

‘DRASTIC MEASURES FOR STURDY LOAFERS’ BRIGHTON GUARDIANS AND THE ABLE-BODIED MEN IN THE WORKHOUSE 1909–1914

by John Jacobs

The number of inmates in the Brighton Workhouse fell from 1,809 on 1 January 1909, the highest it had ever been, to 1,375 on 1 January 1914, a fall of 24 per cent. In seeking to account for this large reduction this article examines the steps taken by the Guardians in the context of contemporary Poor Law policies and practices, and concludes that the reforms instigated by the Guardians were a case study in ‘blaming the victim.’

TOO MANY PAUPERS

In 1908 the Guardians of the Poor in the parish of Brighton were alarmed to find themselves the subject of press speculation that they may have been ‘too lavish in poor relief’.¹ The question arose because Brighton had a far higher proportion of paupers dependent on them than either Sussex or England and Wales. Whereas the figure for Sussex on 1 January 1908 was 30.3 per 1,000 population and that for England and Wales was 26.6, the figure for Brighton was 43.1.² With the local press asking ominously ‘Is Brighton Too Benignant?’, the Guardians decided to act. Over the next six years the number of outdoor paupers fell by 1,217 (56 per cent), the number in the workhouse fell by 434 (24 per cent),³ leaving Brighton at the end of the period with a rate per thousand of 28.3, still higher than either Sussex or England and Wales, but only by 7 and 8 per thousand respectively.⁴ This paper principally examines that part of the change which relates to the reduction of those in the workhouse.

The Numbers

Table 1 shows the sharp fall in the numbers of paupers relieved in Brighton between 1909 and 1914.⁵ As the numbers being relieved in January

1909 were the highest ever recorded in Brighton, the change is all the more remarkable as it reverses what had been an inexorable annual rise from the beginning of the century. Poor law relief carried with it many penalties; for many of the indoor paupers the price was enforced incarceration in the workhouse, with the attendant loss of liberties and dignity, and the splitting up of families in segregated wards; for those on outdoor relief (except where it was given on medical grounds) there was disfranchisement, and for both there was the stigma of being ‘on the parish’. At least as far as those on outdoor relief were concerned these large reductions denoted a sea-change in the way paupers were dealt with and heralded the dawn of the welfare state.

Outdoor Relief

The main reduction occurred in those on outdoor relief, for which the explanation is relatively straightforward and owes little to the efforts of the Brighton Guardians. There can be no doubt that the main reason was the 1908 Old Age Pensions Act, which was widely credited with the fall in the numbers of those on outdoor relief in the country as a whole.

TABLE 1

Number receiving Poor Law relief in Brighton on 1st January in each year. (The figures exclude those in institutions other than the workhouse and the workhouse school).

| | <i>Indoor relief</i> | <i>Outdoor relief</i> | <i>Total</i> |
|------|----------------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| 1909 | 1,809 | 2,154 | 3,963 |
| 1910 | 1,702 | 1,997 | 3,699 |
| 1911 | 1,676 | 2,003 | 3,679 |
| 1912 | 1,513 | 1,180 | 2,693 |
| 1913 | 1,494 | 1,017 | 2,511 |
| 1914 | 1,375 | 937 | 2,312 |

The Act was first introduced at the beginning of 1909, but the effects on paupers took over two more years to come into play. The Act had been the subject of heated debate for many years before coming into force, and when it was finally born the conditions attached to the receipt of the pension reflected its controversial gestation. Protagonists of the pension had argued passionately for it precisely because they saw it as the only way of keeping future generations of old people out of the Poor Law. Those opposed argued that the giving of a pension to which the pensioner had contributed nothing would lead to the abandonment of thrift, since there would be less reason to save for one's old age.

The resolution of this conflict was a political compromise. The pension was paid to those over 70, subject to a test of means and, to distinguish the deserving from the thriftless, subject also to a test of character, so that anyone in receipt of

parish relief was ineligible. This prohibition was lifted with effect from the beginning of 1911, leading to a sharp rise in the number of pensioners after that date.⁶ The pension was worth a maximum of 5s a week, depending on means, which, meagre as it was, was enough to make the difference for thousands of people between applying for parish relief and not. The effects were instantaneous; in the combined areas of Kent and Sussex there were 28 per cent fewer on outdoor relief in the first week of February 1911 than in the first week of December 1910.⁷ Nationally the number of all paupers on outdoor relief fell by 24 per cent between the summer of 1910 and 1911.⁸

In January 1911 the Clerk to the Guardians reported that of those over 70 in Brighton who had been in receipt of outdoor relief 431 had been granted pensions, with some additional cases deferred for later decisions.⁹ Table 2 shows the effects on outdoor relief in Brighton.¹⁰ While the overall fall was 40 per cent between July 1910 and July 1911, the fall among adult men and women was 50 per cent; children under 16 fell by only 10 per cent, showing that the reduction took place among older adults with few dependent children.

Confirmation of the effect of the pension can be seen in the recommendation of the Guardians' General Purposes Committee that the number of medical districts for outdoor relief purposes in Brighton be reduced from four to three. Reporting to the Guardians in December 1912 they based the recommendation on

the reduced number of cases at present in receipt of Out Relief, as compared with the number prior to the operation of the Old

TABLE 2

Number in each category receiving outdoor relief in Brighton on 1st July 1910 and 1st July 1911, showing the effect of the introduction of the old age pension.

| | <i>Men</i> | <i>Women</i> | <i>Children</i> | <i>Lunatics</i> | <i>Total</i> |
|-----------|------------|--------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------|
| 1910 | 297 | 932 | 440 | 89 | 1,758 |
| 1911 | 146 | 459 | 395 | 51 | 1,051 |
| Reduction | 51% | 51% | 10% | 43% | 40% |

Age Pensions Act 1908, viz; 1,034 on the 31st December 1910 with 546 on the 16th November 1912 . . .¹¹

Some of the reduction may have been the result of the Guardian's tighter administration, but there can be no doubt that the halving of the numbers of adult outdoor paupers in Brighton was largely due to the coming of old age pensions.

Indoor Relief

The reduction in the numbers within the workhouse is less easy to explain. The workhouse records are incomplete; we have the annual totals at 1 January and 1 July each year,¹² and we have more detailed records from April 1910 to

September 1912, and again from July 1914 onwards.¹³ Fig. 1 shows the numbers of inmates in the classifications given in the returns, from which it seems that broadly speaking there was a relatively fixed base of non-able-bodied men and women, who would be the old, the sick, and the feeble-minded, while the fluctuations in the total numbers were largely caused by the comings and goings of the able-bodied inmates, particularly the men.¹⁴ As we shall see later, the term 'able-bodied' needs to be treated with considerable caution. The seasonal variations are clearly in evidence as the men came in the winter and left in the summer, and over the whole period there is a jerky downward trend. While it is clear that the overall reduction was largely the

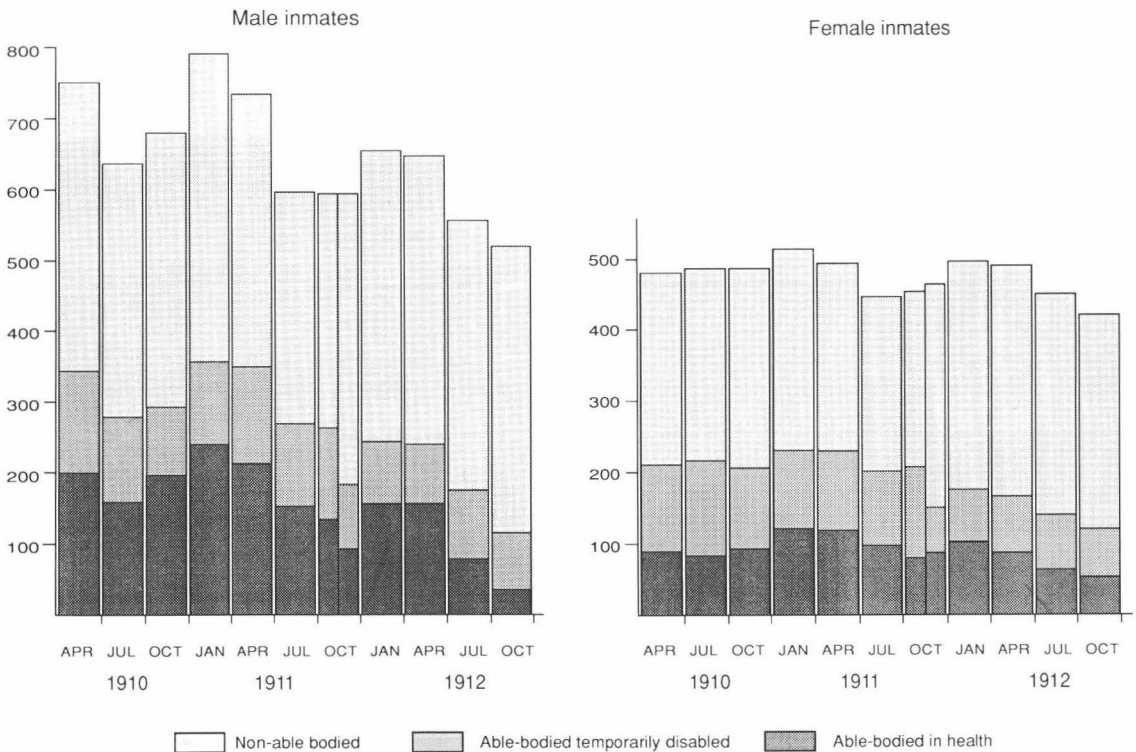


Fig. 1 Inmates in Brighton workhouse on the 1st day of each quarter 1910-1912.

Note: The classification changed in October 1911, from when all men aged 60+ were no longer classified as able-bodied. The number of women assigned to each category changed and 12 women were added to the total presumably reclassified from being 'children'.

result of a fall in the numbers of able-bodied men it remains to explain why this particular fall occurred.

Old age pensions had little effect on the numbers in the workhouse. As Mr W. D. Bushell, the LGB Inspector for Kent and Sussex wrote at the time,

the preponderance of well-informed opinion seems to be to the effect that no substantial reduction [in indoor pauperism] can be expected from this cause. It must be remembered that workhouse inmates over 70 years of age are generally persons who need care, as being either sick or infirm. The case where these aged people have no near relation, or none who are in a position to give sufficient time to their care, will not be less numerous than before.¹⁵

His returns for Kent and Sussex show a reduction of only 62 people, less than one half of one per cent, among workhouse inmates between December 1910 and February 1911.¹⁶ In Brighton despite there being 375 inmates over the age of 70 at the end of 1910,¹⁷ only ten men and six women left the House in January 1911¹⁸ as a result of qualifying for a pension, and the number of non-able-bodied inmates in April 1911 was only about 6 per cent down on April 1910.¹⁹

Following the reform of the Poor Law in 1834 the workhouse had several different functions; it was where the able-bodied pauper was set to work under conditions of 'less-eligibility' to induce him to stay outside; a refuge for the old and infirm; an asylum for the feeble-minded; a general hospital for the sick pauper; a maternity hospital, and a hospital for those suffering from venereal disease. This combination of a frankly deterrent institution for the able-bodied and a general refuge for the old and sick was a constant source of problems to those administering the workhouses. In particular the able-bodied male pauper had long been the thorn in the side of the Poor Law authorities. The Report of the enquiry into the Poor Law in 1832 which culminated in the Poor

Law Amendment Act advocated policies which were designed specifically to rid the workhouse of this particular group of inmates in the belief that they could all find work outside if they chose. Motivated by the same beliefs, in 1909 the Brighton Guardians singled out the able-bodied pauper as the main target for their reforms. We shall examine their attitudes towards the able-bodied pauper, the policies adopted, and whether it was these policies which drove them out of the House.

THE GUARDIANS' REFORMS

Faced with the unwelcome realisation that they had too many paupers the Guardians acted swiftly. In June 1909 they set up a Special Committee to examine the administration of poor relief in the parish. In September it presented figures to show that, in January 1908, at 17.4 per 1,000 of the population, the rate of *indoor* pauperism in Brighton was over twice that of England and Wales (8.2) and very nearly twice that of Sussex (9.2).²⁰ Furthermore, the proportion of indoor paupers classed as *able-bodied* in Brighton (5.3) was nearly four times that per 1,000 of the population in England and Wales (1.5), and nearly three times that in Sussex (2.1). This, it claimed, 'is very excessive', adding whilst admitting that a considerable number of those so classed are not physically fit for hard manual labour, your Committee is convinced that a large proportion (the majority of whom have wives and children dependent upon them) are nothing more than loafers, as a rule strong and healthy men, having no trade and a strong dislike for work.²¹

Such was the unanimous opinion of the solicitor, the vicar, the wine merchant, the hotelier and the wife of a furniture dealer who made up the Special Committee.

Having ascertained that the average weekly number of able-bodied inmates over the preceding six months was 203, only 20 of whom had been employed on task work, the rest having

been employed about the House on routine maintenance work, they recommended both an increase in the numbers set to do task work and an increase in the tasks required. All able-bodied inmates were to be classified as either Class 1, men of previously good character or physically unfit to do task work, who were to be employed on work about the House, or Class 2, men of 'bad or indifferent character, or who constantly take their discharge from the Workhouse without sufficient reason' who were to be put upon task work. Punishment for refusal to do the allotted task was to consist of being put on a punishment diet, with persistent refusal dealt with by prosecution, for refusal to work made one vulnerable to the criminal charge of being an 'idle and disorderly person' under the Vagrancy Act of 1824.

To prevent the paupers from evading their tasks, the Committee recommended that all able-bodied inmates should be detained in the workhouse after they had given notice of their intention to leave, up to the legal maximum of one week. In addition, they reduced the diet of the able-bodied and banned smoking for all except those engaged on particularly unpleasant work in the House. These were, as the *Brighton Herald* gleefully reported, 'drastic measures for idle loafers.'²²

Work in the Workhouse

The issue of the purpose and nature of work in the workhouse was problematic, both ideologically and administratively. Sometimes work was seen as the main instrument of punishment and deterrence, sometimes as a means of ensuring that the paupers 'paid' for their keep by their labour, almost always it was seen to serve the purpose of maintaining the life of the institution, and it might also be seen as a means of cheap labour when non-routine repairs or extensions needed doing; as such it could also be seen as depriving outside labourers of jobs and thus creating yet more unemployment. The potential for conflict between these purposes is obvious, and such conflicts often arose in

practice.

The administrative problems arose in deciding which men should be given punitive task work and which the easier maintenance jobs, and also in enforcing the task work. Despite these difficulties, once the Special Committee had decided that the problem lay with the 'loafers' it was inevitable that they should call for harder task work.

Task work.

Task work was meant to deter the able-bodied from entering the House. The ideological problem with such work was that if it succeeded in deterring all but the genuinely destitute, who by definition would have no other means of maintaining themselves and their families, what justification could there be for imposing punitive tasks on such as these? The harder the tasks, so the Guardians believed, the more likely those who could possibly leave would leave, which had the unfortunate consequence of making the punishment all the more inappropriate for those that remained.

Ten months before the reforms of the Special Committee the Guardians had already taken steps to increase the tasks imposed.²³ They did so as an express measure to deal with the problem of the 'ins and outs'. In November 1908 the Chairman of the Workhouse Visiting Committee, Councillor Geere, produced a list of inmates who were discharging themselves from the Workhouse too often 'without sufficient reason.'²⁴ It included three men who had been in and out of the House between 40 and 50 times in the previous year, and he claimed that the average number of admissions and discharges of the highest 20 men on his list was 36. It seems very unlikely that it could have been that high given the other examples he cited. Moreover, he claimed that the men were leaving for frivolous reasons.

They do not go out for any good purpose. In many cases they go only to "cadge" from friends who are better off than they are, or else to beg from the general public.

Another Guardian claimed that they only went out to watch a football match or the conveniently placed Brighton races, and that 'these men can get a living outside if they are only given work in the House which they don't like.'

Acting on these beliefs, they decided to increase the then current task of breaking 7 cwt of granite to 10 cwt. They also agreed that the alternative tasks should be the pounding of 2 cwt of granite or the picking of 4 lb of beaten oakum, which were in fact the same as the tasks already in force. In addition they decided to detain the persistent 'ins and outs' for a week.

These measures met with the instant approval of the local press, who lost no time in embellishing the belief that the inmates were not only loafers but parasites living a life of luxury at the ratepayers' expense, as the following report in the *Brighton Herald* on 7 November 1908 demonstrates.

In the Brighton Workhouse there are (sic) a class of able-bodied persons of luxurious habit. They are known as Ins and Outs and use their workhouse as an hotel. They toil not neither do they spin. They only sponge. When, as an 'In', a thirst comes upon them, they become an 'Out'. They take their discharge and sponge upon old friends, or beg from those who have not the distinction of coming under that category. Having slaked their thirst, and temporarily exhausted their sources of revenue they return to the work—we beg their pardon, their hotel.

The report continues in this vein for some time, and ends with this extraordinary sentence, revealing the depth of loathing which the writer felt and presumably thought would not be seen as anything out of the ordinary by his readers.

Some of these gentry need the repose of a lethal chamber rather than of the workhouse.

Less than a year after these increases, on the recommendation of the Special Committee, the Guardians gave the Master the discretion to increase the amount of stone to be broken to

15 cwt, to double the amount of stone to be pounded from 2 to 4 cwt, and to increase the amount of unbeaten oakum to be picked from 4 to 6 lbs.²⁵ All but one of the 19 Guardians present voted for the reforms.

The Press Approves

Given the place which the able-bodied male pauper had in the demonology of the popular press, it was no surprise that the reforms were hailed as long-overdue by the local papers. We have seen the terms of the headlines in which the *Brighton Herald* welcomed the changes. In their editorial comment they commended the Guardians for their reforms which would ensure that 'shirkers are to be roped off and to be compelled to do a fair day's work' and 'Weary Willie and Tired Tim will no longer get pork and vegetables for their Sunday dinner.'²⁶ Three days later they again reported favourably on the changes, this time under the headline 'Short Shrift for Shirkers', with the sub-headline 'Guardians Stop Loafers' Luxuries.' The *Sussex Daily News*, under the headline 'Brighton "Loafers"' reported that 'things were to become less pleasant for these gentry. They are to work harder and live less luxuriously'.²⁷

'NOTHING MORE THAN LOAFERS'?

Were the Guardians justified in singling out the able-bodied men as the target for their reforms?

They were right to identify them as a special category within the House. While Cllr Geere was reporting on the extremes in his list of 'ins and outs' it was the case that the able-bodied were much more likely to come and go at frequent intervals than were other groups of inmates. From April to September 1911 there was an average daily number of 156 able-bodied inmates in the House; this group generated 648 admissions and 720 discharges over the six months. Over the same period the average daily number of 339 non able-bodied men, a much larger group, generated more or less the same

number of admissions and discharges, 699 and 794 respectively.²⁸ Being a much more mobile group the able-bodied men were a likely target for the reforms.

The main reason they were singled out, however, was the prevailing views held about them by the Guardians. How justified were these views? To answer this question I propose to consider the evidence about the potential employability of the able-bodied, the prevailing economic conditions, the policies relating to detention in the workhouse and outdoor relief and the alternative sources of assistance open to these men.

How Able Were The Able-Bodied?

The assumptions behind the measures adopted by the Guardians were that they were dealing with 'loafers, as a rule strong and healthy men,' yet the evidence suggests that such men were generally neither strong nor healthy.

The Royal Commission on the Poor Laws which reported in 1909 set up an enquiry by Dr Parsons into the physical condition of the able-bodied inmates in selected workhouses. He reported;

For practically all ages above 21 the average measurements of height, weight and circumference of chest are considerably below the standard average for all classes in Gt. Britain. In about half the cases the weight is considerably below the worst averages recorded by the Anthropometric Committee, viz., the averages given for artisans, whilst in height practically all of them are below the average height of artisans. Not only that, but the [weight to height ratio] is less than the standard in nearly all cases, showing that the inmates are not only stunted in growth, but poorly nourished.²⁹

His stark conclusion was that the best of the work-house inmates I examined, taken as a whole, are physically worse developed than the worst of the ordinary population.³⁰

These were his findings in relation to the élite among the able-bodied; he also found 'men suffering from some physical or mental defect rendering it impossible for them to support themselves',³¹ who had nevertheless been classed as able-bodied.

The Royal Commission also cited a report from their West Midlands Inspector³² claiming that out of the 6,079 male paupers under 60 in his area in December 1905 only 216 (3.5 per cent) were considered by him to be able to earn a living, and that in 1906 the masters of the London workhouses considered that only 37.2 per cent of their so-called able-bodied inmates were capable of doing a full day's hard work.³³

Local information was gathered by Mr J. W. Thompson, then the Local Government Board Inspector with responsibility for Sussex and Kent. He reported that he had asked every workhouse master in the district how many able-bodied male inmates on 1 January 1910 were 'fit for a full day's hard work' and 'capable of earning his own living.'

From the information supplied it appears that there were on that day 1,533 men on 1 or 1a diets [i.e. who were classified as able-bodied] of whom 637 or 42% were in the opinion of the master capable of doing a hard day's work and 803 or 52% (inclusive of the above 637) were capable of earning their own living.³⁴

He also noted the wide variations in the replies; some masters claimed that 80 per cent of their men were capable while others claimed 20 per cent, and in one large union even as little as 10 per cent. He concluded

There is one fact, however, that stands out clearly as a result of the information, and that is that an exceedingly large proportion of those classed (for diet) as able-bodied would not be capable of earning their own living. And from personal observation when inspecting I am inclined to think that the number of those so capable would probably turn out to be much smaller than the estimate given by most of the masters in the

statement to which I have alluded.³⁵

The insight into the conditions of the men did not, however, prevent him from praising in the same report the harsh measures adopted by Brighton. He saw no contradiction in recognising the inability of most so-called able-bodied men to earn their own living and hounding them with severe task work and a worse diet to drive them out of the workhouse.

This ability to ignore the condition of the men and to resort to reliance on mythology is even more marked in the case of the Brighton Guardians themselves. The Guardians undertook periodic reviews of all the inmates to see if they could persuade some to leave, or find relatives who could be required to contribute towards maintenance costs, or to remove some to other unions in cases where the pauper's settlement was in question. In April 1907 they had received the following report of the 'call-over' from their Workhouse Visiting Committee.

Your committee regret to state that the majority of the large number interviewed by them were too feeble to give any tangible information as to their previous history which might affect their settlement in Brighton, and for the same reason their chance of living outside the Workhouse was beyond the question of consideration.

The regrettable feature was and is the large number of inmates classed as able-bodied, many of them however being altogether of an unemployable class. It must be borne in mind that many of the so-called able-bodied are only nominally so, a large number of them being either physically or mentally deficient though otherwise enjoying good health.³⁶

Two years later these same Guardians were calling such men strong and healthy loafers.

Prevailing economic conditions

There is little doubt that the period around 1908 and 1909 was one of severe unemployment nationally and in Brighton, where one of the main causes was a slump in the building trades.

Unemployment had already been a major national issue for several years, and had resulted in the Unemployed Workmen's Act of 1905, which established Distress Committees in all major urban areas as a way of dealing with unemployment. Table 3 gives the figures of those applying to Distress Committees outside London, showing the winter of 1908/9 with by far the highest number of applicants, indicating high unemployment.³⁷

This is confirmed by the report of the LGB Inspector with responsibility for Sussex and Kent. In his report for 1911 he wrote;

Figures for the third week of December 1908, 1909 and 1910 show, what is also confirmed by general impression, that distress in the winters of 1909/10 and 1910/11 has been substantially less than in the winter of 1908/9.³⁸

TABLE 3
Numbers applying to Distress Committees in England and Wales outside London

| | |
|---------|---------|
| 1905-6 | 74,107 |
| 1906-7 | 58,820 |
| 1907-8 | 57,433 |
| 1908-9 | 147,518 |
| 1909-10 | 85,223 |
| 1910-11 | 46,960 |
| 1911-12 | 33,308 |
| 1912-13 | 27,235 |

TABLE 4
Numbers applying to the Brighton Distress Committee

| | |
|---------|-------|
| 1905-6 | 2,050 |
| 1906-7 | 1,992 |
| 1907-8 | 1,929 |
| 1908-9 | 2,659 |
| 1909-10 | 1,994 |
| 1910-11 | 1,766 |
| 1911-12 | 1,359 |
| 1912-13 | 1,281 |

Turning to Brighton we can see from the applications to the Distress Committee shown in Table 4 that 1908/9 stands out as the worst year of those shown.³⁹ The Brighton and District Trades Council were so concerned that they led deputations to the Town Council, the Guardians and the Distress Committee. The leader of the deputation, Mr W. Evans from the Brighton Labour Party, appealed to the Committee to send special deputations to all local bodies

emphasizing the phenomenal character of distress, and urging on these bodies the urgent necessity of at once putting in hand adequate work to meet the difficulty.⁴⁰

The Guardians could have been in no doubt that in the winter of 1908/9 unemployment was exceptionally high. They had particular occasion to be aware of what was coming because in August 1908 they accommodated 132 'hunger marchers' from London in the casual wards of the workhouse.⁴¹ It was against such an economic background that they decided on their reforms.

POOR LAW POLICIES: THE PARADOX OF DETENTION

The workhouse was intended to deter able-bodied paupers from entering, yet there were other policies which, paradoxically, worked to detain the able-bodied inmate in the institution against his will.

The Guardians had no power to refuse entry to the workhouse for those presenting themselves as destitute. They could, however, use their discretionary powers to detain inmates for up to a week to prevent them from, in the extreme case, discharging themselves every morning and returning every evening, thereby avoiding their tasks. As we have seen, they were used to curb the activities of the 'ins and outs', and were already being used extensively by the Brighton Guardians before September 1909. In November 1908 53 inmates were subject to a restriction order and during the course of the following year orders were made in a further 83 cases, 67 against

men and 16 against women.⁴² In the year following the reforms, despite the 'get-tough' policy, only 57 orders were issued.

All those to whom this order applied were being incarcerated against their will. In effect, they were undergoing a week's imprisonment, often with hard labour, because they were a nuisance to the Poor Law authorities. While the hoped for longer-term effect was that it would discourage the paupers from using the workhouse, in the short term it meant that some men and women were in the workhouse against their wishes.

More importantly, there was another set of linked policies which worked to create reluctant detainees. The Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 had prohibited the giving of out-door relief to the able-bodied pauper. This prohibition was crucial to the new Poor Law, since it was only by making relief for the able-bodied conditional on entering the workhouse that the full power of deterrence could be brought to bear. Its importance was re-affirmed in the Poor Law Relief Regulation Order of 1911, which began with the declaration that 'the Guardians of a Poor-Law Union shall not afford relief other than institutional relief',⁴³ though exceptions were allowed in the case of those seeking only medical relief and in the case of widows or deserted wives (provided that they did not have any illegitimate children after their widowhood or separation!).⁴⁴

Moreover, if the House was offered to the able-bodied pauper it *had to be offered to his family also*. The 1911 Order re-affirmed the existing policy, that 'institutional relief shall only be afforded to any such person *together with such of his family as may be resident with him and dependent on him for support*.'⁴⁵ This policy was meant to act as a 'test' of the applicant's destitution, but when a man was without means it ensured that the numbers in the workhouse would be further increased by the inclusion of his family.

This policy also worked to prevent the men and their families from leaving the House. The

fear that men would leave the workhouse 'leaving their wives and children chargeable to the Parish' meant that Guardians were reluctant to allow men out to look for work unless they took their whole family with them. In February 1907, 18 married inmates raised the issue with the Brighton board.

We the undersigned married inmates of this institution respectfully beg to petition the Board to ask if you cannot use your discretionary powers in giving us permission to leave the House for a specified period, without our families, to enable us to endeavour to find employment.

You must all be aware of the want of facilities of obtaining work while here and the extreme difficulty a man has with a family on his discharge to obtain the necessary sleeping accommodation for himself and his family even if he has the means at hand. His whole time is spent in this one endeavour, his first consideration, and is often the cause of his returning the same day.

Our aim is to obtain the necessary funds to enable us once more to get a fresh start in life and so relieve the Guardians of the custody of our families.⁴⁶

Again, it was men such as these who were being branded as 'nothing more than loafers' two years later by Guardians who, on the occasion of the presentation of the petition, voted by 16 to 0 to ignore it.

In fact the Guardians did allow some inmates out to look for work, leaving their families behind. From the beginning of 1909 to the end of 1912 there were 169 applications to leave the House leaving children chargeable.⁴⁷ The Guardians consented to 83 and refused consent to 86. Even requests for just one day's leave of absence were sometimes refused. If the applicant had a definite job to go to, as opposed to a general wish to go out and look for work, he was more likely to be given permission. In the case of the few women concerned the key variable working against their being given

consent was having illegitimate children. For example, in June 1912 Florence Bradick applied to leave the House taking one of her five children with her but leaving the others, for whom she offered to pay at the rate of 4s per child per week. She had the definite offer of a job at the Grand Hotel, but when the Clerk 'informed the Committee that the whole of Bradick's children were illegitimate', Bradick's application was not granted.⁴⁸

Two other women, however, with legitimate children, were favourably treated relative to the men. These found themselves jobs away from Brighton and were allowed to leave their children in the Warren Farm Schools more or less indefinitely on condition that they sent 2s a week towards the costs.⁴⁹

Strict adherence to the principle of no outdoor relief can be seen in these applications. One woman who was not in the House applied to have her child admitted so that she could take up an offer of employment; she was refused.⁵⁰ One man who was in the House applied to take himself and family out on condition that the Guardians agreed to make an order granting him out-relief but again they refused.⁵¹

Sometimes the inmates took matters into their own hands and simply absconded, or, having been given leave of absence, failed to return at the due time. Both were offences under the Vagrancy Act 1824, and throughout this period the Brighton Guardians applied to the courts for warrants against missing paupers at a steady rate of about six or so each year.⁵² It was a matter they treated very seriously, even to the extent of offering rewards of a guinea in the local papers for information leading to arrests.

Together, these policies of refusing to give the able-bodied outdoor relief, insisting that they bring their families in with them, often refusing to allow them out to look for work and pursuing unlawful absentees through the courts combined to give destitute men and women little choice but to enter the House and then made it very difficult for them to leave again. It may have seemed ironic to these reluctant detainees to find

themselves being blamed for being in the workhouse.

Alternative Sources of Help

Given the relative unemployability of the men and the shortage of work available, what alternatives were there other than the Poor Law?

National Insurance, against both sickness and unemployment, was not introduced until 1911, and no benefits were paid until January 1913. Before then workers in certain trade unions and friendly societies might have had some insurance, but the kinds of workers who made up the bulk of the inmates of the workhouse would scarcely have been affected by either. There were in any case only about 700,000 men covered by such schemes in the whole country in 1909.⁵³

The main formal source of help was the Distress Committee, set up under the 1905 Unemployed Workmen Act. It was a sub-committee of Brighton Town Council composed of Councillors and Guardians and had very limited powers. It could keep a register of all those who applied to it for work, and it could seek to find work for them, which the Brighton one did almost exclusively by asking the Town Council to provide a programme of works. The funding was supposed to have been supplied entirely by voluntary contribution, but after the first year a small sum of money, around £200,000 per year for the whole country, was provided by the Local Government Board towards the cost of wages. Wages were not allowed to be paid for out of the rates, even when work was being done for the Council. Its limitations were fatal to its effectiveness, and were openly acknowledged, not least by the Committee itself.

The Act prescribed that in order to qualify for assistance an applicant must be 'honestly desirous of obtaining work' and his case should be 'capable of more suitable treatment under the Act than under the Poor Law.' To these conditions the LGB added that the applicant must be 'of good character', with special preference given to those who had in the past been 'regularly employed, well-conducted and

thrifty'. These conditions were meant to limit such work as was available to the deserving unemployed.⁵⁴

It was widely acknowledged that the Distress Committees were able to offer the unemployed little help, and the Brighton Committee was no exception. Addressing a meeting of the Ratepayers Association in Brighton in 1907 Mr Donovan, who was both a member of the Committee and a Guardian, said

Unfortunately, the work the Distress Committee could offer only touched the fringe of the poverty and distress in the town. They could not employ more than 250 men at one time, and at the very outside they could not employ a man more than one week out of five.⁵⁵

Men were offered work one week at a time; from the annual reports of the Committee⁵⁶ we know that the average number of weeks' work offered to each man in the winters of 1905/6 to 1909/10 were respectively 3, 2.7, 2.5, 4, and 2.4., confirming Donovan's claim that the Distress Committee could only touch the fringe of poverty. It could not offer the means to keep men out of the workhouse.

Outdoor Relief: the 'Test' House

The only other source of public help potentially available to the able-bodied unemployed apart from the workhouse was outdoor relief, which could only be given in exceptional circumstances. The only way in which the Guardians could have given outdoor relief was by providing 'test' work at the House. This differed from the usual offer of the House in that if the man performed the test work then outdoor relief could be given to his family, and he need only be present at the House during the day.

In the winter of 1905/6 the Brighton Guardians did provide test work because of the exclusion of those who had been in receipt of parish relief from the help of the Distress Committees. The task consisted of picking feathers from 8.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. This suggests that the ordinary task work of the

House was not considered to be suitable for these men, who were, according to one Guardian:—'not professional unemployed, but were ready and willing to work.'⁵⁷

The work was on offer from the end of November until the end of March, during which time 31 families comprising 171 persons were relieved. The maximum amount of relief granted to any one family in any one week was 10s 7½d (for a family of 6 persons) and the minimum 6s 0½d (for a family of 4). In addition to these very small sums there would have been an allowance in kind.⁵⁸

The following year, and thereafter, the Guardians refused to re-open the test house. The arguments for renewing the scheme were the same as before; the arguments against the scheme centred on the difficulty of finding suitable work; the Guardians agreed that feather picking was 'unmanly', 'stupid', and 'not proper employment for able-bodied men', but they were unable to provide an alternative. The work was also deemed 'unproductive', with the Clerk claiming that 'they could not regard the relief as wages for work done, it was relief pure and simple.'⁵⁹

In rejecting it the Guardians were closing the only option they had of making outdoor relief available to the able-bodied men.

Charity

This left only charity. The irony was that the establishment of the Distress Committees had dried up the very source of funds upon which they were to have depended. Wages for work done were to have been paid entirely out of voluntary donations, and in this way it was intended that indiscriminate almsgiving to the unemployed was to have been checked and brought into a well-disciplined scheme. Reviewing the success of the Committees in achieving this objective and in raising funds for the unemployed the Majority Report of the Royal Commission on the Poor Laws commented;

In so far as the new bodies collected the money and focused the efforts of charity,

their action has undoubtedly been beneficial. But unfortunately the success of the new bodies in attracting the help of charity has become less and less.⁶⁰

The annual sums collected nationally by the Distress Committees fell from £105,000 in the first year to £36,000 in the second and a miserly £7,800 in the third. The Royal Commission attributed the fall entirely to the fact that, because the money raised by voluntary subscription was nowhere near adequate, an exchequer grant of £200,000 was paid after the first year of the scheme.

Charitable contributions have practically ceased, and a further object-lesson has been afforded of the truth that the charitable public will not easily or largely contribute towards purposes for which money is compulsorily taken from them by means of rates or taxes.⁶¹

The truth was rather that charitable contributions, even at £105,000 were insufficient to make any impression on the problem.

Charity in Brighton also quickly waned. In the first year of the operation of the Act the Mayor's Relief Fund, the medium through which the voluntary contributions were directed, raised £1,350. In each of the following years the amounts raised and used directly to fund the work of the Distress Committee were £990, £500, £1,100 (in the winter of 1908/9) and £850.⁶²

In addition to the direct contribution to the wages of the men the Mayor's Fund also dispensed dribbles of charity in the form of 1s tickets, which could be used to buy groceries. In the first year the sums dispensed amounted to £150, thereafter the figure was usually nearer £100. About 10 tons of coal were also distributed in 1 cwt lots, and around 1,000 bread tickets. (In the winter of 1908/9 a further lucky 825 men received tickets for free meals on condition that they attended the services conducted by the Rev. E. Aldon French at the Dome.)⁶³ The sums raised by charity in Brighton were never anything more than of marginal consequence.

Emigration

One other option was open to the men, at least for a while. The Distress Committee had the power to assist men to emigrate, but, having had its fingers burnt, it soon turned against this remedy. In the first year it sponsored six men and their families and in the following year 28. The arrangement was that the Committee would pay for the expenses and the men would repay once they were settled in Canada. However, hardly anyone did repay, which led it to conclude in 1908 that 'it was not advisable that any more applications should be entertained.'⁶⁴ Only one other man was helped to emigrate in the next three years.

The Guardians could also help with emigration, and in January 1906 ten able-bodied inmates were helped to go to Canada.⁶⁵ In March the Trades Council wrote to the Guardians vigorously deploring the use of emigration as a means of solving the unemployment problem,⁶⁶ but they need not have worried. After 1906 applications fell to about two or three a year, and were either from women wishing to take their children with them, or from children. Emigration as a solution to the problem of pauperism in Brighton was a non-starter.

BLAMING THE VICTIM

We began by asking whether the Guardians were justified in taking such apparently harsh measures against the able-bodied inmates. They knew the able-bodied were poor employment prospects, that unemployment was high, that their own policies worked against the men staying out of the House and made it difficult for them to leave, and that there were precious few alternatives for the destitute on the outside. Nevertheless, they ignored these facts which were well known to them and chose instead to blame the victim for his misfortune.

Such an analysis would not have been unfamiliar to some of the Guardians who argued against the majority approach. In April 1907 one of Guardians, Cllr Heun, argued that many of

the inmates could have been prevented from entering the House if they had been offered outdoor relief.⁶⁵ At the meeting where the special report was adopted Cllr Jarvis, the only dissenting voice, argued that as many as 300 inmates could be released if only they could be given 5s a week outdoor relief.⁶⁸

Alternative solutions were offered, in particular that task work should be discontinued. Throughout this period there were constant debates among the Guardians on the issue of suitable work for the inmates, which were the showground where they paraded their beliefs about the nature of the men.

The undisputed champion of task work was Mr Tindall, a Brighton hotelier. In February 1910 he moved a motion aimed at preventing paupers from doing any repair or maintenance work in the House, thus leaving them more available for task work. He pointed out that there was a regulation which required any work over the value of £50 to be put out to tender, and that

the system of setting the inmates to do the Workhouse repairs was most objectionable when there were honest working men tramping about the streets trying to get a job.⁶⁹

Both these points were reasonable, but the other pressing motive for his suggestion was that he believed all pauper inmates were loafers for whom only task work was suitable. He described the workhouse as a 'huge temple of sloth and a palace of idleness',⁷⁰ and in a letter to the local press, in which he claimed that there was only one able-bodied inmate of good character, followed up his contention by saying that the aim of his motion was to discourage

a class of disreputable and lazy vagabonds (for whom the Workhouse should not be intended) to make it their hotel.⁷¹

In October 1911, reporting a debate on a proposal to exempt all men over the age of 60 from task work, the *Brighton Herald* wrote;

No one would object to those of good character being excused from task work, but

Mr. Tindall was afraid that there are none of good character at the workhouse.⁷²

Against such opinions were ranged the views of those who argued that task work was degrading and unsuitable for those who were in the House through little fault of their own. The debates arose whenever there was any suggestion of using pauper labour for relatively major works, such as redecorating. In one such debate in June 1910 Mr Pocock

denounced the attitude of the Board towards the inmates as scandalous and cruel, in that the Board assumes that the inmates are worthless and should be put only to the criminal tasks of stone-pounding and oakum picking.⁷³

A month later he sought to overturn the measures introduced by the Special Committee, but to the delight of the *Brighton Herald*, who reported the meeting under the headline 'Pocock Pines to Pamper the Paupers', he failed by a margin of 17 votes to six. During the debate he argued that 'the Guardians have no right to punish a man just because he is destitute.'

It is a serious loss to the ratepayers generally that the men are not allowed to do any other work but this [oakum picking and stone pounding], and it is a libel on the inmates to say that they are loafing, lazy scoundrels who won't work. They *will* work if the Guardians given them the opportunity.⁷⁴

The Guardians were split on the issue. Whenever there was a motion to give workhouse maintenance work to outside contractors it was defeated, but the motion to ease up on task work was also defeated by much the same margin. The majority of the Guardians were thus simultaneously able to endorse the giving of task work and the giving of 'real' work, which of necessity took men away from punitive tasks.

DID THE REFORMS WORK?

As we can see in Figure 1 there is no doubt that from 1909 onwards the numbers of able-bodied men in the House fell so that by October

1912 there were only 38. How much can this fall be attributed to the success of the Guardians' tougher measures? Certainly Mr. Tindall was quick to claim that the reforms had worked. In a letter to the *Brighton Herald* in March 1910 he claimed:—

Last week the numbers in the Workhouse were more than 100 lower than the corresponding week of last year. There were 80 more than last year in the Workhouse who were over 60 years of age; consequently there must be a reduction of 180 in those under 60.⁷⁵

In July 1910 he claimed that

previous to the scheme being put in force the average increase weekly of the able-bodied inmates over that of the previous year had been 35. The moment the scheme started there was a decrease of 135 on the preceding year.⁷⁶

Establishing the accuracy of these claims is problematic as no detailed records exist for that period. We do know that the number of *all* adult male inmates on 1 January 1910 was 47 lower than on 1 January 1909,⁷⁷ which makes it extremely unlikely that the numbers of the able-bodied fell by anything like as much as 135. We also know that the total number of all inmates at the end of March 1910 was 156 down on the previous year,⁷⁸ which, in the absence of other factors, could support the view that the reforms were working. Such pointers as we have indicate that even if the measures did have an effect they were short-lived. From a call-over carried out in September 1909, just before the reforms began, we know that there were 154 able-bodied men in health in the House.⁷⁹ One year later this had *increased* to 178.⁸⁰ We know from the report of the Special Committee that the average weekly number of able-bodied inmates for the six months ending 26 June 1909 was 203. We cannot make a direct comparison with the corresponding six months in 1910 because we only have detailed records from the beginning of April 1910. These show an average weekly number of able-bodied inmates up to the end of

June 1910 to have been 184.⁸¹ As this comprised the three months without the worst of the winter it is very likely that the average six-monthly figure would not have been very different from that of the same period of 1909. We can make a full comparison for the first six months of 1911, by which time the weekly number of able-bodied men was 204, almost exactly back to the 1909 figures.⁸²

While the reforms may have made life less convenient for a while it is not surprising that their effect was less dramatic than their proponents had hoped. Almost certainly the changes were more likely to have been in policy rather than in practice. There were difficulties in classifying the men for task work, since as we have seen many were not physically up to hard work and would have been excused by the Medical Officer, and many of those who were designated for task work were often needed to do the ordinary work about the House. Almost immediately after the reforms were instigated it became apparent that the allocation of 109 of the 154 able-bodied inmates to task work left the Master short of men to do routine cleaning and maintenance jobs, so that less than a month after the measures were taken he applied to move 31 men back to house work.⁸³ The Committee reluctantly agreed to let him have 20. Thereafter at regular intervals he applied for permission to move half a dozen or so men from task to house work. By June 1910 there were only 78 men allocated to task work as against 93 to house work.⁸⁴

The crucial flaw in the reforms was that it was practically impossible to exact the amount of work demanded. The amount of stones to be broken had risen from 7 cwt in 1907 to 15 cwt by 1909, yet in reality it is unlikely that the men ever came anywhere near even the lower figure. Stone breaking was an extremely difficult task; Everard Wyvall, a journalist, posed as a pauper in 1909 and recorded his efforts at attempting to break a half ton block of granite:—

I smote with all my strength . . . I made no impression whatever.⁸⁵

Similarly, he recorded his efforts at stone-pounding:—

For half an hour I tried my best to pound these stones, but I seemed to make little or no impression upon them . . . Finally blisters put in an appearance, and these, breaking, the chafings gave way to blood, which soon began to trickle down my fingers . . . I do not think my hands were particularly tender, because the hands of the other men were affected in much the same way.⁸⁶

Oakum picking was described by Mary Higgs, the secretary of the Ladies Committee of the Oldham workhouse, who also disguised herself as a pauper;

Do you know what oakum is? A number of old ropes, some of them tarred, some knotted, are cut into lengths; you have to twist and unravel them inch by inch . . . After two hours I had perhaps done a quarter of a pound, and my fingers were getting sore, while the pile before me seemed to diminish little.⁸⁷

Whether the task was 7 cwt of stone-breaking or 15, 2 cwt of stonepounding or 4, 2 lbs of oakum or 4 made very little difference to the amounts actually done. Confirmation of this can be seen in the complaints which Tindall and his like-minded Guardians made from time to time about the laxity of the way in which the tasks were performed.⁸⁸ In October 1910 one Guardian made a surprise visit to the stoneyard and found that after six hours of work 'the amount of stone some of the men had pounded could be tied up in my handkerchief'. He went on to allege that although the men were recorded as pounding 2 cwt a day (which itself is of interest since one of the Special Committee changes had been to give the Master the discretion to raise this to 4 cwt) they could not possibly have done so. He based this claim on the fact that if all the men had pounded 2 cwt a day each, with 20 men at work this would mean that they would have used up 500 tons of stone a year, whereas in fact they only used 50 tons!⁸⁹

This statement was made during a debate in

TABLE 5

Percentage of adult inmates in the Brighton workhouse in each category in the first week of each quarter. Note: In October 1911 the classification of inmates changed; all men aged 60 or over were no longer classed as able-bodied. The figures in brackets are based on the new classification.

| | 1910 | | | 1911 | | | | 1912 | | | | |
|-----------------------|------|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|-------|------|------|------|------|
| | Apr | Jul | Oct | Jan | Apr | Jul | Oct | (Oct) | Jan | Apr | Jul | Oct |
| Non able-bodied men | 45 | 43 | 41 | 42 | 42 | 42 | 45 | (48) | (44) | (45) | (47) | (51) |
| Non able-bodied women | 32 | 36 | 34 | 30 | 30 | 33 | 34 | (36) | (34) | (37) | (38) | (49) |
| Able-bodied men | 16 | 14 | 17 | 19 | 17 | 15 | 12 | (9) | (13) | (11) | (9) | (4) |
| Able-bodied women | 7 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 9 | 9 | (8) | (9) | (7) | (6) | (6) |

which Tindall was attempting to ensure that proper records were kept of the amount of stone pounded. As the *Brighton Herald* ruefully commented

A curious point in the short discussion was the apparent certainty of the speakers that this instruction to the officials would not be taken notice of, and that it would be necessary to force their hands.⁹⁰

The Guardians might call for harsher tasks, but the Master and the Labour Masters, who had the day to day dealings with the men, had more compassion or realism, or both.

Tasks, however imperfectly done, were enforceable by law. Under Mr Burden, the Master in office at the time of the reforms, little use seems to have been made of the powers of compulsion; there is only one instance of a prosecution in the records from 1908 to his departure under a cloud early in 1911.⁹¹ The new Master, Mr Daking, had no such compunction; from August 1911, one month after his arrival, to March 1912 he sent 15 men to the courts for failing to perform their allotted task, for which they received prison sentences ranging from 10 to 21 days with hard labour.⁹² In March 1912 matters came to a head when he handed over seven men in one day to the courts, after which nothing was heard again about men refusing to work.⁹³ It may well have been the new Master's vigorous enforcement of task work, rather than the increase in the tasks themselves, which helped to encourage the men to leave.

Why The Numbers Fell

If the reforms had succeeded as the Committee had hoped the numbers of able-bodied in the workhouse would have fallen sharply in the winter of 1909/1910, but as we have seen this did not happen. As Table 5 shows,⁹⁴ for the next three years the proportion of able-bodied in the House was a relatively constant figure, year on year, until the very sharp drop in October 1912. The decline in the total numbers did not come about as a result of a particularly sharp drop late in 1909, nor was it a steady downward slope but rather a series of drops and plateaus.

Just as the main reason for the high numbers of able-bodied in the House in the winter of 1908/9 was the high level of unemployment so it seems highly probable that the subsequent fall in numbers was largely due to the improvement in outside employment prospects. We have seen that the numbers applying to the Distress Committee fell from 1908 onwards; we can see

TABLE 6

Percentage of men in trade unions who were registered as unemployed in England and Wales

| | |
|------|-----|
| 1909 | 7.7 |
| 1910 | 4.7 |
| 1911 | 3.0 |
| 1912 | 3.2 |
| 1913 | 2.1 |
| 1914 | 3.3 |

from Table 6 that the level of unemployment, as recorded by the numbers of unemployed men in trade unions, fell considerably between 1909 and 1914.⁹⁵ The men in the House would be those who are on the margins of employability and would always be the first to feel the effects of any unemployment and the last to feel the benefits when jobs became available once more.

After 1913 the effects of the National Insurance Act, which gave entitlement to health insurance to seven and a half million men and over three million women in England, will have had some effect. Over two and a half million unemployment insurance books were issued nationally, and in the first six months of 1913 there were 315,000 claims for benefit in London and the South-East.⁹⁶ There are however no local figures to show how much impact these made in Brighton.

The fall in the number of pauper inmates from January 1910 to 1914 was a national phenomenon,⁹⁷ and though, at 8.6 per cent, the national reduction was just under half that of Brighton's 19 per cent, it too signalled the general recovery of the economy which enabled the men to leave the Brighton workhouse as they did

workhouses all over the country. As the LGB Inspector for Kent and Sussex noted in April 1913:–

The past year has been one of good trade and the winter just over has been a very open one and it is to these facts as much as to recent social legislation [the National Insurance Act] that the present somewhat low rate of pauperism must be attributed.⁹⁸

When the Recruiting Officer came to the Brighton workhouse in August 1914 he could only find six men fit enough to be considered for army service.⁹⁹ The War solved the problem of unemployment in the short-term, and after the War the reluctance of successive Governments to send the unemployed, who were now called ex-servicemen, back on to the Poor Law eventually brought to an end the problem of the able-bodied inmate. After desperate attempts to make the post-war insurance schemes work, the government finally established the Unemployment Assistance Board in 1934, bringing back another form of outdoor relief as the alternative to the workhouse exactly 100 years after its abolition.

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Notes

¹ *Brighton Herald*, 1 August 1908.

² East Sussex Record Office (hereafter E.S.R.O.), RS/10/16, p. 201.

³ See *Yearbook of the Guardians of the Brighton Parish*, 1914. Brighton Reference Library, SB 339 G 93, pp. 66–7.

⁴ E.S.R.O., RS/10/26, p. 197.

⁵ See *Yearbook* for source from which Table 1 is compiled.

⁶ See *Annual Report of Ministry of Labour*, 1916, 210.

⁷ *Annual Report of the Local Government Board*, 1911, 36.

⁸ See *Pauperism (England and Wales) (Monthly Statistics)*, Statement for July 1915. (British Sessional Papers House of Commons, 1914–16, LIV, 873.)

⁹ E.S.R.O., RS/10/19, 10 January 1911.

¹⁰ See *Yearbook* for source from which Table 2 is compiled.

¹¹ E.S.R.O., RS/10/23, p. 95.

¹² *Yearbook*.

¹³ Weekly returns of inmates, (classified under non-able-bodied, able-bodied in health, able-bodied but temporarily disabled for both sexes, and children) are given in the

records of the Workhouse Master, E.S.R.O. R/S 18/1 and 18/2. These returns have been used to compile Fig. 1, Table 5, and all references to number of inmates in these classifications.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Annual Report of LGB* (1911).

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ E.S.R.O., RS/11/1, 10 October 1910.

¹⁸ E.S.R.O. RS/10/19, 10 January 1911.

¹⁹ E.S.R.O. 18/1 and 18/2.

²⁰ E.S.R.O., RS/10/16, p. 200 *et seq.* The recommendations are all taken from this report.

²¹ *Ibid.* p. 202.

²² *Brighton Herald*, 4 September 1909.

²³ See E.S.R.O., RS/10/15, 3 November 1908.

²⁴ For this and subsequent quotations from this meeting see *Brighton Herald*, 7 November 1908.

²⁵ E.S.R.O. RS/10/16.

²⁶ *Brighton Herald*, 4 September 1909.

²⁷ *Sussex Daily News*, 4 September 1909.

²⁸ E.S.R.O. R/S 18/1 and 18/2.

- ²⁹ *Royal Commission on the Poor Laws and Relief of Distress*, 1909, (hereafter *Royal Commission*, 1909), Appendix Volume XXIV, 13.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*, 13.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*, 6.
- ³² *Royal Commission*, 1909, Part IV. para. 488.
- ³³ *Ibid.*
- ³⁴ *Annual Report of L.G.B.*, 1910.
- ³⁵ *Ibid.*
- ³⁶ E.S.R.O. RS/10/12, 9 April 1907.
- ³⁷ Table 3 is compiled from *Annual Report of L.G.B.*, 1913, lxxxv.
- ³⁸ *Annual Report of L.G.B.*, 1911, 36.
- ³⁹ Table 4 has been compiled from the *Annual Reports of the County Borough of Brighton Distress Committee*, E.S.R.O. DB/B49/1-4.
- ⁴⁰ E.S.R.O., DB/B49/1, p. 112.
- ⁴¹ E.S.R.O., RS/10/14, 11 August 1908.
- ⁴² Data compiled from the minutes of the Workhouse Visiting Committee, E.S.R.O. RS/11/1.
- ⁴³ Poor Law Relief Regulation Order, 1911, Article II (1).
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, Article II (2) iii and iv.
- ⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, Article II (1).
- ⁴⁶ E.S.R.O., RS/10/11, 12 February 1907.
- ⁴⁷ E.S.R.O. RS/11/1.
- ⁴⁸ E.S.R.O. RS/11/1, 17 June 1912.
- ⁴⁹ *Ibid.* 11 May 1910 and 6 November 1911.
- ⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 10 October 1910.
- ⁵¹ *Ibid.* 4 October 1909.
- ⁵² E.S.R.O. RS/11/1.
- ⁵³ *18th Abstract of the Labour Statistics of the U.K.*, Min. of Labour. (1926) 94.
- ⁵⁴ For fuller discussion of the Act see *Royal Commission*, 1909, Part VI, chapt. 3, paras. 409-71.
- ⁵⁵ *Sussex Daily News*, 7 February 1907.
- ⁵⁶ E.S.R.O. DB/B49/1-4.
- ⁵⁷ *Sussex Daily News*, 19 December 1906.
- ⁵⁸ E.S.R.O. RS/10/11, 18 December 1906.
- ⁵⁹ For this and the other quotations in the para. see *Sussex Daily News*, 19 December 1906.
- ⁶⁰ *Royal Commission*, 1909, Part VI, chapt. 3, para. 462.
- ⁶¹ *Ibid.*
- ⁶² Figures compiled from E.S.R.O. DB/B49/1-4.
- ⁶³ *Ibid.*
- ⁶⁴ E.S.R.O. DB/B49/1, p.89.
- ⁶⁵ E.S.R.O. RS/10/9, 30 Jan. 1906.
- ⁶⁶ *Ibid.* 27 March 1906.
- ⁶⁷ *Sussex Daily News*, 10 April 1907.
- ⁶⁸ *Ibid.* 8 September 1909.
- ⁶⁹ *Brighton Herald*, 26 February 1910.
- ⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 26 February 1910.
- ⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 3 March 1910.
- ⁷² *Ibid.*, 21 October 1911.
- ⁷³ *Ibid.*, 4 June 1910.
- ⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 16 July 1910.
- ⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 3 March 1910.
- ⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 16 July 1910.
- ⁷⁷ *Yearbook*.
- ⁷⁸ *Yearbook*.
- ⁷⁹ E.S.R.O. RS/11/1, 20 September 1909.
- ⁸⁰ E.S.R.O. R/S 18/1 and 18/2.
- ⁸¹ *Ibid.*
- ⁸² *Ibid.*
- ⁸³ E.S.R.O. RS/11/1, 4 October 1909.
- ⁸⁴ *Ibid.* 13 June 1910.
- ⁸⁵ E. Wyvall, *The Spike*, (1909), quoted in N. Longmate *The Workhouse*, Purnell Book Services, Book Club Edition, undated, 253.
- ⁸⁶ *Ibid.* pp. 253-4.
- ⁸⁷ M. Higgs, *The Tramp Ward*, Manchester, 1904, quoted in Longmate, *op. cit.*, 254.
- ⁸⁸ See for example *Brighton Herald*, 26 February 1910.
- ⁸⁹ *Brighton Herald*, 6 October 1910.
- ⁹⁰ *Ibid.*
- ⁹¹ E.S.R.O., RS/11/1, 11 January 1909. (Mr Burden, the Master of the workhouse, resigned through ill health after a scandal in which he was eventually prosecuted for misappropriating workhouse meat for his own use.)
- ⁹² Data compiled from E.S.R.O., RS/18/1.
- ⁹³ E.S.R.O., RS/18/1, 27 March 1912.
- ⁹⁴ E.S.R.O. R/S 18/1 and 18/2.
- ⁹⁵ *Annual Report of Ministry of Labour*, 1916.
- ⁹⁶ *16th Abstract of Labour Statistics*, Min. of Labour, 1913, 15-16.
- ⁹⁷ See note 8 for source of monthly statistics on pauperism in England and Wales.
- ⁹⁸ *Annual Report of L.G.B.*, 1913, 14.
- ⁹⁹ E.S.R.O., RS/18/2, 26 August 1914.