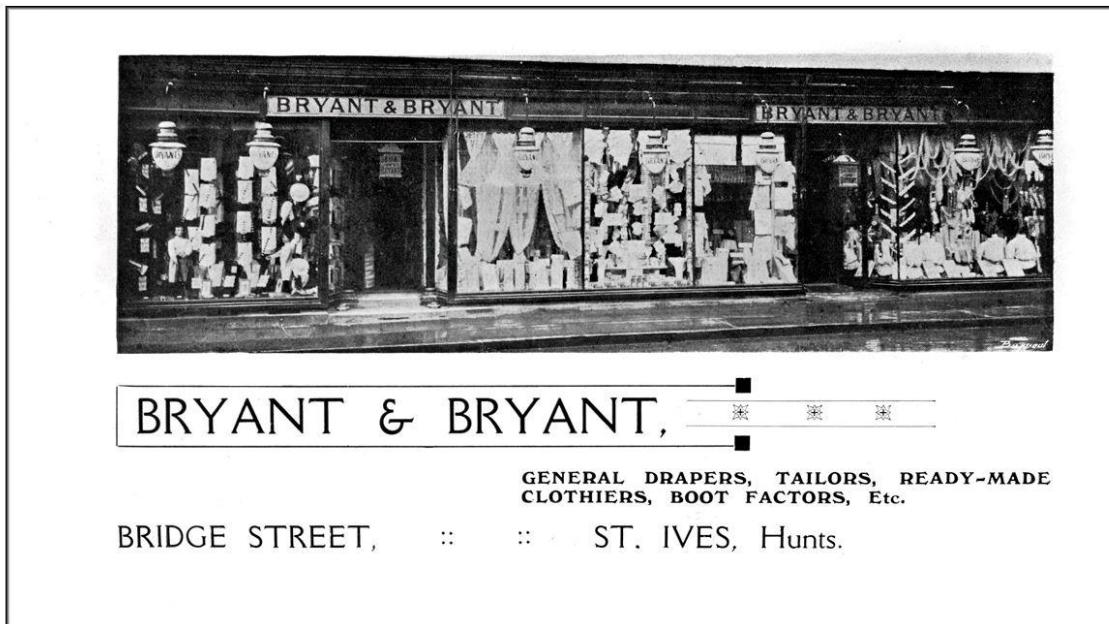
with GRO ref: MARTIN, ALICE JANE, 4Q 1952, Chlemsford, 4a 433, Age 82; and John's as MARTIN, JOHN, 4Q 1942, Maldon, 4a 805, Age 74.

Millicent Mary Portsmouth (1872-1947)

Millicent Mary (GRO: 4Q 1872, Guildford, 2a 50, MMS: Champion) was baptised 6 November 1873, at St John the Evangelist, Stoke next Guildford. At that time, the family were living in Woking. She was living in the family home in the 1881 census, but by 1891, at age 18, she was working as a draper's assistant, and living at 125 High St, Guildford, in the premises of widow Emma Chaplin, a General Draper. In the same household were Mrs Chaplin's son, two nieces, another 5 draper's assistants, a cook and a housemaid.¹⁰⁷ Maybe this was too crowded, as in the 1901 census she had moved in with her married sister Emily Doubell (as had her younger sister, Charlotte), at 29 Testard Rd, Guildford. She was still listed as a Draper's Assistant, and probably it was through working in this business that she met her husband.

On 1 September 1909, at age 36 she married Arthur Edward Morris (41) in Shefford, Bedfordshire (GRO: 3Q 1909, Biggleswade, 3b 773), who was a Draper's Assistant (as listed in the 1891 and 1901 censuses). Arthur was the son of Edmond Henry Morris.¹⁰⁸

In 1911, a little more than a year after being married to Arthur, the couple were living in Shefford, Beds. Arthur (42, b. Brighton) was a Drapery Traveller.¹⁰⁹ By 1921, the couple had moved to Cromwell Place, St Ives, Hunts, where Arthur was a Furnishings Buyer for Bryant & Bryant Drapers and Furnishers, Bridge St, St Ives.^{110, 111}



In 1939 the couple were living at 12 Parkside, St Ives. Arthur was retired by this time.¹¹² There were no children listed in any of the records – possibly they were too old by the time they married. Millicent died, aged c. 73, in April 1946 (GRO: 2Q 1946, St Ives, 3b 277), leaving her effects of £498 16s 8d to her husband. Arthur lived until November 1957 (GRO: 4Q 1957, Huntingdon, 4b 388, age 88). The probate record stated his address as Rheola, Cemetery Rd, St Ives, although he died in Walnut Tree House, Huntingdon, and probate of his effects of £1182 18s 11d were granted to Westminster Bank Ltd.

Edith Kate Portsmouth (1875- 1947)

Edith Kate was baptised 6 August 1875 in St John the Evangelist, Stoke Next Guildford (GRO: 2Q 1875, Guildford, 2a 67, MMS: Champion). Henry was listed as a Relieving Officer.¹¹³ She appeared with the family in the 1881 and 1891 censuses, still listed as scholar at 16, and living at home. By 1901 she was living in Woking with her sister Alice, husband John Martin (a local relieving officer) and their daughter, Doris. Edith's occupation was listed as '*formerly a bookkeeper*'. She was still living (age 36) in Woking with Alice's family in 1911, no occupation listed. In 1921, she was working as a general domestic servant for Harriet Hill, and elderly widow in West End, Chobham. Late in life, 51-year-old Edith married widower George Palmer (54) on 5 March 1927 at St John's, Woking. Her residence was listed as 105 York Rd, Woking and her father as Henry Portsmouth (deceased), relieving officer. George was an Engineer of 1 Netley Cottages, Queens Rd, Knaphill. His father was James Samuel Palmer (deceased), engine driver.¹¹⁴ The electoral registers indicated the pair moved into George's house at Netley Cottages, and in the 1939 register, George and Edith appeared at 51 Queens Rd, Knaphill. George (b. 1870) was listed as a Club Steward, and Edith as a housewife.¹¹⁵ A possible death registration record for Edith is that in 1947 (GRO 4Q 1947, Surrey North Western, 5g 620, age 74).

Charlotte Maud Portsmouth (1877- ?1954)

Charlotte Maud (GRO: 1Q 1877, Guildford, 2a 74, MMS: Champion) was baptised on 16 February, 1877, again St John the Evangelist, Stoke. Henry was recorded as a relieving officer. By now the family had moved back to Guildford, and were living in the Stoke area. Charlotte appeared with the family in the 1881 and 1891 censuses. In 1901 she was at Testard Rd in the Doubell household, with sisters Emily Doubell and Millicent Portsmouth. At that time no occupation was listed for her, just that she was living on her own means.

At age 30 she married Charles Harvey, a post-office clerk, on 25 November 1906, at Christ Church, Stoke next Guildford. At that time, she was residing at Foxenden Rd, off York Rd, Guildford, and Charles was in Artillery Rd. He was son of Thomas Harvey, a harness maker.¹¹⁶

The 1911 census recorded the couple, age 36 and 34, as living at 40 Artillery Rd. Charles was still a post-office clerk, and was born in Redruth, Cornwall.¹¹⁷ Charles, age 44 and a '*skilled telegraphist*', enlisted for National Service with the Royal Engineers in June 1918. He was released in March 1919.¹¹⁸

The 1921 census showed the couple as visitors with George Collingham and family in Brighton. George's occupation was given as a Relieving Officer.¹¹⁹

Charles served over 29 years in the post-office, starting in 1894 and performing such roles as sorting clerk, telegraphist, instrument fitter and inspector. He retired, age 50, in April 1924,¹²⁰ and died in July the same year. He was buried in The Mount Cemetery, Guildford.¹²¹ A potential death record for Charlotte is in 1954 (GRO: Harvey, Charlotte M., 1Q 1954, Surrey South Western, 5g 1051, age: 79).

APPENDIX 1 – HENRY PORTSMOUTH AS RELIEVING OFFICER IN THE PRESS

He seemed to spend a lot time pursuing contributions to support from family members of those in the workhouse or receiving parish aid, and thus he was often in court prosecuting defaulters. For instance,

- the *West Surrey Times* of 21 June 1873, reported him (as Relieving Officer for Woking) in the case of an old man, George Notridge, who had left his blind wife destitute and chargeable to the Guildford Union. She was now in the Guildford Workhouse.
- the *Surrey Advertiser and County Times* of 16 January 1875 reported that Henry Portsmouth, Relieving Officer of the Guildford Union, was at the Guildford Bench deposing that Henry Spencer, a fireman employed by South Western Railway, was failing to maintain his wife, Elizabeth, and she had been admitted to the Union house and was now chargeable to the Common Fund. Mr Spencer, in turn, said he would not support her unless compelled, as he had seen her walking the streets at midnight with other men. His wife said that they had separated the previous May but with no terms agreed, and she had tried various avenues to find accommodation and support herself, including pawning all her possessions. She had run up some debts in her husband's name as she had seen no adverts in the local papers to say that he would not be answerable for her debts. She denied seeing men at night, saying that she had been out looking for her husband, who was 'not to be found in the day time'. Henry Spencer was ordered to make payments to his wife in instalments.
- the *Surrey Advertiser and County Times* of 16 October 1875 reported Henry Portsmouth, relieving officer, testifying that James Turner, a chimney sweep and army pensioner, had failed to maintain his wife such that she had become chargeable to the Guildford Union for 15 weeks, and the amount due was £3 15s, plus 3s 6d cost of a warrant. James, who had just received a pension payment, paid the amount required.
- the *Surrey Advertiser, County Times* of 22 January 1876 reported that Henry Portsmouth, relieving officer, was at court requiring James Turner to show cause as to why he should not contribute to the support of his wife, Elizabeth, an inmate of the workhouse. Although James said that he did not mind paying for her whilst in the Union, Henry reported that on the previous 8 October James had promised to pay 5s a week maintenance, but had failed to do so. Elizabeth, it seemed frequently went in and out of the Union and they had no power to keep her there. The amount owing in January was £3 5s, but James refused to pay because he had no money and was unable to work. The court ordered he pay 5s at that time.
- The *West Surrey Times* of 17 November 1877 reported Henry pursuing Berry Brown, a smith formerly of North Square, Stoke, for deserting his wife and family and thus unlawfully leaving them 'chargeable to the common fund'. Berry Brown thus owed the Guardians £3, to which he pleaded guilty, and was ordered by the mayor to pay this together with costs of £2 3s. He was remanded to police custody for 24 hours to allow him to contact his employer in Great Marlow with the hope of obtaining payment.
- At the Borough Bench (as reported by the *Surrey Advertiser, County Times* and *West Surrey Times*) on 9 Mar 1878), Henry Portsmouth was pursuing a William Saunders, a pork butcher of Chertsey (who pled mitigation based on poor trade and an invalid wife, and a mistaken belief that his brother should contribute) for £3 7s 6d for the maintenance of his father, then an inmate of the Guildford Union/ Brookwood Lunatic Asylum. William had been ordered to contribute 2s 6d per week to keeping his father, but had not made regular payments and was thus in arrears. William was ordered to pay the amount within a month.
- The *Surrey Advertiser, County Times* of 30 March 1878 reported that Henry Portsmouth was prosecuting William Gale, a bricklayer's labourer, for a charge of £2 9s, owed as a result of the defendant deserting his 11-year-old son, thus rendering him chargeable to the Union since the previous November. William promised to pay in instalments (10s then and then 10s per week).
- In February 1879, (*West Surrey Times*, 15 February 1879) Henry Portsmouth was at court demanding that Chas. Barlow, a master shoemaker of 'Kingston, Berkshire' should contribute to keeping his

mother in the Guildford Union. An order against the defendant of 1s/week was granted, plus costs of 31s 3d.

- Henry was before the Borough Bench again in October, giving evidence as to the state of 2 boys, William (12) and Edward (8) Sayers, he had taken from the police station to the Union. They had been turned out by their mother who lived in lodgings and was a drunk and disreputable woman, and had been found sleeping in a carriage near the Seaford Arms, Merrow where their father boarded and worked as chief ostler, with an income of 35s per week. Henry described their appearance as spectre-like, and described how their hair had needed to be completely cut off, and their clothes destroyed. He also commented that their younger sister was in a similar state. The father was described as disgraceful and inhuman with his indifference to the plight of his children, and was charged with allowing them to become chargeable to the common fund of the Union. The boys were sent to Industrial School for 5 years with the father to pay weekly costs. (*Epsom Journal*, 7 October 1879).
- In May 1880, Henry attended an inquest at the Row Barge Inn, Stoke on behalf of the Guildford Board of Guardians, in the case of a woman found dead in the river. She had told the proprietor of the Temperance Hotel, where she spent the previous night, she had come from Norfolk after recently losing her husband, and shortly after her 3 children (bronchitis), and was intending to go to the union as she was a Guildford woman. She appeared to have committed suicide, and a verdict of '*Found Dead*' was returned. (*Surrey Advertiser and County Times*, 29 May 1880).
- June 1880 found Henry, in his capacity as relieving officer, commenting on the quality of meat supplied for paupers' consumption by Mr Briggs, who was applying for renewal of the contract. In some cases, it had been reported as unfit for human consumption, but Henry thought this was not deliberate (occurred when someone was 'filling in'). *West Surrey Times*, 19 June 1880.
- The *Epsom Journal* of 15 February 1881 reported Henry Portsmouth, relieving officer. Giving evidence against George Taylor, a hearty-looking young man (ie: well capable of work - a lot was judged by appearance!) who had abandoned his wife and three children. Henry testified that from his own knowledge the family had been systematically neglected by the defendant and when they applied for admission to the union they were in a dreadful condition and alive with vermin. Taylor said he had been travelling in search of work, but would now attempt to maintain them. He was let off with a caution.
- The *Surrey Advertiser, County Times* of 29 August 1881 reported the case of desertion of wife by Robert McDonald of Worplesden, leaving her chargeable to the Union. Henry Portsmouth stated the amount of maintenance due to the Union. Defendant claimed that she had left of her own accord, but when he found out that she was in the Union he decided to leave her there. He was sentenced to 21 days hard labour.
- In August 1882, Henry Portsmouth was called to testify on the lamentable condition of the Goodridge children in Slyfield Green- '*alive with vermin... emaciated with hunger*', whose family story can be viewed on the Spike Lives website.¹²² At the County Bench the father, George Goodrich was charged with neglecting to provide proper food and nourishment for them, and sentenced to 14 days with hard labour. (*Surrey Mirror*, 23 September 1882).
- Another duty of the relieving officer must have been to refer workhouse inmates to the asylum (Brookwood). In general, it was preferred to keep harmless 'idiots' in the workhouse as it cost less, but if behaviour deteriorated then they were moved. In September 1882, Henry Portsmouth referred George Goddard to Brookwood Asylum, where his behaviour improved almost immediately.¹²³ [Does this imply anything about the conditions for workhouse inmates?]
- The *Surrey Advertiser*, 7 July 1884, reported Henry giving evidence before the Guildford Borough Bench against John Russell, an able-bodied cab driver, who had neglected his wife and 3 children. Since coming out of prison he had not removed them from the Union, despite being told to find a

suitable home for his family. The cost of their maintenance was 18s. He was sentenced to 21 days in prison

- Later in 1884 he proved a case at the County Bench against a stocking maker named Peters who ran away in 1882, leaving them chargeable to the Union. The defendant was fined £2.
- In February 1886 (*Surrey Advertiser*, 22 February 1886, *Epsom Journal* 23 February 1886), Henry Portsmouth and PC Barnes gave evidence against one-armed drover, George Dyer, who deserted his child. The boy was found the previous November sleeping in the Guildford goods station and taken to the Union Workhouse. A sum of £2 0s 6d was now owing (81 days at 6d per day). George Dyer was sentenced to 14 days hard labour.
- In June 1887 (*The Surrey Advertiser & County Times*, 6 June 1887), Henry was called to the Borough Bench in the case of John Russell, charged with deserting his family. His three children had been found by the police on Guildford High St at 10pm at night, hungry and tired. Henry reported this was the fifth time the defendant (who claimed he had been absent in search of lodgings) had been prosecuted for a similar offence. John was sentenced to 3 months hard labour.
- In July 1887 (*West Surrey Times*, 2 July 1887), Henry Portsmouth testified to the desertion of his three children by James Chuter. Henry had provided a workhouse admission order for James and the children the previous year, but after 2 weeks James had withdrawn his family and then abandoned them a few days later. The children were readmitted, and more recently had been sent to Canada, leaving a cost for maintenance and passage to Canada of £32 6s owing. Henry testified that James had also been arrested previously for desertion of his family and had been a '*continual source of trouble for years*'. James received 21 days hard labour.
- In July 1888, Henry gave evidence that Thomas Fearneyhough of Lichfield, had been removed back to Lichfield in 4 months before having cost the Union £4 14s 3d during the 2 months he had been in Guildford, but had since returned and so far, his maintenance amounted to 5s 6d. Fearneyhough, rather than getting a job, devoted his time to reading portions of scripture to vagrants, and seeking work from local churches as an evangelist. The Mayor and magistrates thought he should also have done something to support himself, and as he had not remained in his own union they sent him to prison for 7 days (*West Surrey Times*, 7 July 1888).
- Some families appeared more troublesome, with repeat appearances (and presumably caused more work for Henry). Charles Ba(t)chelor was one such – he appeared before the Guildford Borough Bench (*Surrey Advertiser*, 24 November 1889) charged with neglecting to maintain his children. Henry testified that since coming out of prison in September he had only paid £1 15s 11d towards his children's keep, leaving £2 14s 1d owing to the Union. His case was adjourned for one month to allow him to reduce the debt with small weekly payments. However, he was again before the Bench the next spring (*Surrey Advertiser, County Times*, 3 March 1890), described as an '*Inhuman Father*' for abandoning his five children on the Shalford Road. They themselves request admittance back into the Union house (this the day after their father had discharged himself and them, having been inmates for the previous 6 months). By the time of the court case an amount of £35 17s 6d had accrued for their maintenance. The case was not brought sooner as Charles could not be found – he had taken on the alias of Charles Porter, and was eventually apprehended in the Epsom Union. Then again, on 16 February 1891 (and repeated on 21 February) the *Surrey Advertiser, County Times* reported Henry at court in his capacity of Relieving Officer in the case of Charles Batchelor, who had neglected to maintain his five children, such that they became chargeable to the Union. The sum owed was £6 10s (despite a small payment having been made), and Henry reported that Charles had been convicted twice the previous year for similar offences, resulting in imprisonment (sentences of 2 months, and

14 days). Evidence was presented showing Charles had been seen drunk on a number of occasions recently, and he was sentenced to 21 days with hard labour.

- The *Surrey Advertiser, County Times* of 31 August 1891 reported Henry giving evidence at the Borough Bench against William Preston of Stoughton Road, for non-payment of contributions for maintenance of his wife in the Brookwood Asylum. He had defaulted on the payment of 2s 6d a week for 12 weeks. The case was adjourned for a month with William promising to make some payment.
- The *Surrey Times and County Express* on 28 October 1893 reported Henry Portsmouth taking Thomas Earp to court for desertion of his wife and three children in February 1891, leaving them chargeable to the parish ever since. He had given himself up in Warwickshire and been returned. He said he was willing to take his children out of the workhouse, but made allegations against his wife, citing her as the reason for his leaving. He was given a month in prison after which he was to remove his children from the workhouse.
- The *Surrey Times and County Express* of 9 December 1893 reported that the previous month the wife of Henry Hacker, a stableman of no fixed abode, had come to Henry's house in a destitute condition saying that her husband had run away the previous day leaving her penniless, and all her furniture had been turned out onto the common at Shalford. Henry gave an order for the workhouse for her and her two children, but she appeared again at his house a few days later (having gone to look for her husband, unsuccessfully), and had been in the workhouse and chargeable to ratepayers ever since. The husband was apprehended in the Castle beerhouse on Farnham Road, and claimed he had walked to Southampton in search of work, but had not been successful apart from a few odd jobs on the way. Henry took him to the Borough Police Court for the payment of £2 8s for keeping his family, and he was sentenced to 14 days imprisonment, and told to remove his family from the workhouse when he came out.

APPENDIX 2 – HENRY PORTSMOUTH AS VACCINATION OFFICER IN THE PRESS

- As Guildford Vaccination Officer, Henry Portsmouth appeared before the magistrates to prosecute a teacher of French, Louis Rehfuss for failure to vaccinate his children. The latter said that he had had Mr Shollick vaccinate them since the summons was served. His case was adjourned to allow him to produce the certificate (*West Surrey Times*, 18 December 1875).
- The *Surrey Advertiser, County Times*, 26 August 1876, reported two more unusual cases where Henry summoned people to court under the Vaccinations Act:

In the first case, William Abbott Dernford did not object to vaccination, but his wife had died since the birth of the child, and it was now in Leatherhead being nursed. He had been told he should get it vaccinated there but the next vaccination session was not until September. When the Guildford authorities said this was wrong and the child should be vaccinated in the area of its birth, the father questioned this, citing distance. He was then allowed time to have the child vaccinated in Leatherhead and to provide a certificate.

The second case had summoned Frederick Falconer, but his wife appeared (with child in arms) saying that her husband was at work. It transpired the child had been vaccinated but not until after the summons was issued, and the public vaccinator, Frederick Schollick, would not sign the certificate pending the hearing of the case. Henry testified that he had had the same trouble with this defendant 18 months earlier. The judge ruled that she should be fined 10s for the trouble and expenses caused to the vaccination officer.
- On 16 July 1881, the *Surrey Advertiser, County Times* reported Henry Portsmouth bringing George Herbertson White to court for failing to vaccinate his daughter, Agnes Mary Jane. George

claimed that Agnes was very delicate and had been unfit for vaccination, but she latterly had been vaccinated. He was fined 10s for the expenses of the summons.

- The more 'important' the defendant the more newspaper inches, and the more trouble they seemed to cause. In 1884 (*Surrey Advertiser and County Times*, 18 October 1884), Henry was a witness at the Borough Bench against Mr Benjamin Hammond, a dental surgeon, of Portland House, Spital Street, who had failed to have his son vaccinated until October (it having been born in March. Several notices had been issued, and indeed the hearing had been postponed too, with Hammond claiming nervous exhaustion. Hammond had stated that his position should have been considered before he was summoned, and Henry had '*exceeded his duty*'. He also complained that Henry had accused him of bullying behaviour, and wanted an apology. He said that he had had all his other children baptised at the right time but this one suffered from convulsions, and he did not think it suitable to vaccinate it earlier. It appears no fine was levied, but he was not allowed the satisfaction of an apology from Henry.
- Charles George Candlin refused to have his son, Charles Harold Candlin, vaccinated due to strong '*physiological and conscientious objections*' (*Surrey Advertiser and County Times*, 14 September 1889). Henry Portsmouth had served him with several notices, but he cited the case of a nearby family mourning the loss of their child due to vaccination, and a doctor in town had admitted there had been deaths associated with the procedure. The article included reference to the returns of the Registrar General which showed 316 deaths of children under one-year of age within the last 6 years, related to vaccination. Charles wanted his objections to be respected at least until the Royal Commission on efficacy of vaccination had published its findings. He was fined 10s. He was back in court the following month still not having vaccinated his child (*West Surrey Times*, 19 October 1889).

Henry was called to join a discussion with the Board of Guardians later that month (*West Surrey Times*, 26 October 1889) regarding repeat offenders – namely Charles Candlin and Arthur Rawlings. There was some talk of not prosecuting offenders more than twice (as in the Shere district), but the Guardians did not want to formally make a resolution to that effect, and no decision was taken.

- In 1890, Henry Portsmouth was reported as applying for distress warrants against William H Loveland, of Cheselden Rd, and Alfred Rawlings, High St, for failure to both have their children vaccinated and for not paying the previously issued fines (William had been fined for not having his 3rd child vaccinated, claiming that he had had 2 others vaccinated, one of who had suffered badly for a month from the effects of it – *West Surrey Times*, 30 November 1889). The reason for his making the application was '*that both defendants had given him great trouble in regard to previous fines, and unless the warrant was ordered he would have to attend again next week*'. The defendants were given a further 14 days to have their children vaccinated, and a week to pay the outstanding fines, with the treat of the warrant if they did not. (*Surrey Advertiser, County Times*, 13, 18 January 1890). This did not have the desired effect, as William Loveland was again fined 10s in March, along with John Lampard – both described as anti-vaccinators. John described the practice as '*a cruel law which compelled him to have his child vaccinated to what he considered the danger to its life*' and William said '*he should not have his child vaccinated whatever it might cost him*'. Both William and John again appeared in a report in May, charged with obstinacy, and Henry was seeking distress warrants against both for failure to pay fines. (*Surrey Advertiser, County Times*, 1 March 1890, 10 May 1890).

In March, Henry again appeared before the Borough Bench, this time proving separate cases against William Wady and Francis Billimore for neglecting to have their children vaccinated. A plea was put

in for Wady, on the basis that he was poor, and had already been fined 10s, but the judge made no exception (*Surrey Advertiser*, 22 March 1890). Both these men were again mentioned before the court in June – Henry Portsmouth was seeking a distress warrant against William Wady for failure to pay the March fine (it was argued he had been off work due to illness, and the judge allowed a further month for payment), and another order was placed against Billimore. In addition, Henry Piggott was fined 10s for failure to vaccinate his child (*Surrey Advertiser*, 2, 7 June 1890). Both Wady and Billimore were summoned again in July, for failure to provide vaccination certificates. Billimore was fined 10s, and Wady indicated that he had no intention of getting his child vaccinated. He was given an order to have the vaccination done within 14 days. John Lampard made another appearance, was fined 10s, but indicated that he was ever more determined to resist the vaccination law, regardless of being brought before the bench. (*Surrey Advertiser*, 12 July 1890). In August, Henry was still pursuing Henry Piggott, both to get his child vaccinated and to pay the fine issued in June. Piggot was given 14 days to vaccinate his child (although he announced his intention not to comply), and was threatened with a distress warrant if he did not pay the fine that day (*Surrey Advertiser*, 2 August 1890). Meanwhile, in the same publication, William Wady was back in court, this time pursued by Mr A Portsmouth, for still failing to vaccinate his child. Despite arguing having been in hospital, he was fined a further 10s.

October of this year saw the further appearance of George Charles Candlin, with Henry providing evidence of the child's birth date, and vaccination orders and fines issued to date, all of which had been ignored. Charles again cite the Royal Commission, and also a further complaint that other diseases, such as erysipelas, were being transmitted via the vaccination process. He was again fined and ordered to comply with the law, to have the child vaccinated. (*West Surrey Times*, 19 October 1890).

In December, Henry, as vaccination officer, appeared against William James Smith of South Place, Guildford, Eli Fricker, a carman of North Street, and William Cooper of Castle Street, all of whom were fined and ordered to have their children vaccinated. (*Surrey Advertiser, County Times*, 8 December 1890).

- William James Smith (again) appeared before the Borough Bench for not having produced a certificate (in this case of unfitness for vaccination), to which his response was that he was 'sick of certificates'. Henry Portsmouth testified that he had not received any certificate from Smith since January 1890 (*Surrey Advertiser*, 21 March 1891).

In June, Henry gave evidence that Charles Hicks and Henry Heather had both failed to have their children vaccinated, and they were fined 10s each. Also, that Isaac Richards had failed to send his certificate (he had produced a piece of paper stating the child had been vaccinated on 6 March, but had been unable to get a certificate and only produced it that morning (instead of by 20 March). Richards was fined £1 (*Surrey Advertiser*, 8 June 1891).

The *Surrey Advertiser, County Times* of 13 July 1891, reported William Cooper (again) and a James Smith (?? the same Smith as above), together with Arthur Charles Sutlieff being summoned by Henry Portsmouth, vaccination officer, for failing to comply with the Vaccination Act, resulting in fines for Cooper and Sutlieff, and Smith being given 14 days to have his child vaccinated.

In October, Henry reported at the Borough Bench that Henry Gale, whose child was born in January, had neglected to have his child vaccinated within the stipulated period despite Henry having served all the necessary notices. He had received no communication from Gale until 18 October (after the summons was issued), and it was stated that the child had been vaccinated. The judge found that it was the parent's duty to transmit the certificate if the public vaccinator was not used, and the fine would be the same (10s) as if the child had not been vaccinated. At the same hearing, James Tucker was fined for neglecting to vaccinate his child. Tucker said '*he hoped the authorities would have the greatest possible trouble upholding the Act!*' (*Surrey Advertiser*, 19 October 1891)

The same publication, of 21 November 1891, listed a number of fathers being summoned by Henry Portsmouth before the Borough Bench, and fined 10s for not vaccinating their children: Charles George Candlin (again), Ernest Ventham, Thomas Greenfield and George Mumford. The last named complained that two of his children had died from the effects of vaccination. The court suggested he take any evidence to the Commission.

John Simpson was ordered to have his child vaccinated, and a Distress Warrant was issued against him for non-payment of the fine previously inflicted. Similarly for William Henry Clarke.

- Continuing in to 1892, in February, Henry Portsmouth was before the Borough Bench proving cases against George Mumford, John Lampard and Thomas Greenfield – in each case they were ordered to have their child vaccinated within 14 days, and distress warrants against them were issued for non-payment of previous fines. Also, George Gowen was fined 10s for a similar offence (*Surrey Advertiser*, 3 Feb 1892).

The same publication on 2 March 1892, again showed Henry in pursuit of William Clarke, applying for a Distress Warrant for non-payment of a fine imposed under the Vaccination Act.

People seemed to be following the progress of the Royal Commission Inquiry into vaccination, and a John Rapkins referred to a Commission recommendation against continued prosecution in respect of the same child. He continued by saying he considered the actions of the '*ex-officio Guardians*' to be persecution, and his prosecution as '*tyranny*', and requested the Bench to dismiss the case or reduce the fine. The Bench still fined him 10s. George Goman and Richard Baxendine were fined for similar offences, whilst orders for vaccination were issued against William Baxendine and David Coker. All these cases were proved by Henry Portsmouth (*Surrey Advertiser*, 20 June 1892).

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