

From ‘Ignorant Mothers’ to ‘Conscientious Fathers’: Cornwall and the Vaccination Act, 1840-1907

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*Thesis
Submitted to Flinders University
for the degree of*

Doctor of Philosophy
College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences
July 2018

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university; and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

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March 2018

Acknowledgments

I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the support and guidance that I have received from my supervisors, Philip Payton and Catherine Kevin, throughout my candidature. I am so grateful to have had such a wonderful team behind me as I conducted this research. Without your dedication, your kindness, and your encouragement, this thesis would never have come to fruition. Thank you for always believing in me and building my confidence as I worked my way through this project. I also thank you both for pushing me to share my research with the world. I am honoured to have been able to work with you both.

To the wonderful team of historians at Flinders University who have supported me throughout this journey, I am very grateful for all that you have done for me. I am so very appreciative of the faith you have all placed in me. In particular, my thanks go to Romain Fathi for the guidance you have given me over the last year of my candidature, it is very much appreciated.

To my family, my parents Alan and Sue, my brother David, and my grandparents Les and Thelma, my partner Adam, and his parents Peter and Kerry, thank you all for the wonderful support and encouragement you have provided me over the years. It would not have been possible to get this far with my research without you all. Your love and kindness has kept me going through the most challenging of times. I am forever grateful.

Thank you also to all my wonderful friends. To Paul, Ellen, and Kieran, it has been an honour to take this journey with you. I am excited to see what the future holds for us all. To Michelle, Sarah, Brodie, Rachael, Lauren, and Karlee, thank you for being some of the best friends anyone could ask for. Thank you all for putting up with my endless excitement about all things weird in history and for encouraging me as I pursued this research.

Finally, I acknowledge the contribution of the Australian Government through the Research Training Program that has enabled me to undertake this thesis.

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Abstract

Vaccination has always been a contentious issue; from Edward Jenner's first successful experiment with the cowpox vaccine in 1796 to the modern day, the procedure has had its opponents. Whilst there have been some inroads made into the history of vaccination, the subject remains under-researched. This thesis builds upon the existing historiography of the procedure and its opponents to undertake a region-specific study of the Vaccination Act, argued to be one of the earliest examples of state intervention into medicine and public health in Britain. The first Vaccination Act for England and Wales was introduced in 1840 and, whilst it did not make vaccination compulsory, it outlawed the earlier practice of inoculation (also called variolation), attracting many critics amongst the lower classes and amongst those employed to perform the inoculation procedure itself. Throughout the nineteenth century, the Vaccination Act would be amended several times, first to make the procedure compulsory, then to strengthen the penalties for those who did not comply, and then to allow for conscientious objectors to exempt their children from the law. The existing body of literature on the topic of vaccination in the nineteenth century takes a broad look at the Act and its opponents. In taking a region-specific approach, this thesis contends that there was no uniform enforcement of the Vaccination Act across England. It is also argued that opposition to the procedure varied from region to region throughout the country.

For many historians of vaccination, opposition to the procedure did not begin to emerge until the late 1860s and early 1870s, as a response to the harsher penalties that were enacted through the 1867 amendment. However, by examining the role of folklore and traditional healthcare practices, this thesis shows that the roots of anti-vaccinationism were already observable amongst the peoples of the South-West, particularly those in Cornwall who clung to traditional 'Celtic' beliefs in the face of ever-encroaching modernity. In the earliest years following the introduction of compulsory vaccination, passive forms of opposing the Act continued to spread amongst the population and Boards of Guardians, the local government bodies responsible for enforcing the Act, began the process of prosecuting those in their Poor Law Unions who refused to vaccinate their children. For the most part, early opposition to vaccination was largely dismissed by authorities as being the result of 'ignorance' amongst the poor, uneducated women living outside the major urban centres. Following the 1867 amendment, harsher penalties were enforced, and a new type of anti-vaccinationist began to emerge; the 'conscientious father', a man who was willing to take any punishment meted out by the government to protect his children from a procedure he considered unnecessary and dangerous.

The 'Conscientious Fathers' phase of vaccine objection is the focus of much of the existing historiography. However, this thesis contends that a region-specific approach is essential to understanding exactly how the enforcement of the Vaccination Act, and the opposition that subsequently arose, varied across England. Using the example of Cornwall during this period, it is

argued that historians cannot simply present a uniform history of vaccination and anti-vaccinationism in England. Individual anti-vaccinationists and their involvement in the movement are examined, through the examples of two brothers from Truro, to examine how anti-vaccinationism as a concept functioned in a county without any formally-established branches of anti-vaccination leagues or societies. With regards to the enforcement of the Act itself, the established concept of two separate 'Cornwalls' existing is put into practice, revealing that the Act itself was enforced very differently in the rural North than it was in the more populous West. Finally, the impact of the sustained propaganda campaigns that the urban anti-vaccination societies of the nineteenth century are renowned for are examined in the Cornish context, through an analysis of the role that conspiracy theories played in the development of a uniquely Cornish anti-vaccination movement. This thesis fills a gap that exists between a broad history of vaccination and a more nuanced understanding of the regional and cultural differences that existed across the country.

Introduction

The oft-repeated story of vaccination in Britain begins with the revolutionary discovery by Edward Jenner that a case of cowpox, deliberately introduced into the body, could prevent an individual from contracting the more serious viral infection; smallpox. Following this discovery, as the general narrative implies, the practice was initially treated with suspicion by many, but eventually it was accepted universally. This narrative discusses the history of vaccination as though it was a simple progression from the 'primitive' practices of smallpox prevention prior Jenner's discovery, to the 'modern' and 'enlightened' practice of vaccination. This is particularly evidenced in the historiography when authors consider the history of smallpox as a whole; from its early ravages amongst pre-industrial populations, through the era of vaccination, to the eventual eradication of the disease in December 1979. A prevailing cause of this simplified narrative of success is the tendency for histories of smallpox (and, in turn, vaccination) to be written, not by historians, but rather by medical professionals. The most obvious case of this can be found in the work of Donald A. Henderson. Henderson, an American medical doctor, led the international effort that ultimately resulted in the eradication of smallpox. As a result, his impact upon the story of smallpox is undeniable and his writings on the subject present a very 'heroic' tale of the struggle of humanity to overcome the scourge of smallpox. In 1997, two decades after his project to eradicate smallpox had finished, Henderson presented a history of the disease to the Royal Society of London. In an article tellingly entitled 'The Miracle of Vaccination', Henderson charted the history of the practice from Jenner's discovery, reverentially referring to 14 May 1796 (the day when Jenner conducted his first vaccination) as 'that truly momentous event in the annals of medicine'.¹ From this point, Henderson goes on to claim that Jenner's method was instantly successful, stating that

Edward Jenner's discovery of a method to protect against mankind's most feared disease was understandably hailed as one of the most important advances in medical history. Within five years, the cowpox vaccine had been sent by sailing vessel to countries on every continent. Even by today's standards, this was an incredibly rapid dispersion of technology.²

Henderson's narrative merely glosses over the controversial nature of the smallpox vaccine and the, often rabid, opposition to the procedure that permeated the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. A similar story was presented in another publication to which Henderson contributed. Published by the World Health Organisation in celebration of the success of the global smallpox eradication programme, *Smallpox and Its Eradication* also relies upon the notion that vaccination was rapidly dispersed across the globe as proof of its immediate acceptance.³ However, this claim is not

¹ Donald A. Henderson, 'The Miracle of Vaccination', *Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London*, vol. 51, no. 2, 1997, 236.

² Henderson, 'The Miracle of Vaccination', 236.

³ F. Fenner, D.A. Henderson, I. Arita, Z. Jezek, and I.D. Ladnyi, *Smallpox and Its Eradication*, World Health Organization, Geneva, 1988, 261-263.

enough to substantiate the 'heroic' narrative of progress that Henderson later outlined. The dispersal of the vaccine is of no relevance if a historian does not consider how readily the procedure was accepted by those who received it. Without a proper historical foundation, Henderson's narrative falls into the trap of ignoring two centuries of controversy and opposition, as his attention is focused on his team's ultimate success in finally eradicating the disease. Indeed, 'The Miracle of Vaccination' includes no acknowledgment that any opposition to the procedure existed at all, not even mentioning any of the differing scientific theories that were proposed, both those that attempted to explain how vaccination worked and those that tried to discredit it. Instead, Henderson presents a 'heroic' account of the progression from the discovery of the cowpox vaccine to the eventual eradication of the disease in the last decades of the twentieth century.

Reading the history of smallpox as authors like Henderson have done, as the progression from revolutionary discovery through to eventual eradication, denies the historical agency of those who, throughout the nineteenth century, maintained a staunch opposition to a procedure that seemed to counteract all they knew about the prevention of disease. As Anne Eriksen contends, 'traditional medical history used to present a continuity from inoculation to Jenner's vaccine in 1798 and subsequently to the national vaccination programmes of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, ending in total triumph with the global eradication of smallpox in the 1980s'.⁴ However, since the rise of the new medical history in the 1970s, historians have devoted their attention to the importance of studying the beliefs that surrounded certain medical practices, as well as illness and health in general, challenging the traditional notion that medical advancement has been relatively smooth and uncomplicated throughout human history. This approach is by no means limited to theories of health or disease, but also can be employed to analyse the implementation of certain medical tools or instruments, such as has been suggested by Alison Nuttall through her work in analysing the reception that forceps received upon their introduction into the Edinburgh Royal Maternity Hospital.⁵ This thesis adopts this approach, studying the beliefs that surrounded vaccination in the nineteenth century to develop an understanding of why such a critical advancement in biomedical science was received with such controversy. From our modern standpoint, we know that the benefits of vaccination against smallpox far outweighed the potential dangers associated with it because we know that smallpox would ultimately be defeated. In the nineteenth century, this conclusion was far from certain. In the 1850s and 1860s, pro-vaccine organisations and public health authorities occasionally referred to the prospect of eradicating smallpox from the British Isles, but these discussions did not convey a sense of steadfast belief that this was at all an achievable prospect.⁶ Some historians have, indeed, emphasised this fact,

⁴ Anne Eriksen, 'Cure or Protection? The Meaning of Smallpox Inoculation, ca 1750-1775', *Medical History*, vol. 57, no. 4, 2013, 516.

⁵ Alison Nuttall, 'Passive Trust or Active Application: Changes in the Management of Difficult Childbirth and the Edinburgh Royal Maternity Hospital, 1850-1890', *Medical History*, vol. 50, no. 3, 2006, 351.

⁶ For example: *The Morning Post*, 25 January 1854; *Leeds Times*, 28 April 1855; *Sheffield and Rotherham Independent Supplement*, 1 October 1864.

arguing that opposition to vaccination was a natural outcome of the introduction of the procedure and that this opposition only intensified in England and Wales when the Vaccination Act was amended in 1853 to make the procedure compulsory for all children under three months of age.

The historiography of vaccination opposition in Britain, however, again falls short when one wishes to consider the earliest phases of such opposition. For many historians of British vaccine opposition, vaccination became compulsory in 1853, but opposition did not truly appear until the 1870s. This thesis will argue that there were at least two distinct phases of vaccine opposition in England (exclusive of Scotland, Ireland, and Wales): the first pre-dates the 1853 amendment to the Vaccination Act and was largely grassroots and unorganised in nature; the second phase is that which is so often studied by historians of vaccine opposition, finding its origins in the 1870s and continuing beyond the introduction of the 'conscientious objection' clause to the Act in 1898. That the history of vaccine objection can be broken down into separate phases is a concept that has previously been established by the work of E.P. Hennock.⁷ Based upon the evidence gathered from primary sources, the first of these phases will be referred to as the 'Ignorant Mothers' phase, in which the opposition to the procedure was largely blamed upon the ignorance of the poor and working class mothers who could not comprehend the science behind vaccination. In this phase, opposition was largely unorganised, with individuals rejecting the procedure in favour of its predecessor, inoculation (or variolation), which was decidedly more dangerous. Ultimately, it will be argued that the perception of the 'Ignorant Mother' as the driving force behind the opposition to vaccination provided the impetus for the government to make vaccination compulsory through the 1853 amendment to the Act. The second phase of vaccine opposition will be referred to as the 'Conscientious Fathers' phase. This definition clearly highlights the fact that the two phases are opposites and reflects the notion that emerged amongst anti-vaccinationists in the later nineteenth century that to oppose vaccination was to perform one's 'manly duty' as a father. The 'Conscientious Fathers' phase also reflects the rise of the concept of the 'conscientious objector' through the lens of those who perceived themselves to be as such.

The 'Conscientious Fathers' phase has been most widely represented in the established historiography. As such, the overarching aims of this thesis are two-fold; firstly, the notion that vaccination opposition began with the emergence of organised anti-vaccination societies in the 1870s will be challenged by an examination of the ways in which individuals before this time expressed their own opposition to the procedure. Secondly, the idea that these major anti-vaccination societies define the anti-vaccination movement in the later phase will also be challenged through an examination of the county of Cornwall. The selection of Cornwall as the

⁷ E.P. Hennock, 'Vaccination Policy Against Smallpox, 1835-1914: A Comparison of England with Prussia and Imperial Germany', *Social History of Medicine*, vol. 11, no. 1, 1998, 49-71.

basis for this study is a measured one. Existing on the periphery of English society,⁸ Cornwall presents a pertinent example of the earlier, grassroots opposition to vaccination; a period of opposition that is largely missing from broader studies of the history of vaccine objection. With regards to the later period of objection, Cornwall presents a unique challenge to the established notion that organised societies drove the anti-vaccination movement across England, through both the larger organisations that were based in metropolitan areas and the smaller branches of these societies that appeared in communities across the country. No study has yet been conducted outside of the involvement of these anti-vaccination societies in the organisation of opposition amongst certain communities. Cornwall presents a unique opportunity for this to be undertaken as there were no local branches of these societies established in the county until 1902, far too late to have had any real impact on Cornish anti-vaccinationists.⁹ As a result of the nature of this study, a great deal of emphasis is placed upon the need for primary sources to establish the history of vaccination opposition in Cornwall before any attempt can be made to challenge the established historiography. A number of historians have examined the history of vaccine opposition in Britain and it is certainly an attractive subject, given its potential relevance to the modern anti-vaccination movement. However, this thesis will argue that it is necessary to take a region-specific approach to examine how anti-vaccinationism actually functioned on the ground during the nineteenth century.

Region-specific studies have proven to be very useful for historians of medicine. Alun Withey's examination of apothecaries and the medical marketplace in early-modern Wales is a pertinent example of the benefits that can be derived from studying the history of medicine in regional Britain.¹⁰ Withey asserts that historians of medicine must challenge the accepted universality of medical experiences, drawing attention away from well-studied urban environments, such as London and Edinburgh, and towards the periphery. To demonstrate this, Withey focuses his attention on Wales, both geographically and linguistically isolated from the urban centre.¹¹ The uniqueness of the Welsh experience of medicine is of critical benefit to Withey, who demonstrates that Wales has been neglected in the historiography, specifically surrounding the sale of apothecary medicines in the early modern period. Whilst he seeks to place Wales in the context of a broader British medical historiography, Withey acknowledges that the sale of these medicines was not homogenous across the regional Welsh context, an acknowledgment that is of particular importance in developing a more comprehensive understanding of medical history across the

⁸ See Philip Payton, *The Making of Modern Cornwall: Historical Experience and the Persistence of 'Difference'*, Dyllansow Truran, Redruth, 1992; Philip Payton, *Cornwall: A History*, 3rd. ed., University of Exeter Press, Exeter, 2017; Bernard Deacon, *A Concise History of Cornwall*, University of Wales Press, Cardiff, 2007.

⁹ The Penryn and District Anti-Vaccination League was founded in 1902 but there is little to no evidence that it survived for very long. Only one letter to the editor in April 1902 can be found in which the name of the League was invoked and there are no records of the organisation that survive in archives.

¹⁰ Alun Withey, "Persons that live remote from London": Apothecaries and the Medical Marketplace in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Wales', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, vol. 85, no. 2, 2011, 222-47.

¹¹ Withey, "Persons that live remote from London", 224.

border in England.¹² Using Withey's conclusions that a singular, universal history of medicine cannot be considered to encompass all of Wales, it can similarly be concluded that the same cannot be said for England and this thesis intends to demonstrate that the Cornish experience of smallpox vaccination can highlight this.

The investigation of vaccine opposition within the context of a single county has been considered in the existing historiography. Ann Clark's work on compliance with vaccine legislation in the rural community of Hollingbourne, Kent, has raised the notion that examining such complex historical themes as vaccine opposition from the ground up, and within discrete regional settings, is a valid way to undertake this research.¹³ Clark challenges the existing historiography of public health in nineteenth century Britain, a body of literature that she describes as 'preoccupied with the unfolding of dramatic change in cities' at the expense of rural England.¹⁴ This approach is particularly evident in the work of Nadja Durbach who, despite being one of the most prolific historians of anti-vaccinationism, focuses her attention largely on the urban working-class in major centres such as London, Sheffield, Gloucester, and Leicester.¹⁵ The conclusions drawn by Clark in her study of Hollingbourne are important, not just for what they say about compliance with vaccination legislation in that specific part of Kent, but also for what these results reveal is lacking in the existing historiography. Of particular interest is Clark's assertion that her research shows that the working-classes in this area of rural Kent, during the later phase of compulsory vaccine opposition were actually more compliant with the legislation than their professional and trade counterparts.¹⁶ This contradicts the more general statements made by Durbach through her urban-centric study of the role of class in this debate. In 'Class, Gender, and the Conscientious Objector to Vaccination', Durbach expresses her understanding that the majority of opponents to compulsory vaccination in Britain at the turn of the twentieth century were working-class.¹⁷ The disparity between the general statements made by Durbach and the findings of Clark in her investigation of rural Kent reveals one of the most critical issues with the historiography of opposition to compulsory vaccination in England; the experience of the urban population is taken to be representative of the whole.

Clark sets in motion a challenge to historians of British public health, calling for more region-specific studies of issues that have been generalised in the existing historiography. Her work is limited only to this specific area of Kent, an area which she openly acknowledges performed vaccination in an unusual way, and, as a result, her findings cannot be considered representative of any other part of England, or even of other districts of the same county.¹⁸ This is not considered

¹² Withey, "'Persons that live remote from London', 225.

¹³ Ann Clark, 'Compliance with Infant Smallpox Vaccination Legislation in Nineteenth-Century Rural England: Hollingbourne, 1876-88', *Social History of Medicine*, vol. 17, no. 2, 2004, 175-198.

¹⁴ Clark, 'Compliance with Infant Smallpox Vaccination Legislation', 175.

¹⁵ Durbach, 'They Might As Well Brand Us', 45-62.

¹⁶ Clark, 'Compliance with Infant Smallpox Vaccination Legislation', 194.

¹⁷ Durbach, 'Class, Gender, and the Conscientious Objector to Vaccination', 59.

¹⁸ Clark, 'Compliance with Infant Smallpox Vaccination Legislation', 196.

a limitation of her work but, rather, a great example of why sweeping statements, supposedly representing the experiences of all in England, are detrimental to an understanding of opposition to compulsory vaccination in the nineteenth-century. If the conclusions Clark has drawn for Hollingbourne contradict the accepted mainstream narrative of vaccine opposition in England, then this is clear evidence of the need for further investigation into rural experiences under this particular legislation. Looking beyond the boundaries of the major urban centres, as critically important as they are, adds flesh to the bones of this story and highlights just how varied life was across the entire nation. Yet, beyond Clark's study of Hollingbourne, there are few (if any) examinations of other rural communities and their responses to the compulsory vaccination legislation. There have been specific studies for urban centres, particularly London and Leicester,¹⁹ but, on the whole, the study of smallpox vaccination has expanded in the other direction, with an entire volume of *The Bulletin of the History of Medicine* dedicated to the introduction of the smallpox vaccine to a wide variety of nations, including Australia, Spain, the West Indies, Japan, and India. Whilst it is absolutely critical that historians understand the story of vaccination in every nation, Sanjoy Bhattacharya and Niels Brimnes argue that it is through this global approach to this particular aspect of history that notions of universality and uniformity can be challenged.²⁰ This thesis contends that it is also necessary to examine smallpox vaccination as a form of micro-history, one which has reverberations for the existing macro-history. That is, in order to better understand the history of smallpox vaccination in England, we must undertake region-specific studies, as evidenced by Clark.

Joseph R. Fitchett and David L. Heymann's article is characteristic of studies that examine only the second phase of vaccine opposition in England, focusing exclusively on the organised opposition to the procedure through anti-vaccination societies.²¹ Fitchett and Heymann's primary source materials are exclusively derived from the archives of anti-vaccination societies, particularly from branches of the National Anti-Vaccination League (NAVL) and draws heavily on literature produced by some of the most prominent vaccine opponents in nineteenth-century England, such as the naturalist Alfred Russel Wallace, and businessman William Tebb. For Fitchett and Heymann, there were many reasons for vaccine opposition, including issues of hygiene and sanitation, as well as a

¹⁹ Ann Beck, 'Issues in the Anti-Vaccination Movement in England', *Medical History*, vol. 4, no. 4, 1960, 310-321; Dale-L. Ross, 'Leicester and the Anti-Vaccination Movement, 1853-1889', *Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society Transactions*, vol. 43, 1967-1968, 35-44; Anne Hardy, 'Smallpox in London: Factors in the Decline of the Disease in the Nineteenth Century', *Medical History*, vol. 27, 1983, 111-138; S. Williamson, 'Anti-Vaccination Leagues', *Archives of Disease in Childhood*, vol. 59, 1984, 1195-1196; J.D. Swales, 'The Leicester Anti-Vaccination Movement', *The Lancet*, vol. 340, 1992, 1019-1021; Martin Fichman and Jennifer E. Keelan, 'Resister's Logic: The Anti-Vaccination Arguments of Alfred Russel Wallace and Their Role in the Debates Over Compulsory Vaccination in England, 1870-1907', *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science*, vol. 38, no. 3, 2007, 585-607.

²⁰ Sanjoy Bhattacharya & Niels Brimnes, 'Introduction: Simultaneously Global and Local: Reassessing Smallpox Vaccination and Its Spread, 1789-1900', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, vol. 83, no. 1, 2009, 1-16.

²¹ Joseph R. Fitchett and David L. Heymann, 'Smallpox Vaccination and Opposition by Anti-Vaccination Societies in 19th Century Britain', *Historia Medicinæ*, vol. 2, no. 1, 2011, 1-13.

vigorous debate regarding civil liberties.²² These issues are indeed characteristic of the later phase of vaccine opposition in England and Fitchett and Heymann provide some excellent primary source material to illustrate the intricacies of this debate. However, what is missing is any discussion of what came before the NAVL and its parallel organisations. The NAVL was established in 1896, just two years before the campaign to recognise conscientious objection as a legal right in the vaccination debate achieved its goal. The organisation was a conglomeration of many of the earlier anti-vaccination societies and, as such, had essentially existed in its varying components for three decades. However, focusing solely on the NAVL means that this analysis, by necessity, excludes the earliest phase of vaccine opposition in England and, as a result, Fitchett and Heymann make no mention of anything that occurred in the 'Ignorant Mothers' phase, prior to the establishment of national opposition societies.

Durbach's ground-breaking monograph *Bodily Matters* makes very little reference to the period of vaccine opposition that pre-dated the 1867 amendment making penalties under the Vaccination Act harsher. In the introduction to *Bodily Matters*, Durbach defines her subject matter as follows:

the first vaccination act [referring to the 1853 amendment, not the original Act of 1840] provoked outrage from heterodox medical practitioners and was blatantly disregarded by many parents; organized and widespread resistance to vaccination, however, emerged largely after the more stringent 1867 act was passed.²³

With this statement, Durbach brushes aside the 'Ignorant Mothers' phase of vaccine objection and focuses the reader's attention on the later 'Conscientious Fathers' phase instead. This thesis will contend that what Durbach dismisses as simple evidence of a law being 'blatantly disregarded by many parents' is actually a critical component of vaccine opposition in English history. A so-called 'blatant disregard' for the law can be understood as much as evidence of opposition to compulsory vaccination as the formation of organisations to agitate against it. This thesis counters Durbach's statement and aims to show that opposition to vaccination in England did not begin with the formation of the first national anti-vaccination societies. Rather, this is simply the point at which the mode of opposition was changed through the increasing influence of the middle-classes following the introduction of the 1867 amendment. As Durbach herself contends, her work focuses on 'the vaccination debate at its most heated'.²⁴

Durbach's approach to anti-vaccinationism in nineteenth-century England is, however, very receptive to the idea that this debate was as much about class as it was about medical practice. In fact, the role of class divisions in the vaccination debate forms the basis of several of Durbach's articles on the subject. Despite her interest in the objections of the working classes to the imposition of compulsory vaccination, Durbach focuses firmly on the latter stages of opposition, the

²² Fitchett and Heymann, 'Smallpox Vaccination and Opposition by Anti-Vaccination Societies', 2,4.

²³ Nadja Durbach, *Bodily Matters: The Anti-Vaccination Movement in England, 1853-1907*, Durham, Duke University Press, 2005, 11.

²⁴ Durbach, *Bodily Matters*, 11.

organised phase that is so often associated with the middle classes. Although she does not engage with the earliest phases of vaccine opposition, Durbach's work has been instrumental in cementing the place of the working classes in the history of vaccine objection and she has disproven the contention amongst contemporary pro-vaccinationists that the lower classes of British society did not have the requisite intelligence to object conscientiously to the procedure.²⁵ As a result, Durbach has been instrumental in restoring the agency of lower-class anti-vaccinationists in the later phase of vaccine objection and this thesis aims to extend her work to include a discussion of the critical role that the lower-classes played in the earliest phase as well. In addition to her focus on the role of the working-classes, Durbach also highlighted the importance of the print media in the anti-vaccination campaign. The organised societies that dominated the later phase of the debate were instrumental in establishing a network of members through which pamphlets, books and handbills could be disseminated to the general public throughout the country.²⁶ Even in areas without an established local branch of an anti-vaccination society, such as Cornwall, individuals who subscribed to the large metropolitan leagues were responsible for disseminating anti-vaccinationist literature to the masses. These individuals would hand out flyers on the streets, deposit leaflets at vaccination stations, and mail postcards to new parents, 'warning them that vaccination would only "Welcome Early Death"'.²⁷

As the work of Fitchett and Heymann has shown, much of this print media has been retained in archives and forms the basis of many studies that place the inner-workings of the organised societies at the core of the narrative of anti-vaccinationism in the nineteenth century. Indeed, for Fitchett and Heymann, true anti-vaccinationist agitation only emerged with the rise of the organised societies and their publications.²⁸ However, the propaganda machine of the anti-vaccination societies went far beyond the enormous print runs of their own pamphlets and handbills. There were at least three anti-vaccinationist journals in operation; Henry Pitman's *The Anti-Vaccinator* was published in Manchester and ran for eighteen issues between 1869 and 1873, before being incorporated into another of Pitman's publications.²⁹ Between 1874 and 1884, William Hume-Rothery published eight volumes of the *National Anti-Compulsory Vaccination Reporter* from Cheltenham, attacking vaccination as an offence to the natural liberties of the freeborn Englishman. In 1879, William Tebb began to publish the *Vaccination Inquirer*, the official journal of the London Society for the Abolition of Compulsory Vaccination (LSACV). This publication was the longest lived of any periodical that had its roots in the nineteenth-century anti-vaccination movement, with the

²⁵ Nadja Durbach, "'They Might As Well Brand Us': Working-Class Resistance to Compulsory Vaccination', *Social History of Medicine*, vol. 13, no. 1, 2000, 45-63; Nadja Durbach, 'Class, Gender, and the Conscientious Objector to Vaccination, 1898-1907', *Journal of British Studies*, vol. 41, no. 1, 2002, 58-83.

²⁶ Durbach, *Bodily Matters*, 47.

²⁷ Durbach, *Bodily Matters*, 50.

²⁸ Fitchett and Heymann, 'Smallpox Vaccination and Opposition by Anti-Vaccination Societies'.

²⁹ *The Anti-Vaccinator's* masthead included a quotation from a prominent anti-vaccinationist doctor, Garth Wilkinson; 'Other Wars are Toward Death, but in this Crusade the War is Against Death'. *The Anti-Vaccinator*, no. 4, November 9, 1869.

last issue published in 1971, some 92 years after Tebb had established it. There was also a plethora of materials designed to appeal to the illiterate or semi-literate lower classes. Posters and prints, photographs and public lectures were all designed to attract the attention of the ordinary citizen. Some of these images were extremely graphic in nature, depicting what many believed to be the horrific side-effects of the vaccination procedure. Some local branches of anti-vaccination societies were more creative in their approach, as Durbach has documented: 'the Birmingham Anti-Variole League's magic-lantern show was so successful that multiple copies of the slides were circulated among Northern audiences'.³⁰

Another critical component of the anti-vaccination campaign's substantial propaganda machine was a nationwide letter writing campaign, attacking vaccination in the correspondence columns of national, metropolitan, and regional newspapers. This arm of the campaign has formed the focus of this thesis, with newspapers from across the south west of England, and beyond, serving as an archive of anti-vaccinationist thought. Whilst prominent members of organised societies such as William Tebb, William Hume-Rothery, James R Williamson, and William Young were amongst the most prolific writers of these letters, the fact that the letters appeared in publications outside of the control of the major organisations provides a unique opportunity to study the impact of the anti-vaccination campaign on the periphery of English society. By engaging in a public debate through the columns of these newspapers, anti-vaccinationists could not only spread their message beyond the reaches of their flyers and handbills, they could also engage, not just with their pro-vaccinationist opponents, but also with others who opposed the procedure but who did not necessarily belong to any organised societies. The letters of those individuals who were not prominent in the movement but who maintained a staunch opposition to the vaccination procedure are invaluable to the story of the anti-vaccination movement of the nineteenth-century. The use of letters to the editor and newspaper articles to form the basis of this research is also designed to circumvent one of the most critical problems with research into the administration of the Vaccination Acts in rural and regional areas. As Clark encountered in her Hollingbourne case-study, 'unlike the census and registration processes, the system did not require vaccination registers to be copied and held or checked centrally ... what should be a universal source (because of its basis in legislation) enjoys only patchy survival'.³¹ This is not the first study to incorporate the newspaper correspondence of the anti-vaccinationists into the broader story of the vaccination debate; Durbach provides excellent examples of such letters in *Bodily Matters*. However, this thesis relies primarily on the evidence that has been gleaned from these letters, rather than on the archived materials of the major anti-vaccination societies. This approach has been taken deliberately in an effort to break away from the influence of these societies and examine the

³⁰ Durbach, *Bodily Matters*, 48.

³¹ Clark, 'Compliance with Infant Smallpox Vaccination Legislation in Nineteenth-Century Rural England', 197-198. In the case of Cornwall, vaccination registers from only one registration district, St Stephens in Brannel, have survived to the present day. They have been archived by the Cornwall Record Office, reference numbers X899/1-X899/6 for the series.

realities of the anti-vaccination movement on the ground in an area of England that was, both geographically and culturally, separated from the organisations that were established in the metropole.

As Nadja Durbach's research has revealed, the history of vaccination is a complicated one. For Durbach, one of the most poignant questions relates to exactly how well vaccination actually worked in the nineteenth century. The answer to this question is far from straight-forward. Reflecting on the development of the smallpox vaccine through the lens of eradication, it is easy to view the story as one of great success; after all, the eradication of smallpox could be considered one of humanity's greatest scientific achievements so the discovery and implementation of the method by which this feat was achieved should fit within this 'heroic' narrative. However, as Durbach shows, the historical record presents a very different story. In order to combat the arguments of opponents of the procedure, the government employed statistics which 'had the appearance of objectivity and added scientific weight to otherwise subjective opinions'.³² The government employed these statistics as proof that the vaccination procedure worked and that the death-rate from smallpox was decreasing in areas where vaccination was thoroughly carried-out. The government statistics were far from infallible, however, as they were collected from admissions to smallpox isolation hospitals where doctors visually examined the patients and categorised them as 'vaccinated' or 'unvaccinated' based upon whether or not there were visible vaccination scars upon the body.³³ As anti-vaccinationists soon realised, this meant that those who suffered the most virulent attacks of smallpox (i.e. those most likely to die from the illness) were regularly misclassified under this system as the rash of pocks on their body would obscure any vaccination marks, leading doctors to classify them as 'unvaccinated' regardless of whether or not the procedure had been performed. This skewed the data in favour of vaccination when it came to the proportion of deaths attributed to the 'unvaccinated' class and made the vaccinated look much less susceptible to smallpox than they might actually have been.

Another critical problem with smallpox vaccination in the nineteenth century was the high level of potential danger that accompanied the procedure. As will be seen throughout this thesis, nineteenth-century vaccination was very different to the modern procedure, involving deep cuts to the patient's skin, after which the cowpox matter (referred to as 'lymph') was smeared into the open wounds. Without a clear understanding of germ theory and with many children exposed to dangerously insanitary conditions in their everyday lives, the procedure meant patients often ran the risk of contracting infections that could result in septicaemia and this proved fatal in some cases. Anti-vaccinationists who wrote of the suffering of children following vaccination often described symptoms that would be associated with blood-poisoning from an infected open wound – the child would develop a terrible fever, followed by nausea, vomiting, and septic shock. The

³² Durbach, *Bodily Matters*, 2.

³³ Durbach, *Bodily Matters*, 2.

infected areas would develop red and swollen lumps or blisters and some limbs would turn gangrenous. Reverend William Nassau Molesworth, vicar of Spotland in the Greater Manchester region, wrote of these symptoms in 1870 in a letter to Henry Pitman, the prominent Manchester-based anti-vaccinationist. Pitman then spread Molesworth's letter around England through the correspondence columns of both metropolitan and regional newspapers. According to Molesworth,

One of my parishioners, of the name of Scott, who lives near my house, had a child which at the time of its vaccination was in perfect health; in about 24 hours after vaccination the arm began to swell and exhibit symptoms of inflammation ... the part of the arm which had been vaccinated turned black, and the blackness extended down the back till the child died.³⁴

Children who contracted infections following vaccination often suffered immensely. One of the most prominent anti-vaccinationists of the nineteenth century, William Tebb, described vaccinated children suffering from 'dark red and sometimes almost black ulcers from one to one and a half inches deep, and from two to three inches in diameter'; others wrote of 'poor infants ... borne of pillows for weeks decaying alive before death ended their sufferings'.³⁵ The inclusion of these statements is not intended to minimise the immense suffering that smallpox brought as it should certainly be remembered as one of the most fearsome diseases humanity has ever faced. However, vaccination in the nineteenth century was far from perfect and, to parents who had not seen a full-scale outbreak of smallpox in their own lifetime (ironically, this was partially the result of the success of vaccination programmes), it is, perhaps, entirely understandable that they would fear vaccination itself. Indeed, researchers today are familiar with the concept of the natural history of an immunisation programme, outlined in [Figure 1](#), developed by prominent epidemiologist Robert T Chen. As Marian Ołpiński explains, before a vaccine exists, people fear the disease because they have some direct experience with it and when a vaccine becomes available, the side-effects that the vaccine may have are of a secondary concern. When instances of the disease begin to decrease, people forget how dangerous it really is and instead start to notice apparent side-effects (whether truly caused by the vaccine or not) and begin to fear the vaccine more than they fear the disease. This is likely due to the fact that people no longer have any direct experience of the disease in their lifetime. Ołpiński describes this as 'the time when a vaccine becomes a victim of its own success'.³⁶ Anti-vaccination movements then begin to grow as people become increasingly fearful of the vaccine. As a result, the disease begins to take hold once more, increasing morbidity and mortality until the population begins to fear the disease again and the

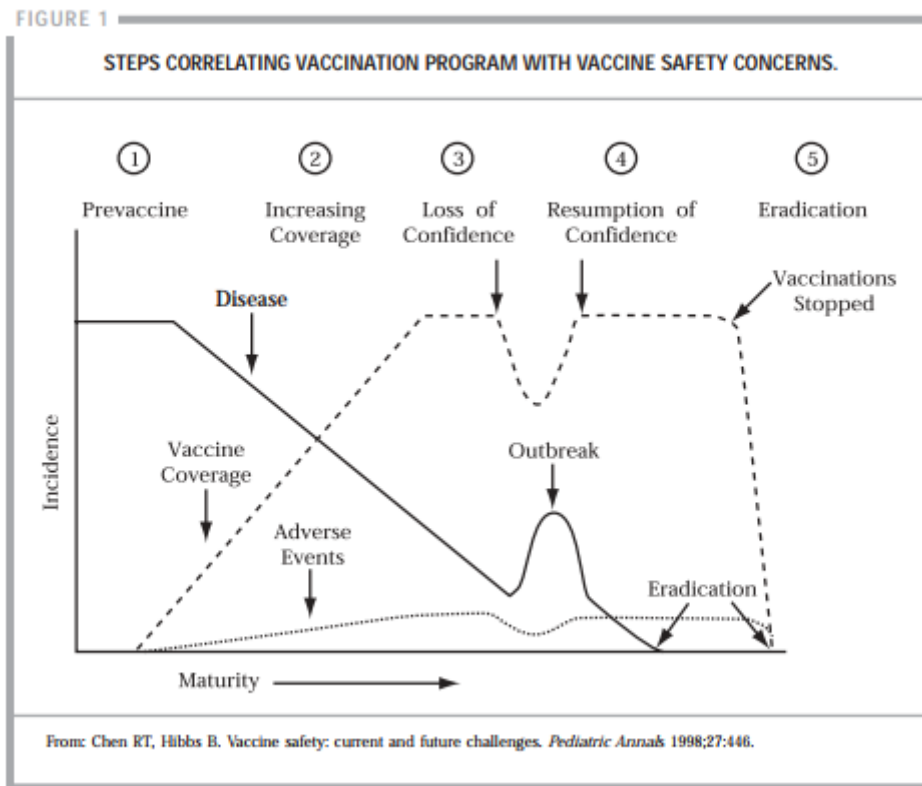
³⁴ Letter from Rev. William Nassau Molesworth to Henry Pitman, dated 23 February 1870. Reprinted in various newspapers including the *Barnsley Chronicle* (Yorkshire), 5 March 1870; *Burnley Advertiser* (Lancashire), 19 March 1870; *Clerkenwell News* (London), 12 March 1870; *Cornubian* (Cornwall), 18 March 1870.

³⁵ *Gloucester Citizen*, 24 October 1890; *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 17 December 1886.

³⁶ Marian Ołpiński, 'Anti-Vaccination Movement and Parental Refusals of Immunization of Children in USA', *Pediatrica Polska*, no. 87, 2012, 381-385.

uptake of vaccination increases, potentially leading to eradication (as was the case with smallpox) and the end of the vaccine altogether.

Figure 1: Natural History of an Immunisation Programme. From Sanford R. Kimmel, Ilene T. Burns and Richard K Zimmerman, 'Addressing Immunization Barriers, Benefits, and Risks', *The Journal of Family Practice*, vol. 52, no. 1, 2003, s47-s55. Originally devised by Robert T Chen and Beth Hibbs, 'Vaccine Safety: Current and Future Challenges', *Pediatric Annals*, vol. 27, 1998, 446.



Whilst Ołpiński's research focuses on the modern anti-vaccination movement and its impact in the United States, he acknowledges that this cycle also applies to vaccination in the nineteenth century:

The fear of vaccines appeared with the first-developed vaccine, the Jenner's [sic] vaccine against smallpox. This fear and the belief that vaccines themselves may cause those diseases against which they are made or at least cause serious complications, has been and still is a breeding ground for the development and duration of anti-vaccination movements.³⁷

This is clearly evidenced by the history of vaccination in nineteenth-century England; as the lived experience of major smallpox epidemics faded from the collective memory of society, the dangers associated with the disease were forgotten too. Over time, vaccination came to be feared more than smallpox itself, leading to an increase in the influence of the anti-vaccination movement. It is important to note that vaccination alone was likely not the sole cause of the decrease in smallpox that occurred in the nineteenth century. Whilst it was an important component, the role played by the reduction of urban overcrowding through sanitary reform and the naturally variable virility of the

³⁷ Ołpiński, 'Anti-Vaccination Movement and Parental Refusals of Immunization of Children in USA', 382.

disease itself were also critical to the overall reduction in both cases of, and fatalities from, smallpox during this time.

One of the major issues facing pro-vaccinationists in the nineteenth century was incorporating vaccination into what Durbach describes as the existing 'medical cosmology'.³⁸ In *The Birth of the Clinic*, Michel Foucault challenges the notion that our modern understanding of health and disease was shared by the peoples of the past.³⁹ This concept is fundamental to Durbach's argument as she highlights the fact that vaccination contradicted many of the extant understandings of health and medicine in Victorian Britain. Durbach reveals that the introduction of vaccination, and its subsequent enforcement by Acts of Parliament between 1840 and 1907, was entirely at odds with other medical practices at the time. To the Victorian mind, healthcare was based upon the principles of cleanliness and purity and much attention was directed towards keeping the blood pure and the body free from any foreign matter. Medical professionals across Britain still looked to the works of individuals such as Thomas Sydenham (the 'English Hippocrates') for their understanding of disease prevention and healthcare. Vaccination operated in direct opposition to these long-held beliefs as it required the insertion of foreign material directly into the bloodstream, counteracting Victorian notions of the importance of blood purity. For anti-vaccinationists in the nineteenth century, this was a difficult concept to understand and many continued to advocate traditional methods of disease prevention. An anonymous correspondent to the *Cheltenham Chronicle* in 1872 took issue with the theory that inserting any sort of foreign material into the human bloodstream could have potential benefits for an individual and instead maintained that:

the way to avoid [smallpox] is to keep the blood pure by abundant fresh air and exercise, and good wholesome living, with cleanliness of person, clothing, &c., and not by inoculating a child with either horse, cow, or human matter, however healthy or otherwise innocuous it may be.⁴⁰

Other anti-vaccinationists saw the procedure as a direct affront to God. Henry Veysey, a self-proclaimed 'traveling evangelist' based in Taunton, Somerset taught that vaccination was unnatural; 'all approach to the blood is most carefully guarded by our beneficent Creator'.⁴¹ To Veysey's mind, vaccination was the result of 'man, making himself wiser than God', a recurring theme amongst the writings of those who disagreed with the scientific medical theories that were emerging throughout the nineteenth century.⁴² For many anti-vaccinationists at the time, the Bible itself, when understood to be the literal truth, revealed that God's law was entirely opposed to the procedure. The proverb that 'for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap', was critical to

³⁸ Durbach, *Bodily Matters*, 4.

³⁹ Michel Foucault, *The Birth of The Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception*, Vintage, New York, 1994.

⁴⁰ *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 26 November 1872. According to the same correspondent, to prevent smallpox, 'pure and healthy blood' must be maintained. This meant, amongst other things, avoiding the marriage of cousins.

⁴¹ *Taunton Courier*, 21 November 1877.

⁴² *Taunton Courier*, 21 November 1877.

the worldview of those who opposed vaccination on religious grounds.⁴³ John Brown, a Poor Law Guardian and vestryman for the Parish of Stepney in London, was one of those who saw this proverb as a literal warning from God about the dangers of vaccination. Writing to the *Bristol Mercury* in 1896, Brown claimed that 'if disease be sown in the frames of little children as they cross life's threshold, there must be a harvest of disease and death. It is not possible to sow disease and reap health'.⁴⁴ Brown was firmly of the belief that the Bible provided instructions for the practice of medicine and argued that vaccination should be considered abhorrent by any truly God-fearing Christian:

The word of God gives no countenance to the doing of evil that good may come. You can only sow disease and reap immunity from disease when you successfully mock God; there is absolutely no warrant for the use of disease in fighting disease; and the very thought of using disease as an ally, and making war upon health is utterly repugnant to Bible sanitation. Bible sanitation gives warrant for notification of diseases, for isolation and disinfection, but neither in Old or New Testament are we enjoined to send the physician to the healthy and only the healthy, as is done by vaccination.⁴⁵

The latter part of this quote reveals another argument that Biblical anti-vaccinationists put forward as direct evidence that God had forbidden the practice of vaccination. Brown's assertion that vaccination was an affront to God because it was practised only on the healthy and not on the sick, comes from a literal reading of Mark 2:17 'they that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance'.⁴⁶ Other anti-vaccinationists would follow a similar line of argument, claiming that, whilst this particular verse clearly refers to Jesus' calling to preach to the unconverted, it also relays the explicit instruction that only the sick were in need of medical care. Charles Thomas Pearce ([Figure 2](#)), physician, homeopath, and medical astrologer of London, wrote to the *Western Times* in April 1870 that 'to vaccinate a healthy child is a *crime*. An axiom is to be found in the New Testament from the highest authority – "They that are whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick." In Heaven's name keep healthy babies out of the hands of doctors'.⁴⁷ This reliance upon scripture to support his opposition to vaccination is particularly surprising, given that Pearce himself was an acknowledged atheist whose own wife would die in the Peckham House Lunatic Asylum after suffering from 'religious mania' for many years. However, Christianity was a critical component of life in England in the nineteenth century and it is, perhaps, little wonder that Pearce would use Biblical rhetoric to spread his message that vaccination was abhorrent to all known natural laws. Pearce likely had his own reasons for opposing vaccination. As a homeopath and medical astrologer, he was one of many alternative medical practitioners who were finding themselves marginalised by the growing scientific medical profession (referred to as 'allopathic' practitioners). The status of individuals such

⁴³ The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Galatians 6:7 (King James Version).

⁴⁴ *Bristol Mercury*, 1 April 1896.

⁴⁵ *Wiltshire Times*, 31 July 1897.

⁴⁶ The Gospel of Mark 2:17 (King James Version).

⁴⁷ *Western Times*, 16 April 1870.

as Pearce as heterodox practitioners on the periphery of medicine in England was enforced by the Medical Act of 1858 which legislated who could register as a medical practitioner in the country.

Figure 2: Charles Thomas Pearce, London-based alternative physician, homeopath and medical astrologer.



According to Pearce, the only true preventatives of smallpox were ‘a clean city, pure water, plenty of pure air by thorough ventilation, unadulterated food and abstinence from physic’, and drove this message home to readers of the *Western Times* by concluding ‘I speak as a doctor, judge ye what I say’.⁴⁸ Pearce had been adversely impacted by the growth of the scientific medical orthodoxy in England. In 1849, his own brother, David, had contracted cholera during an epidemic and Pearce had tried to treat the illness homoeopathically. When David died, Pearce was charged with his manslaughter by Thomas Wakley, founding editor of *The Lancet* and medical reformer.⁴⁹ Wakley had presided over the coronial inquest into David’s death and was a firmly established member of the medical orthodoxy, being a qualified surgeon and Member of the Royal College of Surgeons. At his trial, Pearce’s defence team argued that Wakley had only charged Pearce with manslaughter as ‘an attack on the homeopathic system’.⁵⁰ Although he was acquitted of the charge as it could not be proven that David would not have died if he had received treatment from an allopathic practitioner, Pearce clearly carried his resentment for the medical orthodoxy with him throughout his career.

⁴⁸ *Western Times*, 16 April 1870.

⁴⁹ Patrick Curry, ‘Alfred James Pearce’, *Oxford National Dictionary of Biography*, 2004. This entry is for Charles Thomas Pearce’s son, Alfred James (also a physician and astrologer) but contains details of his father’s life and career.

⁵⁰ *London Medical Gazette*, 2 November 1849.

Whilst the status of practitioners such as Pearce was rejected amongst the medical orthodoxy that had benefited from the introduction of the Medical Act, alternative medicine retained its popularity amongst the general population.

Sanitation was a fundamental component, not only of nineteenth-century English medicine, but also of national identity. As a 'civilised' and 'enlightened' people, a crucial aspect of British imperialism was the dissemination of sanitation amongst colonial subjects across the globe. As E B van Heyningen argues, medicine in the furthest reaches of the British Empire was constructed around the notion of British superiority: 'civilization was equated less with political freedom than with a clean water supply and a society educated in sanitary principles'.⁵¹ In this manner, sanitation was far more than just municipal and individual cleanliness. Rather, sanitation was a core component of British national identity, an identity built upon the supposed superiority of the coloniser. Sanitation was thus exported across the globe; a gift to be bestowed upon the 'uncivilised'. With hygiene and sanitation so important to the nation and its Empire, proponents of the sanitary approach to medicine fought hard to discredit vaccination as an 'unhygienic' procedure, one that was entirely at odds with all accepted notions of health and medicine. The journal *Public Health* published an editorial in 1897 to honour the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria. In this editorial, the importance of sanitation was expounded:

Of all the achievements of the Victorian Era ... history will find none worthier of record than the efforts made to ameliorate the lives of the poor, to curb the ravages of disease, and to secure for all pure air, food, and water, all of which are connoted by the term 'sanitation'.⁵²

The enforcement of vaccination alienated a wide range of medical practitioners – from the alternative practitioners already on the fringes of the profession, to the sanitarians who had once been at the forefront of medical science. If vaccination caused consternation amongst medical practitioners, it caused outright opposition amongst the general public who could find no reason to believe in its efficacy. This opposition only continued to grow as the nineteenth century wore on, particularly as, by the time harsher penalties for non-vaccinating parents were introduced in the 1867 amendment, vaccination as a preventative of smallpox was beginning to show its limitations. When Jenner's initial discovery of the protective influence of cowpox was first made public, he had confidently written that 'what renders the Cow Pox virus so extremely singular is, that the person who has been thus affected is for ever after secure from the infection of the Small Pox'.⁵³ By the mid-nineteenth century, this lifelong protection was considered to be far from a guarantee, and

⁵¹ E B van Heyningen, 'Agents of Empire: The Medical Profession in the Cape Colony, 1880-1910', *Medical History*, vol. 23, no. 4, 1989, 451-452.

⁵² *Public Health*, 10 January 1897.

⁵³ Edward Jenner, *An Enquiry into the Causes and Effects of the Variolae Vaccinae: A Disease Discovered in Some of the Western Counties of England, Particularly Gloucestershire, and Known by the Name of the Cow Pox*, Royal College of Physicians, London, 1801, 7.

many vaccinators and health professionals began to recommend revaccination. As the century wore on, however, debates amongst these professionals raged on as no one could positively determine exactly how often individuals needed to be revaccinated in order to assure their complete protection against smallpox. Some doctors even turned away from the idea that vaccination could prevent an individual from being attacked by smallpox, arguing instead that it only mitigated the effects of the disease and likely made it easier for a smallpox patient to survive the disease with minimal complications.

One of the biggest problems with vaccination in the nineteenth century was the way in which it was practised. As has been stated, the procedure itself was quite brutal, involving a deep cut into which lymph, taken from the arm of a previously vaccinated child, was smeared. There are some critical issues with this approach that are immediately obvious (particularly relating to hygiene, cross-contamination, and infection). However, it also meant that the virus was passed from child to child over a course of years, weakening its protective value as time passed. With the potency of the vaccine lessening over time, doctors attempted to counteract the ineffectiveness of the lymph by increasing the number of cuts that were made upon a patient's body, thereby increasing the risk of infection. This risk of infection truly sets the vaccination procedure of the nineteenth century apart from its modern counterparts; there was a substantial identifiable risk of severe side-effects following the procedure. This led to a prominent and vocal anti-vaccination movement, both at an official level and at a grassroots level. This thesis examines the role that both of these forms of anti-vaccinationism played in the reception of the Vaccination Acts in Cornwall. It is not a thesis that is intended to glorify the anti-vaccinationists of the nineteenth century, nor is it intended to validate their views; this thesis aims to identify and explore the fears at the core of this particular worldview.

In order to achieve this goal, it is necessary to break down the periods of vaccination opposition in Cornwall. Beginning with the introduction of the Vaccination Act of 1840, which rendered inoculation a crime and promoted vaccination in its place, is the 'ignorant mothers' phase of vaccine opposition; the period in which pro-vaccinationists had control over the publication and promotion of materials relating to the vaccine procedure. During this time (and even beyond it), pro-vaccinationist medical authorities pointed to the rural working-class mother as the cause of anti-vaccinationist sentiment. This was a nationwide trend but it had particular potency in the south-west of England. These women were blamed for being too ignorant to understand what was best for their children and medical authorities attempted to use the Vaccination Act to step between the 'ignorant mother' and her helpless child, to protect them from the dangers of inoculation and to ensure that the child was suitably protected against smallpox. However, as mothers (and, indeed, fathers) across Cornwall and the broader south-west continued to seek out inoculation for their children, medical practitioners called for vaccination to become mandated by the state. However, it is the contention of this thesis that, in assuming that early anti-vaccinationism was borne solely

from the 'ignorance' of poor, uneducated women, the medical profession was oversimplifying a highly complex situation.

In order to understand why inoculation remained so popular in Cornwall, despite the procedure being outlawed, it is critical to understand the environment within which it operated. Thus, chapter two serves as an examination of the close relationship between traditional Cornish folklore beliefs and accepted medical practices in the region. It is difficult to extract nineteenth-century Cornish folk medical practices from the broader folkloric context as they are so inextricably combined. This chapter presents evidence that the Cornish medical environment was more receptive to the practice of inoculation than it was of vaccination, due to the latter's association with 'strangers' – medical practitioners with a formal education who had come from outside the community to practise medicine in a form that was incompatible with traditional notions of health and illness. However, state and medical authorities maintained the belief that the 'ignorance' of those who adhered to such traditional medical practices could be overcome by making vaccination compulsory across the country. This led to the first amendment to the Vaccination Act in 1853, making the practice compulsory for all children born in England and Wales before they reached three months of age. Chapter three examines the first two and a half decades of compulsory vaccination in Cornwall, identifying the issues that Boards of Guardians faced in enforcing the law, as well as the ways in which the general population continued to avoid the compulsory aspects of the Act. By the end of this chapter, a new theme begins to emerge, the rise of the 'conscientious fathers' phase of vaccine opposition.

This changing attitude towards the root causes of anti-vaccinationism in the county begins, not with a Cornishman, but with a Scotsman. William Wallace Walker, a Naval pensioner, coastguard, resident of the Cornish parish of St Gorran and later, emigrant to Natal, is positioned as the first 'conscientious father' in Cornwall. Walker steadfastly refused to have his children vaccinated, even going so far as to avoid registering the births of subsequent children in order to evade the law. Walker may have been the first 'conscientious father' in Cornwall, but he certainly was not the last, as chapter four identifies. This chapter is largely devoted to the actions of two men, brothers Thomas and Albertus Cragoe, from Truro. Perhaps the most fervent anti-vaccinationists to emerge out of Cornwall in the nineteenth century, both brothers were so committed to the cause that even personal tragedy could not dissuade them opposing the procedure. These two men serve as examples of Cornish anti-vaccinationists, allowing for a deeper understanding of the motivations behind such dedication to the cause. This examination of their motives and actions also allows for an understanding of anti-vaccinationism in England outside of the bounds of the established societies, as discussed previously. Regardless of how strong personal anti-vaccination sentiment may have been amongst certain individuals within Cornish society, it is clear that there were critical issues with the administration of the Vaccination Acts in the county. Prosecutions were often intermittent or non-existent and the legal requirements of the Act poorly enforced. In order to

understand why this was the case, each of the thirteen Poor Law Unions on the Cornish mainland are disaggregated in chapters five and six to highlight the particular issues that faced each Board of Guardians in their role as administrators of the Vaccination Act.

Chapter five examines the eight Poor Law Unions to the east of Truro, a region dominated by an agrarian economy and issues relating to rurality and sparse populations. In the western region, made up of five Poor Law Unions, the story of the Vaccination Acts is very different. In an economy dominated by mining and in communities dealing with the impact of urbanisation, the relationship between Poor Law officials and the lower classes was already tense by the time vaccination was made compulsory and Guardians were forced to enact their powers of prosecution. As has already been discussed, Cornwall was not home to any local branches of the major anti-vaccination societies (excluding the short-lived attempt to establish one at Penryn). However, this does not mean that the people of Cornwall were unaffected by the enormous propaganda machine of the organised anti-vaccination movement. In order to examine just how connected these societies were to the far-flung peripheries of English society, the phenomenon of increasingly elaborate conspiracies regarding the nature of vaccination and the compulsory aspects of the Vaccination Act is considered in detail in chapter seven. Crucially, in this thesis, no real line of demarcation is drawn between those who opposed compulsory vaccination because of the nature of vaccination, and those who opposed the compulsion alone. Letters to the editors of Cornish newspapers reveal that these two themes were more intrinsically linked than has previously been considered. Chapter seven shows that the major anti-vaccination societies had a powerful influence, even in areas where they had no physical presence. This is characterised by one particular conspiracy theory that emerged following the Vaccination Act amendment of 1898 which granted conscientious objectors the right to apply for exemption certificates. The theory that magistrates were conspiring to refuse anti-vaccinationists the right to obtain exemption permeated Cornish society. However, as chapter seven reveals, this may have had more to do with the influence of the anti-vaccination propaganda in the region than it did with actual reality.

Overall, this thesis does not seek to radically overthrow the established historiography of vaccination and vaccine objection in Britain. Rather, it is intended to complement it, to challenge certain ideas, and to provide new avenues for research into this area of the social history of medicine. Building upon the work of scholars such as Nadja Durbach and Stanley Williamson who have made immense contributions to our understanding of the history of vaccination, this thesis incorporates aspects of regionalised study, as previously demonstrated by the work of Withey and Clark, amongst others, to show the value of undertaking a micro-analysis of a macro-history. However, as this thesis reveals, it is not necessarily ideal to move swiftly from the macro-history of metropolitan England through to the micro-history of Cornwall. There is a pattern of diversity that exists across England with regards to vaccination and it is necessary to also place Cornwall within the broader context of the English South-West. The broader south west, including the counties of

Devon, Dorset, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire, as well as the metropolitan centre of Bristol, acts as an intermediary between the macro-histories of the urbanised metropolises and the micro-history of Cornwall. Influenced by the growing field of Cornish Studies and the new medical history that emerged in the twentieth century, this thesis takes on the challenge laid down by Ann Clark in her examination of the Vaccination Act in operation in rural Kent and seeks to open up new avenues of future research that will add to the richness of the history of vaccination in Britain and across the globe.

Chapter 1: 'Ignorant Mothers' and Inoculation: Vaccination Act 1840

In 1815, Sophia Vantandillo, a mother of six from Paddington in Central London, decided to have her young son inoculated with smallpox. Just two decades earlier, this decision would have been a sound one. Inoculation with smallpox matter (also known as variolation) was a procedure sanctioned by a large proportion of the British medical establishment during the eighteenth century. Designed to save lives, inoculation was built upon the observation that, if an individual survived a case of smallpox, they were usually rendered immune to the disease for the rest of their lives. The theory was that, through inoculation, an individual could be given a milder case of smallpox than they might otherwise have contracted naturally, thus increasing the likelihood of survival and granting the individual lifelong immunity. By 1815, however, inoculation had largely been superseded by a newer, much safer prophylactic measure against smallpox; vaccination. In 1796, Edward Jenner successfully proved to the scientific community that inoculation with cowpox virus, both less contagious and less fatal than the related smallpox virus, could protect an individual from contracting the deadlier of the two poxviruses. Following Jenner's successful demonstration of the procedure, inoculation rapidly fell out of favour with many in the scientific community. However, it retained its popularity with many in the less educated classes of society. Such was the case for Sophia Vantandillo, residing in an overcrowded court in densely-populated Central London. While her husband worked as a coachmaker, Sophia was responsible for the care of their six children, four of whom had previously been vaccinated.¹ These four children all suffered from various health complaints, and both Sophia and her husband blamed vaccination for sickening their children. As a result, the Vantandillos made the fateful decision to have their youngest child, John, inoculated instead of vaccinated.

Sophia sought the inoculation services of an apothecary, Gilbert Burnet, who performed the procedure in a back room of his Marylebone store. In the days that followed John's inoculation, the boy grew visibly sicker, a situation that drew the attention of neighbours who believed the child to be suffering from smallpox. Sophia countered this, claiming that her son only had tooth rash and that it was perfectly safe for her to carry him around in public thoroughfares and in the communal spaces within their residential court. However, Sophia's assertions were wrong; her son did indeed have smallpox and he was very highly contagious. The disease then began to spread, infecting the pupils at a children's school that occupied part of the court. Eleven people from this school contracted the disease, a 19-year-old woman and seven children died, and another child lost an eye.² The contagiousness of the smallpox virus was the very factor that had seen the inoculation procedure fall out of favour with the medical establishment, to be replaced by the less contagious vaccination. Sophia Vantandillo was brought before the Court of King's Bench to answer charges brought against her by the National Vaccine Establishment, a publicly-funded body that was

¹ *Bell's Weekly Messenger*, 30 April 1815.

² 'Court of King's Bench', *The Farmer's Magazine*, vol. 16, 1815, 259.

established by Parliament in 1809 to promote vaccination in the place of inoculation. Michael Bennett describes the establishment of this body as 'a largely unheralded move' as 'it represented the first publicly funded body that directly provided healthcare'.³ Thus, the Vantandillo case represents one of the first times a British subject was prosecuted by the authorities for spreading an infectious disease amongst the broader population. Bennett reveals that women, such as Sophia, were often the targets of vaccinators and inoculators alike who often competed on the streets for the custom of mothers seeking to protect their children against the ravages of smallpox. A contemporary supporter of vaccination was dismayed by the approach of the pro-vaccination propagandists on the streets of London, arguing that '[the] cause is not aided by the ill-timed zeal of those of its advocates who go about, lancet in hand, almost compelling poor ignorant women to have their infants inoculated with cow pock matter'.⁴ This image of 'poor ignorant women' being swayed by the propaganda of the vaccinators and the inoculators on the streets would continue to dominate discussions surrounding the competing procedures throughout the first half of the nineteenth century. Sophia Vantandillo may have been the first 'ignorant mother' brought to the attention of the general public, but she was certainly not the last to be targeted by benevolent individuals seeking to 'protect' the poor from inoculation.

At the heart of the arguments of vaccine proponents in the early nineteenth century was an overwhelming desire to restrict the practice of inoculation as, unlike vaccination, it did not utilise a milder substitute for the smallpox virus. Instead, smallpox material was either inserted directly into the bloodstream or contact was made between the material and the skin. Quite simply, inoculation was, by its very nature, highly contagious, as it involved the deliberate spread of the active smallpox virus. As the inoculated person progressed through their illness, they were a danger to anyone they came into contact with, as was evidenced by the shocking consequences of Sophia Vantandillo's exposure of her infant son in public following his inoculation. Vaccination was a very different story. In 1796, Edward Jenner had successfully demonstrated to the scientific community that replacing the smallpox material in the inoculation method with cowpox material rendered the vaccinated individual immune to the ravages of the smallpox virus and ensured the safety of those they came into contact with following the procedure as cowpox could only be spread by direct contact with the udder of an infected cow.⁵

Mary Lindemann's examination of the increased influence of medical charity during the urbanisation of Hamburg reveals that middle-class benevolence was far from apolitical. According to Lindemann, 'the ultimate goal of medical relief was the prevention of impoverishment' as the

³ Michael Bennett, 'Inoculation of the Poor against Smallpox in Eighteenth-Century England', in Anne M. Scott (ed.) *Experiences of Poverty in Late Medieval and Early Modern England and France*, Ashgate, Farnham and Burlington, 2012.

⁴ Quoted in Bennett, 'Inoculation of the Poor against Smallpox in Eighteenth-Century England'.

⁵ Peter Razzell, *The Conquest of Smallpox: The Impact of Inoculation on Smallpox Mortality in Eighteenth Century Britain*, Caliban Books, Fittle, 1977, ix.

'clear connections between disease, illness, accidents and poverty' had many negative political and economic impacts upon society.⁶ Lindemann argues that, to the rapidly modernising governments of Europe, 'only healthy persons, not cripples and invalids, were valuable to the state. Medical care for the labouring poor seemed an attractive quick fix for many of the seemingly intractable problems of urban impoverishment'.⁷ The benevolence of the middle- and upper-classes of English society with regards to the 'protection of the poor through vaccination' (based upon the notion outlined by Lindemann) continued to grow during the early nineteenth century. At the heart of the arguments of vaccine proponents in the early nineteenth century was an overwhelming desire to restrict the practice of inoculation as, unlike vaccination, it did not utilise a milder substitute for the smallpox virus. Instead, smallpox material was either inserted directly into the bloodstream or contact was made between the material and the skin.⁸ Newspaper accounts of court cases reveal that folk inoculation was still being performed in the south west of England well into the nineteenth century. This adherence to folk inoculation practices was of serious concern to medical authorities. In May 1828, prominent residents of Sidmouth, in Devon, met to discuss the issue of continued inoculation amongst the lower-classes of their parish. In the absence of any nationwide law to expressly prohibit the practice of inoculation, these community members took it upon themselves to attempt to stop the practice within Sidmouth. To do this, they agreed to two resolutions. The first of these was, 'that the introduction of Small Pox by Inoculation into this parish, be discountenanced and opposed in the strongest manner; and that every facility and encouragement be given to the general adoption of Vaccination'.⁹ Through this resolution, it can be seen that higher-class members of communities such as Sidmouth were of the opinion that greater access to vaccination services would help to curb, and potentially even stop, folk inoculation practices in their regions. The second resolution of the parish meeting at Sidmouth reinforces this notion, stating that

it was unanimously resolved, that the undermentioned Gentlemen of the Medical Profession are entitled to the warmest thanks of this Meeting, for their liberal offer to "vaccinate gratuitously all such Children of the Poor of this parish, as shall be brought to them ["], and for the determination which they expressed, "not to inoculate for the Small Pox within this Parish".¹⁰

Localised movements to outlaw inoculation and promote vaccination in its place began to resemble the actions being taken by the government through the National Vaccine Establishment. Quite simply, inoculation was, by its very nature, highly contagious, as it involved the deliberate spread of

⁶ Mary Lindemann, 'Urban Growth and Medical Charity: Hamburg 1788-1815' in Jonathan Barry and Colin Jones (eds), *Medicine and Charity Before the Welfare State*, Routledge, London and New York, 1991, 118.

⁷ Lindemann, 'Urban Growth and Medical Charity', 119.

⁸ For an examination of the evolution of the inoculation procedure throughout the eighteenth century, see Deborah Christian Brunton, *Pox Britannica: Smallpox Inoculation in Britain, 1721-1830*, UMI Dissertation Services, Ann Arbor, 1996 and Sara Stidstone Gronim, 'Imagining Inoculation: Smallpox, the Body, and Social Relations of Healing in the Eighteenth Century', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, vol. 80, no. 2, 2006.

⁹ *Taunton Courier and Western Advertiser*, 28 May 1828.

¹⁰ *Taunton Courier and Western Advertiser*, 28 May 1828.

the active smallpox virus. As the inoculated person progressed through their illness, they were a danger to anyone they came into contact with. Vaccination was a very different story. As Alison Bashford argues, attitudes towards inoculation were rapidly changing amongst many medical professionals: 'inoculation ... came to be understood by British experts as a dangerous technique, largely undertaken by mothers'.¹¹ As Bashford reveals, many medical professionals blamed the adherence to inoculation practices on the ignorance of mothers, a concept that is critical to an understanding of the earliest phase of vaccine opposition in England. To the medical profession looking down upon the unvaccinated children of the nation, it was clear that the blame was to be squarely placed at the feet of the 'ignorant mother', the woman who did not understand enough about medical science to make an informed decision on the subject. Instead, government legislation would be brought in to overrule the shortcomings of mothers and the state was beginning to stand between an 'ignorant mother' and her poor, unprotected children. The substitution of cowpox for smallpox matter was, therefore, highly desirable and it is relatively simple to understand why, from a medical standpoint, surgeons and physicians wanted the government to outlaw the dangerous smallpox inoculation method and encourage, or even enforce, the uptake of vaccination.

Initially, this movement towards vaccination seemed promising when, following much debate in the House of Commons, inoculation was expressly prohibited across England and Wales by the Vaccination Act of 1840. However, the extent to which government should be allowed to interfere to prevent the practice of inoculation was a contentious issue. In debating whether or not the government should make use of the machinery of the Poor Law to make gratuitous vaccination available to the poor, Sir James Graham, 2nd Baronet and, Conservative member for Pembroke, 'abstained from providing an absolute prohibition of inoculation, doing so, not because his own opinions did not incline to such a measure, but because he doubted whether the public mind was prepared for such a prohibition'.¹² Indeed, Graham had a very valid point. The outright prohibition of a medical practice was a drastic step and one which fits well within a biopolitical reading of nineteenth century English governance. Hennock argues that, prior to the introduction of the 1840 Act, medicine and healthcare 'was regarded as the province and duty of the individual citizen', not of the state.¹³ This understanding of medicine changed with the Vaccination Act. Through the Vaccination Act of 1840, the government was dictating who could practice preventive measures against the fearful smallpox virus, as well as how they practised such measures. The Vaccination Act of 1840 also made gratuitous vaccination available to the poor based upon the notion that a lack of access to affordable vaccination was the most pressing factor in the continued reliance upon inoculation practices amongst the poor. Through the outlawing of inoculation, the government

¹¹ Alison Bashford, 'Medicine, Gender, and Empire' in Philippa Levine (ed.), *Gender and Empire*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2004, 116.

¹² *Gloucester Journal*, 20 June 1840.

¹³ Hennock, 'Vaccination Policy Against Smallpox', 54.

was not disallowing all forms of preventive medicine with regards to smallpox, but was actually enforcing a law that allowed for only one of the methods previously being used within society to be accepted. This has serious implications for the broader history of the medicalisation of English society and the professionalization of the medical field as well. Returning to the House of Commons debate of June 1840, under Sir James Graham's proposed bill, the machinery of the Poor Law was to be utilised, requiring that the gratuitous vaccination of the poor could only be carried out within the constraints of the Poor Law.¹⁴ Thus, not only was the government preparing to prohibit any lay person or professional alike from practising inoculation, they were also attempting to regulate who could perform the State's sole approved method of preventing smallpox infection.

Sir James Graham took issue with his opponent Thomas Wakley's proposed open policy towards the medical profession as regarding who was entitled to claim government money for vaccinating the poor under the Vaccination Act. Wakley was a prominent reformer of the English medical system, the founder of the eminent *Lancet* medical journal, and the Radical MP for Finsbury. Wakley was noted as being against the Poor Laws in general and the bill he proposed to the House was based upon his conviction that the broader public were opposed to the Poor Laws and he was concerned that 'the poor should have the choice of medical men and not be compelled to go to the union surgeon to have their children vaccinated'.¹⁵ Graham countered this, stating that Wakley had 'too much regard for his brethren of the lancet', and that Wakley's bill had the potential to leave the Act open to exploitation by medical professionals seeking their 2s fee for vaccination, costing the government at least £30,000.¹⁶ To Graham, restricting the vaccination scheme to within the confines of the existing Poor Law system was economical; to Wakley, it was never going to succeed. With his belief that the poor were unlikely to willingly submit to gratuitous vaccination if it was administered by the Poor Law Unions (PLUs), given the general distaste for the system amongst the poor, Wakley believed that £30,000 was a reasonable price to pay to bring about the end of the dangerous practice of inoculation with smallpox matter, asking, is 'human life of so little value that [£]30,000 [is] too large a sum for saving it'?¹⁷ Wakley's belief that the attachment of gratuitous vaccination to the hated Poor Laws would dissuade many within the lower-classes from having the procedure performed on their children is reflective of the widespread opposition to the growth of institutionalised medical treatment. As Anne Summers reveals, 'the poor did everything in their power to avoid entering the workhouse infirmary or sick ward' and, as Wakley argued, those who could benefit most from a gratuitous vaccination scheme would be the least likely to receive it,

¹⁴ *Gloucester Journal*, 20 June 1840.

¹⁵ *Gloucester Journal*, 20 June 1840.

¹⁶ *Gloucester Journal*, 20 June 1840.

¹⁷ *Gloucester Journal*, 20 June 1840.

due to such a widespread distaste for institutionalised medicine in early- and mid-nineteenth century Britain.¹⁸

Robert M Wolfe and Lisa K Sharpe describe the Vaccination Act of 1840 as ‘the first incursion of the state, in the name of public health, into traditional civil liberties’.¹⁹ It is clear from the aforementioned debate in the House of Commons that legislators realised the potential implications of such action but considered it far more pressing to ensure inoculation was prohibited than to preserve civil liberties. Whilst Sir James Graham was sure that a total prohibition of inoculation would be a step too far in the minds of the general public, he genuinely believed that the practice of inoculation had to be stopped in the interests of public health. Referring to Thomas Wakley’s apparent emphasis on smallpox fatalities in defence of his proposed bill, Graham was steadfast in his belief that the number of deaths from smallpox ‘was but a small part of the mischief; it blighted beauty in the cradle; and laid the foundation for chronic diseases in after life. The public good, therefore, was much injured by allowing the practice of inoculation’.²⁰ Thus, the notion of middle- and upper-class benevolence towards the poor became legislation to protect the ‘public good’. Through the Vaccination Act of 1840, the government was taking further steps towards exerting biopower upon its citizens in an attempt to regulate and control certain aspects of their lives.

In *The History of Sexuality*, Michel Foucault outlines the concept of ‘biopower’, a form of authority invested in the life of a population. The beginnings of biopower, corresponding with the rise of capitalism, saw governments become interested in regulating how their citizens lived.²¹ Though Foucault, in this work, used the theory of biopower to explain the Victorian obsession with regulating and ‘normalising’ sexuality, biopower can also be utilised to examine how governments of the same era became invested in the propagation of certain medical procedures, and the prohibition of others, in order to ensure the longevity of their citizens. A review of an unnamed medical book appeared in an 1855 edition of *Trewman’s Exeter Flying Post*. The author of this book, Dr Bayard, an opponent of vaccination, presents some arguments against the procedure that reveal the drastic change in government attitude from power over death to power over life. Bayard argues that

the ancients sacrificed children that did not promise a strong and happy existence. Small-pox appeared to spare the people the sad sacrifices, and you have disarmed it; you have cast it down from that formidable tripod, whence it wielded with intelligence the sword of Justice. Vaccination prevents a large number of sickly persons dying before they attain the age of manhood.²²

¹⁸ Anne Summers, ‘The Costs and Benefits of Caring: Nursing Charities, c.1830-c.1860’, in Jonathan Barry and Colin Jones (eds), *Medicine and Charity Before the Welfare State*, Routledge, London and New York, 1991, 134.

¹⁹ Robert M Wolfe and Lisa K Sharpe, ‘Anti-Vaccinationists Past and Present’, *British Medical Journal*, vol. 325, 2002, 430.

²⁰ *Gloucester Journal*, 20 June 1840.

²¹ Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, Vol. 1, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 2008, 143.

²² Dr Bayard. Quoted in *Exeter Flying Post*, 12 April 1855.

Although abhorrent to modern sensibilities, Dr Bayard's statement reveals the impact that biopower had on governments and broader society alike; no longer was it necessary to lose sickly or weak children to diseases such as smallpox. In fact, from the perspective of a government, it was no longer acceptable to lose such children. Rapid industrialisation required an ever-increasing population of strong, able-bodied individuals. Thus, a child born into such a society had to be given every possible opportunity to survive well into adulthood and prove themselves a productive member of their community. This notion of biopower was the underlying motive behind the need to 'protect' the 'public good' by outlawing inoculation. Benevolence amongst more fortunate individuals had become biopower, a tool wielded by the government to ensure that children across England and Wales were not needlessly exposed to the smallpox virus. Every death from smallpox was a loss to the workforce of the future, and every child disabled by the illness was an unnecessary burden placed upon society.

Under the Vaccination Act of 1840, gratuitous vaccination was made available to the children of the poorest classes within English society through the mechanisms of the already established Poor Law. It is important to note that, at this stage, vaccination was not made a compulsory practice. Rather, the Vaccination Act of 1840 built upon the benevolent attitudes that dominated the discussion regarding the vaccination of the poor prior to the introduction of the Act. That is, it was genuinely believed that cost was the most prohibitive factor to widespread acceptance of vaccination amongst the poor. Prior to the introduction of legislated gratuitous vaccination on a nationwide scale, it was up to the discretion of the individual practitioner to provide the procedure free of charge as an alternative when a parent approached them for inoculation. In a letter to the editor of the *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette* of 6 February 1830, a correspondent known only as 'Justus' highlighted what they believed were the dangerous outcomes of such a system. Referring to an ongoing outbreak of smallpox in the Devonian town of Teignmouth, 'Justus' claimed that approximately 600 residents had been inoculated by medical professionals during the course of the outbreak and that 43 individuals had lost their lives to smallpox in the preceding three months.²³ For 'Justus', such a death toll was unnecessarily high because,

if ... the medical men in Teignmouth had refused to inoculate, and had vaccinated the poor gratuitously rather than inoculate (amongst which class it be remembered this disease is *by far* the most fatal) – is it probable I would ask, that, under the control of vaccination, the cases of natural small pox would have amounted to two hundred. Allowing that two hundred cases did occur, the deaths ... would not have exceeded twenty-eight – an amazing diminution in the mortality.²⁴

From this excerpt, it is clear that 'Justus' not only blames the practice of inoculation for the heightened death toll in the case of Teignmouth; they also blame the inoculators. 'Justus' was far from the only correspondent to the press in the South-West who took such a view. Truro surgeon,

²³ *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*, 6 February 1830.

²⁴ *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*, 6 February 1830.

E.J. Spry was particularly scathing of his professional brethren who opted to inoculate their patients rather than to encourage them to vaccinate. In his letter to the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* of 15 May 1830, Spry describes such practitioners as ‘surgeons who weakly succumb to the prejudices of the people against vaccination, by inoculating the small pox virus’.²⁵ In his rejoinder to Spry’s letter, inoculator John C. Sleman states that

Mr. Spry in his zeal for vaccination has imputed to others motives which I am sure do not influence them. I am sorry he should have been so wanting in candour, in fairness, and in charity, as to charge them with succumbing to prejudice, when perhaps they, guided rather by facts, than by opinions, have arrived at conclusions on the subject, if less correct than his own, are not less honest.²⁶

Thus, in Sleman’s eyes, medical practitioners who continued to inoculate their patients, particularly the poor, were not swayed by the prejudices of the patient, but instead held sincere beliefs that inoculation was preferable, or at least equitable, to vaccination with regards to curbing the spread of smallpox and reducing the mortality rate. Sleman was in no way oblivious to the dangers of the smallpox virus but, as an inoculator himself, remained convinced that ‘if the parties be in good health, if a favourable season of the year be chosen, if proper attention be paid to the progress of the complaint, diet, &c.’, inoculation could prove to be a safe and reliable method of alleviating the dangers of the virus.²⁷ In this pre-bacteriological age, Sleman’s argument regarding the favourability of the season and attention to factors such as individual diet can be seen to represent a form of accepted medical knowledge that was being fundamentally challenged by the introduction of universalised medical procedures such as vaccination.

In order to understand this notion, it is necessary to look at the changing nature of medicine throughout the nineteenth century from a broader standpoint. Vaccination is just one part of a much more complex history of medicine, a grander narrative of the role that scientific knowledge has played in medicine. Mark W. Weatherall contradicts the popular notion that the progression towards more scientific methodologies (including vaccination) was simple, straightforward, or even logical.²⁸ Weatherall explores the persistence of so-called ‘quackery’ throughout Britain in the nineteenth century; a category into which Sleman’s understanding of inoculation would certainly have fitted by the time of the introduction of the Vaccination Act of 1840. Weatherall argues that, although the Medical Act of 1858 legislated who could register as a medical professional and regulated the medical profession as a whole, the public receptivity to ‘quack’ practices such as homeopathy, mesmerism, spiritualism, and botanic medicine, did not diminish.²⁹ In fact, Weatherall indicates that many within nineteenth-century Britain clung to more traditional medical practices in the face of an increasingly scientific and regulated medical industry. One of the biggest issues that he identifies is

²⁵ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 15 May 1830.

²⁶ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 29 May 1830.

²⁷ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 29 May 1830.

²⁸ Mark W. Weatherall, ‘Making Medicine Scientific: Empiricism, Rationality, and Quackery in Mid-Victorian Britain’, *Social History of Medicine*, vol. 9, no. 2, 1996, 175-194.

²⁹ Weatherall, ‘Making Medicine Scientific’, 177.

that of the universality of scientific medicine, an issue that is clearly of critical importance to the history of vaccination and inoculation.

Foucault, in *The Birth of the Clinic*, asserts that Western medicine underwent a series of very distinct changes during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the most prominent of these being a fundamental change in the relationship between the physician and the patient. Through the application of the clinical gaze, the physician became the objective observer with the weight of unchallengeable medical knowledge to support their claim to present the absolute truth. The patient, on the other hand, came to lose all agency in the process of medical diagnosis and treatment, with the patient no longer the subject of medical knowledge. Instead, the body became the object of study, dehumanising the patient. Durbach's examination of the history of vaccination also highlights this fundamental change in medical practise. In the Georgian era, 'the sick often moved freely from one type of practitioner to another, employing, among others, surgeons, bonesetters, and patent-medicine vendors'.³⁰ Medicine during this period was much less rigorously defined and patients had a far greater involvement in procuring their own treatments and cures. This fluidity of practice was slowly being eroded throughout the early nineteenth-century, until the introduction of the Medical Act in 1858 introduced uniformity of the medical profession. However, with uniformity came universality and Weatherall's contention that the universality of scientific medicine was a concern for many following the introduction of the Medical Act mirrors Foucault's theory of the dehumanisation of the patient. He shows that the more traditional medical practices, labelled 'quackery' under the legislation, maintained a core belief that each individual patient was a distinct case and that everyone had a constitution unique to their own particular circumstances. Thus, the patient was an individual and the practitioner had to tailor their treatments to suit each constitution.³¹ In the case of the debate between inoculation and vaccination, this individualisation of medical practice is perhaps best exemplified by Sleman's contention that a practitioner must take into account season, diet, and individual constitution before undertaking the inoculation procedure.

Scientific medicine, based upon empirical evidence and logical deduction, had an opposing view. Regulation was central to this approach and the universality of the human condition formed the basis of the discipline. Individuals were not so different as to require personalised and tailored medical advice; the human body was now considered to be universal, with diseases and infections expected to produce similar symptoms between one patient and another.³² Weatherall's investigation of universality in the scientific medicine of nineteenth-century Britain is an example of Foucault's theory in practice; the patient was no longer an individual in the eyes of a practitioner, they were the object of investigation, a body to be treated in a universalised fashion as a constituent member of a population that was being managed at a macro level through public health

³⁰ Durbach, *Bodily Matters*, 14.

³¹ Weatherall, 'Making Medicine Scientific', 182-183.

³² Weatherall, 'Making Medicine Scientific', 182-183.

interventions. Ultimately, Weatherall shows that many within British society retained their belief in more traditional medical practices, preferring the individualised care of the homeopath or the spiritualist (or perhaps even the inoculator) to the universalised approach of the scientific medical professional. From above, the progression from ‘quackery’ to scientific medicine appears uninterrupted and logical; the 1858 Medical Act made it difficult for traditional healers to register as medical professionals and to attain the qualifications needed to practise under the law, effectively outlawing ‘quackery’. However, Weatherall demonstrates that this was far from the reality, and many within society clung to traditional practices long after the regulation of the medical industry was instituted by Parliament. A similar case can be made for the continuation of the practice of inoculation following Jenner’s discovery of vaccination long after the Vaccination Act of 1840 outlawed the procedure. For Durbach, this regulation of the medical industry, and the restrictions placed on alternative medical practices that were so popular amongst the lower classes of society generated the first stirrings of anti-vaccinationism in Britain, both amongst the general public and the alternative practitioners themselves.³³ According to Durbach, the earliest phases of vaccine opposition were based upon a rejection of scientific medical practices and the enthusiasm for self-help that permeated the nineteenth century:

Alternative medicine was physic for the people. It insisted that every man and woman could and should be his or her own doctor ... The doctrine of self-help was central to most types of alternative medicine. Medical botany fiercely promoted self-medication and self-diagnosis, and hydropaths, hygiests, and the like encouraged their patients to become heavily involved in their own treatment. According to the veteran water-cure practitioner Mary Nichols, the first object of hydropathy “is to teach patients to cure themselves – to make them independent of us”.³⁴

The Medical Act of 1858 was not the only piece of legislation that had an impact on the standing of medical orthodoxy in broader society. Under the Anatomy Act of 1832, the relationship between scientific medicine and the state was also formally enshrined in the law. The Anatomy Act had a profound impact upon the perceptions of medical practitioners within the general public. Attached to the already hated Poor Law, the Anatomy Act was designed to circumvent the problem of bodysnatching by ensuring that anatomists had access to a steady supply of corpses for dissection. The rapid growth of scientific medicine, a field in which qualifications were based upon a fundamental understanding of human anatomy, had led to the demand for corpses outpacing the supply as, prior to the introduction of the Anatomy Act, the only legal avenue for obtaining a corpse for dissection purposes was through executions. Dissection was perceived as a secondary punishment for criminals; ultimately, a fate worse than death. The eighteenth-century artist, William Hogarth, considered dissection to be the ‘the reward of cruelty’, the ultimate punishment in his series of printed engravings entitled ‘The Four Stages of Cruelty’ ([Figure 3](#)).

³³ Durbach, *Bodily Matters*, 26-27.

³⁴ Durbach, *Bodily Matters*, 31.

Figure 3: William Hogarth, *The Reward of Cruelty*, Plate IV, 1751.



Of dissection after execution, Hogarth wrote:

Behold the Villain's dire Disgrace!
Not Death itself can end.
He finds no peaceful Burial-Place
His Breathless Corpse, no Friend.

Torn from the Root, that wicked Tongue
Which daily swore and curst!
Those Eyeballs from their Sockets wrung
That glow'd with lawless Lust!

His Heart, exposed to prying Eyes
To Pity has no claim:
But dreadful! from his Bones shall rise
His Monument of shame.³⁵

With demand outstripping supply, anatomy schools turned to less-legitimate sources for obtaining corpses, leading to the rise of the feared 'bodysnatchers' and the even more abhorrent practice

³⁵ William Hogarth, *The Fourth Stage of Cruelty*, 1751.

known colloquially as ‘burking’ in which individuals were murdered to provide corpses for anatomy schools (named for the actions of Burke and Hare). Even those bodysnatchers who didn’t engage in murder were greatly feared within society. Those who could afford to do so would have iron cages installed over their own graves, or the graves of their friends and families, to ensure their eternal rest would not be disturbed. Fear of bodysnatching gripped society and the introduction of the Anatomy Act was designed to protect the resting places of the wealthy at the expense of the poorest and most vulnerable members of society by allowing anatomy schools to obtain a free supply of corpses from workhouses, hospitals, and prisons. A pauper whose body went unclaimed after death (usually due to the cost of burial) could legally be taken by anatomists for dissection.³⁶ According to Durbach, the Anatomy Act only worsened the already tense relationship between scientific medical practitioners and the lower classes of society; ‘the new act sanctioned the dissection of the poor; in doing so ... the state confounded the “unclaimed” pauper with the criminal. In effect, the Anatomy Act made poverty a crime and the destitute dead body property of the state’.³⁷ It is, perhaps, unsurprising that fear of the orthodox medical profession amongst the working classes only increased following the introduction of the Anatomy Act in 1832.

Returning to the argument between E.J. Spry and John C. Sleman, vaccinator and inoculator respectively, in the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* correspondence columns of 1830, two differing motives for the continued proliferation of inoculation by otherwise ‘scientific’ and ‘empirical’ medical professionals emerge. For Spry, inoculators like Sleman had either not had enough of a backbone to contradict their patients who wished for inoculation to be performed instead of vaccination or had, perhaps, fallen victim to prejudice and superstition themselves.³⁸ For Sleman, some medical practitioners, particularly those who had extensive careers behind them from which to draw knowledge based on experience, inoculation was a proven preventative of the high death rates that would otherwise accompany outbreaks of smallpox.³⁹ However, there is a third potential explanation for why medical practitioners continued to practice inoculation; necessity. In the *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette* of 12 April 1828, correspondent ‘An Advocate of the Genuine Cow Pox’ outlines this potential motive:

My object ... is to remove from the minds of your readers the prejudices ... against the members of the profession who have been induced, from motives of humanity to inoculate. The principal reason for so doing, is the sudden appearance of the Small Pox in the natural way, in a district where it is impossible, from the great number that would require Vaccination, to procure a sufficient supply of the vaccine virus, to shield the whole from the danger of receiving the Small Pox in the natural way. Besides, it is well known that a great length of time is frequently required before the constitution is properly under the influence of the vaccine virus. Until there is some legal means of enforcing Vaccination at a certain period, when from the absence of Small Pox the medical practitioner has before him sufficient time to produce the

³⁶ For an examination of the psychological impacts of the Anatomy Act (1832) on the lower classes of English society, see Ruth Richardson, *Death, Dissection, and the Destitute*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London & New York, 1987.

³⁷ Durbach, *Bodily Matters*, 15.

³⁸ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 15 May 1830.

³⁹ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 29 May 1830.

genuine Cow Pox, it will be in many instances an act of humanity to inoculate for the Small Pox.⁴⁰

'An Advocate of the Genuine Cow Pox', in this excerpt, identifies perhaps one of the most fundamental aspects of this debate, missing from both Spry's argument and Sleman's rejoinder; human nature. As 'An Advocate of the Genuine Cow Pox' argues, in the absence of compulsory vaccination, medical practitioners often experienced difficulty in convincing parents to have their child undergo the procedure. It was not until smallpox broke out amongst a community that the residents became desirous of protection against the virus. However, with such high demand placed upon their resources, practitioners rapidly depleted their supply of cowpox material and it took time to replenish this supply. Additionally, it took time for the vaccine to work to protect the individual. By this point, it was often too late to prevent a recently vaccinated individual from contracting smallpox anyway. In some cases, they may have even already contracted the virus by the time vaccination took place. Thus, as 'An Advocate of the Genuine Cow Pox' demonstrates, in times of crisis and short supply, inoculating an individual to produce a mild case of smallpox and prevent them from catching it in 'the natural way' can be seen as a necessary evil to be carried out as part of a medical practitioner's role. These three motives may go some way to explaining why some professionals continued to inoculate their patients rather than vaccinate them. However, it still remains to be seen why parents would view inoculation with the potentially fatal smallpox virus as preferable to vaccination with the less dangerous cowpox virus.

Some historians argue that folk inoculation methods in Britain actually pre-date the inoculation of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's daughter in 1721.⁴¹ According to Peter Razzell, evidence supporting this can be found in accounts from both Scotland and Wales. He provides two such examples, both from medical practitioners in Pembrokeshire, Wales. A surgeon from Haverfordwest, Mr Richard Wright, confirms that the practice likely predated the Montagu inoculation, having interviewed 'a number of very old people in the area' who claimed 'it had been a common Practice with them time out of mind'.⁴² Dr Perrot Williams goes into further detail, describing the practice as it occurred in Pembrokeshire:

[Inoculation] has been commonly practiced by the Inhabitants of this Part of Wales, time out of mind, though by another Name, viz that of buying the Disease... In order to procure the

⁴⁰ *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*, 12 April 1828.

⁴¹ According to the oft-repeated narrative, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu was responsible for the introduction of the practice into English society. Lady Mary, the wife of the British ambassador to Turkey, reportedly sought out the traditional folk practice used to give a mild case of smallpox the individual being inoculated in order to render them effectively immune from the disease for the rest of their life. Lady Mary had herself experienced the severity of symptoms that often accompanied cases of smallpox, having lost her brother to the virus and having been badly scarred from her own case, ruining her reputed beauty, and wished to spare her own children from a similar fate. Thus, the historiography of inoculation, and subsequently that of vaccination, has often recorded that it was the inoculation of Lady Mary's daughter in London in 1721 that launched the inoculation craze that swept through the field of medicine in England during the eighteenth century.

⁴² Razzell, *The Conquest of Smallpox* 1.

Distemper to themselves, they either rub the Matter taken from the Pustules when ripe, on several Parts of the Skin of the Arms, etc or prick those Parts with Pins or the like, first infected with the same Matter.⁴³

Evidence also suggests that folk inoculation practices in Britain were not limited to Scotland and Wales. Indeed, as Durbach argues, folk inoculation fit well within the ‘vibrant self-help culture of healing’ that was so popular throughout the early nineteenth-century.⁴⁴ Durbach relays an account of such a folk inoculation occurring:

Roger Langdon, a station master and self-taught astronomer, recalled being “knuckle-headed” in 1829 by Nanny Holland, the local “oracle,” “quack doctor,” midwife, bonesetter, and owner of the only bread oven in the village. Armed with an old knife, a razor blade, and a stocking needle, she created a hinged hole in the skin of his arm, which she then filled with smallpox matter as “a painter stopping a hole in a board with putty”.⁴⁵

The Vaccination Act of 1840, which outlawed inoculation and promoted vaccination, did little to halt the former practice amongst lower-class or rural communities. Durbach argues that advocates of vaccination often ‘depicted inoculation as a feminine, foreign, folk practice’ in comparison to the scientific and masculine vaccination.⁴⁶ In Cornwall, folk inoculation remained as popular as ever despite the fact that it had been made illegal. In June 1851, the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* reported that in the district of St Ives, on the Celtic Sea coast, smallpox had been plaguing the population and that, while the death rate remained low, some sufferers had been vaccinated, whilst others had been inoculated, providing evidence of the survival of the practice amongst the community.⁴⁷ Two years later, in August 1853, the same newspaper produced a similar report, this time stating that the district of St Agnes, in Truro, had experienced an outbreak of smallpox earlier in the quarter that had claimed three lives. The Registrar for St Agnes lamented, ‘I fear that inoculation lingers here yet; vaccination is objected to’.⁴⁸ That inoculation with smallpox matter was still a common practice in parts of Cornwall over a decade after the practice was made illegal by the Vaccination Act fits well with Weatherall’s contention that the history of medicine in nineteenth-century Britain cannot be viewed as a natural progression from one state to another, more enlightened, state in a logical fashion. Rather, the history of smallpox vaccination, as with Weatherall’s examination of ‘quackery’, shows that medicine at this time was a murky, confused muddle of differing and often competing ideas, with some older practices retaining favour in certain areas while new ideas were lauded by scientists, doctors, and government officials. Inoculation may have been made illegal in 1840, but its popularity in Cornwall and in neighbouring counties did not diminish. Even the threat of harsh penalties, could not shake the appeal of the practice.

⁴³ Razzell, *The Conquest of Smallpox*, 1.

⁴⁴ Durbach, *Bodily Matters*, 20.

⁴⁵ Durbach, *Bodily Matters*, 20.

⁴⁶ Durbach, *Bodily Matters*, 21.

⁴⁷ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 20 June 1851.

⁴⁸ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 12 August 1853.

In November 1848, a baker and beerhouse-keeper named Matthew Symes of Burstock, in the county of Dorset, was remanded in custody to face a charge of manslaughter in the Dorchester assize of the following year.⁴⁹ Symes was charged following a coronial inquest into the deaths of two young children, the sons of a dairyman named John Hoare, who had been inoculated by Symes. The medical evidence presented to the jury at the inquest indicated that the children had 'died from small-pox, received through inoculation and not naturally'.⁵⁰ Extensive details of the case were published in the *Dublin Medical Press* in December 1848. In an article entitled 'Homicide by Inoculation of Small-Pox', the *Dublin Medical Press* named the two young children as William Samuel Hoare (aged three years) and John Hoare (aged six months).⁵¹ The evidence outlined in this publication gives valuable insight into the ways in which inoculation was carried out under the prohibition of the practice by the Vaccination Act. The inquest heard that the father of the children, 'heard that Matthew Symes was in the habit of inoculating for the small-pox, and sent for him on Saturday, Oct. 21st, 1848, and the said Matthew Symes called the same evening, and inoculated the boys'.⁵² This statement indicates that the elder John Hoare had been made aware of the availability of the inoculation procedure by word of mouth, likely the way that Matthew Symes' services were promoted throughout the community. The inquest also heard, crucially, that this was not the first time that Symes had faced charges for inoculating children. Local police constable Matthew Moran testified that Symes had previously been cautioned against inoculating and was informed that the act had been made illegal as the result of legislation. However this was evidently not enough to stop Symes from inoculating.

Matthew Moran further said he summoned Matthew Symes before the magistrates in petty sessions assembled at Bridport, for inoculating small-pox in six cases, when the magistrates sentenced Matthew Symes to six months imprisonment, being one month for each case, the utmost penalty allowed by law. John and William Samuel Hoare were not included in the six cases.⁵³

The case of Matthew Symes, then, provides substantial evidence of the fact that the Vaccination Act of 1840 could do little to stop inoculation from being practiced. Symes had not only been warned that his actions were illegal, but he was ultimately charged with a total of eight cases (including the young Hoare brothers) of inoculating in defiance of the Act. Although damning evidence was given by Matthew Moran, and the surgeon who attended the deaths of the boys, as well as the father of the children and the neighbour who had held the children on her lap while they were being inoculated and nursed them until they died, perhaps the most telling evidence of Matthew Symes' guilt was his absence from the inquest; he was already serving the six months' imprisonment in Dorchester gaol he had received for the other six cases of inoculation when the

⁴⁹ *Taunton Courier and Western Advertiser*, 22 November 1848.

⁵⁰ *Taunton Courier and Western Advertiser*, 22 November 1848.

⁵¹ *Dublin Medical Press*, 6 December 1848.

⁵² *Dublin Medical Press*, 6 December 1848.

⁵³ *Dublin Medical Press*, 6 December 1848.

inquest sat.⁵⁴ Despite the severity of the case, in March 1849, Matthew Symes pled guilty to the charge of manslaughter and received for his crime just two days' imprisonment. After all the evidence presented at the coronial inquest, Symes' manslaughter indictment was treated as a mere show case to inform the public of the risks associated with inoculating.

Lord Denman, in passing sentence, said he was very glad this indictment had been preferred, as he trusted it would be the means, through the press, of publishing generally throughout the country that whoever inoculated any person was not only liable to a month's imprisonment under the statute prohibiting such inoculation, but also to be proceeded against for manslaughter, in case the person inoculated died from such disease.⁵⁵

Although substantial evidence was given by Matthew Moran of Symes' blatant disregard of the Vaccination Act, the sentence Symes received was justified by the following statement.

In this case it appeared the prisoner had committed this unlawful act in ignorance of the law which prohibited it, and also was suffering imprisonment under the statute. For these reasons he would receive only a nominal punishment for this very grave offence, for such it most assuredly was, since by inoculating one person the lives of thousands of persons might be sacrificed. His Lordship then sentenced the prisoner to two days' imprisonment.⁵⁶

The warning that Lord Denman hoped Matthew Symes' case would be was clearly not heeded by all. Returning to Cornwall, the reports of the continuation of inoculation in St Ives and St Agnes, in 1851 and 1853 respectively, that were discussed previously, show that the threat of manslaughter proceedings being brought against them did little to stop inoculators from practising in these districts. Evidence also shows that inoculation remained popular in the town of St Austell, on the south coast of Cornwall. At the St Austell petty sessions of mid-1852, two women from the parish of St Dennis were charged with the crime of inoculation. The first of these, Priscilla Menear, a tin streamer's wife and confectioner, has a few details of her case recorded in the *Royal Cornwall Gazette*.⁵⁷ It is recorded that Menear was a prolific inoculator, charged with 'the offence of inoculating the children of John Vercoe, and others of the said parish, for the production of small pox'.⁵⁸ The other woman charged was Ann Crowle, the wife of a china stone labourer, her case having only been mentioned in the paragraph detailing Menear's crime. With regards to Crowle's offence, the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* merely states that she was 'also charged with a similar offence'.⁵⁹ Whilst the outcome of Crowle's case is not stated, Menear was sentenced to one month's imprisonment in the common gaol for inoculating multiple children in the parish of St Dennis. The charges against the two women were brought by the relieving officer of the St Austell PLU and it was reported that the Guardians of the PLU were well aware of the extent to which

⁵⁴ *Dublin Medical Press*, 6 December 1848.

⁵⁵ *Essex Standard*, 23 March 1849.

⁵⁶ *Essex Standard*, 23 March 1849.

⁵⁷ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 4 June 1852.

⁵⁸ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 4 June 1852.

⁵⁹ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 4 June 1852.

inoculation was practised within their jurisdiction, acknowledging that 'it appears that a great many children have been inoculated for the small pox, in defiance of the repeated cautions given, and the public notices posted throughout the neighbourhood, by the board of guardians, for the extension of vaccination'.⁶⁰

Across the River Tamar, the problem of continued inoculation was not much better for the Devonian authorities. In October 1853, *The North Devon Journal* reported on the case of Francis Harris, described as a 'quack doctor', from the village of Berrynarbor.⁶¹ This case is of critical importance to this study for a number of reasons. Firstly, the description of Harris as a 'quack doctor' harkens back to the examination of so-called 'quackery' made by Weatherall and the comments of the inoculator John C. Sleman in the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* that were discussed previously. The Harris case provides evidence that, at least in certain circles, inoculation was, in fact, considered to be a 'quack' medical practice. According to William H. Helfand, 'one accuses others of practicing quackery when their methods are not considered proper, are not sufficiently scientific, or possibly might be considered deceitful and dishonest'.⁶² This description certainly seems to fit the case of John C. Sleman, a trained medical professional who believed in the efficacy of inoculation. However, it is another of Helfand's definitions that best fits the case of Francis Harris; 'quack is a pejorative term, disparagingly, albeit sometimes defensively, applied by a member of the establishment, the orthodox, regular, professional, credentialed and accepted class to describe the unorthodox, unlicensed, disproved member of a fringe or irregular group'.⁶³ To describe Francis Harris as a 'quack doctor' was exceedingly generous. Although he may have practiced inoculation, Francis Harris, like Matthew Symes before him, was not a doctor at all, nor was his occupation related to any form of accepted medical practice. According to the 1851 census, Francis Harris of Berrynarbor was a clock repairer.⁶⁴

The report of *The North Devon Journal* discusses five cases of inoculation performed by Francis Harris: Mary Dendle, a young woman engaged in the service of a family at neighbouring Combe Martin; the child of her employer, Mr Clarke; and the three children of Elizabeth Collins.⁶⁵ The second reason for the critical importance of this case comes from the report detailing the evidence given by Mary Dendle before the magistrates. *The North Devon Journal* describes Dendle as having 'appeared to have come prepared to act the part of dummy'.⁶⁶ Despite being on the witness stand for over an hour, Dendle provided no real evidence at all that Harris had done anything illegal. She claimed that, although she was inoculated by Harris, she was not aware of whether he

⁶⁰ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 4 June 1852.

⁶¹ *North Devon Journal*, 6 October 1853.

⁶² William H. Helfand, *Quack, Quack, Quack: The Sellers of Nostrums in Prints, Posters, Ephemera & Books*, The Grolier Club, New York, 2002, 11.

⁶³ Helfand, *Quack, Quack, Quack*, 13.

⁶⁴ 1851 England Census, County of Devon, Civil Parish of Berrynarbor, Enumeration District 3e, page 7.

⁶⁵ *North Devon Journal*, 6 October 1853.

⁶⁶ *North Devon Journal*, 6 October 1853.

had given her smallpox, cowpox, or any other of a myriad of diseases for that matter. Mary Dendle's evidence may have been worthless for the prosecution of Harris' case, but the way the crowd of spectators present at the court reacted to her is invaluable evidence for this study. As *The North Devon Journal* records, 'the people present appeared to sympathise with the witness [Dendle], and expressed their opposition to "cow-pox" so rudely that the magistrates were compelled to order to the court to be cleared'.⁶⁷ Such was the level of hatred for vaccination amongst the ordinary citizenry of rural North Devon.

The third reason for the critical importance of the Harris case comes from evidence that actually was given at the hearing. Elizabeth Collins, mother of three of the children inoculated by Harris, confirmed that she had indeed sought out Harris for the express purpose of inoculating her three children with smallpox material.⁶⁸ This not only established that Harris was indeed inoculating individuals, but also shows that his patients, or at least their parents or guardians, were fully aware that the procedure he was performing was not vaccination with cowpox material. Given that Harris was working in a community that reacted so violently to the mere mention of cowpox in a witness statement that the courtroom had to be cleared, this fact is perhaps not unsurprising. However, Collins revealed one, otherwise innocuous fact; she paid Harris to perform the operations. As the wife of an agricultural labourer, Collins' admission of payment is very important. According to Roger Burt and Sandra Kippen, across the Tamar in Cornwall, 'most agricultural labourers experienced ... unremitting poverty'.⁶⁹ In comparison with metal miners, Cornish agricultural labourers experienced fewer work-related dangers and could expect an 18 percent higher life expectancy, but their work was seasonal, unreliable, and intermittent and agricultural labourers earned less money (between 30 and 50 percent less) than their mining counterparts.⁷⁰ Although Burt and Kippen's study was conducted in Cornwall, Peter Tremewan reveals that wages for agricultural labourers in Devon were on a par with those in neighbouring Cornwall.⁷¹ Thus, when Collins stated that she had paid Harris a total of 18 pence, or sixpence per child, to perform inoculation on her children, it makes a bold statement.

In 1853, the year in which Collins had paid Harris to inoculate her children, the first amendment to the Vaccination Act was introduced. Whilst it made vaccination compulsory, this amendment also reinforced the legislation that made the procedure gratuitous and freely available through public vaccination stations if a parent could not afford to have their children vaccinated by a private medical practitioner. Thus, despite the fact that her husband was employed in some of the lowest paid work known in the region and the family appears to have had no other source of income,

⁶⁷ *North Devon Journal*, 6 October 1853.

⁶⁸ *North Devon Journal*, 6 October 1853.

⁶⁹ Roger Burt and Sandra Kippen, 'Rational Choice and a Lifetime in Metal Mining: Employment Decisions by Nineteenth-Century Cornish Miners', *International Review of Social History*, vol. 46, 2001, 62.

⁷⁰ Burt and Kippen, 'Rational Choice and a Lifetime in Metal Mining', 64.

⁷¹ Peter Tremewan, 'The Relief of Poverty in Cornwall, 1780-1881: From Collateral Support to Respectability', in Philip Payton (ed.), *Cornish Studies Sixteen*, University of Exeter Press, Exeter, 82.

Elizabeth Collins chose to pay 18 pence to a clock repairer to have her three children inoculated with smallpox, rather than to take them to a medical professional employed by the Guardians of the PLU to have them vaccinated for free. Elizabeth Collins' choice to pay an unqualified person to have a dangerous procedure performed instead of seeking vaccination from the medical officer of the Poor Law was not an uncommon one amongst the working classes. F.B. Smith's analysis of the practice revealed that:

Inoculation among neighbours, performed by a local house doctor, wise woman, preacher or itinerant quack, was a shared, understood procedure. Incision by a barely known person with superior status was neither shared nor reassuring.⁷²

For Smith, the implications of the choices made by individuals such as Elizabeth Collins are clear; regardless of the additional expense they would incur, many working class parents preferred to have their children undergo a familiar and known procedure than take them to the Poor Law medical officer and have a strange and unfamiliar procedure performed upon them. Folk inoculation was community-based and a parent likely either knew the person performing the procedure personally, or had sought their services on the recommendation of a trusted friend or relative.

The fourth reason for the importance of this case is the statement added to the end of the article that appeared in *The North Devon Journal* linking the Harris case to that of Matthew Symes, previously discussed, in which Symes (erroneously named as 'Squares' in this article) was tried and convicted for manslaughter following inoculation.⁷³ *The North Devon Journal* quotes Lord Denman's address to the court regarding the severity of the case brought against Symes. Thus, although Symes' appearance in the Dorchester assizes had been little more than a show trial, the fact that he had ultimately been convicted of manslaughter was still being employed as a deterrent to other potential inoculators, half a decade after Symes was first committed to stand trial for the deaths of William Samuel Hoare and John Hoare. However, it is worthy of note that Matthew Symes' ultimately lenient sentence was not mentioned by the *North Devon Journal* who chose merely to remind the public that he had been convicted of the serious crime of manslaughter. The *Royal Cornwall Gazette* of October 1853 took this warning one step further. Reporting on the case of a farmer's wife from Crediton, in Devon, north-west of Exeter, it was stated that

if death had ensued from the illness with which the children had been infected, the parties who had given it to them would have been liable to have been tried for their lives, and, if not found guilty of actual murder, would, beyond a doubt, have been convicted of manslaughter.⁷⁴

Thus, although Matthew Symes had received a sentence of just two days' imprisonment, the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* reported that, given the appropriate circumstances, death by inoculation of smallpox could be construed as a capital offence and those responsible could pay for their crime with their lives. The severity with which newspapers such as the *North Devon Journal* and the

⁷² F.B. Smith, *The People's Health: 1830-1910*, London, Croom Helm, 1979, 161-62.

⁷³ *North Devon Journal*, 6 October 1853.

⁷⁴ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 7 October 1853.

Royal Cornwall Gazette reported on the potential outcomes of trials for inoculation reflects the widespread concerns amongst medical practitioners and higher-class citizens across both counties. Inoculation with smallpox matter was a considerable problem in both Cornwall and Devon well into the mid-nineteenth century, despite the compulsory vaccination laws and the outlawing of inoculation by the Vaccination Act of 1840.

In 1838, William Reid, writing in the *Western Times*, presented his theory as to why vaccination was so unpopular amongst the general population of the south west, as well as why the out-of-favour inoculation procedure remained so widespread:

In a part of the country where the education of the common people is generally committed to the care of cobblers and old women, where ancient prejudices are deeply rooted, where the belief in witchcraft and in many antediluvian superstitions is by no means entirely exploded – is it at all to be wondered at that the population should continue to reject the discovery of the illustrious Jenner, and to resist the general adoption of vaccination? ⁷⁵

Devonian surgeon, John Clapcott Jerrard, of Honiton, concurred with the statement made by Reid. However, in his letter to the *Exeter Flying Post* at the end of January 1839, Jerrard downplayed the assertion that support for inoculation was so widespread, instead arguing that

from the period when Vaccine Inoculation became generally known, Variolous (or Small Pox) Inoculation was as generally exploded, except by a comparatively small number of persons whose prejudices always incline them against every thing that is new, and for every thing that is old.⁷⁶

Whether or not Jerrard was right and these views were held only by a minority within the broader society, it is clear that where these prejudices against vaccination took hold, they were extremely difficult for anyone, medical practitioner or otherwise, to dislodge. Returning to the case of the unnamed farmer's wife from Crediton who was tried at the Crockernwell Petty Sessions in 1853 for inoculating the two children of an unnamed Tedburn woman some valuable insights into the way in which inoculation was practiced by the lower classes in Devon, and by extension in Cornwall, can be gleaned from reports of this case. The report that appeared in the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* on 7 October 1853 detailed the way in which the Tedburn woman procured the inoculation procedure for her children. It is reported that she sent her two children to the house of the defendant (the farmer's wife) where a servant was suffering from smallpox. The defendant took the sick man's handkerchief and tied it around the children's necks as a way of transferring the smallpox virus.⁷⁷ The farmer's wife ultimately escaped any substantial punishment, having been committed to prison for just one

⁷⁵ *Western Times*, 9 June 1838. Reid's reference to cobblers as educators is alluding to the formation of 'Ragged Schools' throughout the nineteenth century, a movement largely influenced by John Pounds, a Portsmouth cobbler who had established his own school for impoverished children who were excluded from other forms of education.

⁷⁶ *Exeter Flying Post*, 31 January 1839.

⁷⁷ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 7 October 1853.

week, with the *Western Times* placing emphasis on the description of her husband as ‘highly respectable’.⁷⁸

If it was genuinely believed that inoculation would eventually die out through the combined efforts of pro-vaccination legislation and convictions of manslaughter or other crimes for inoculators, this assumption could not be further from reality. In 1860, the *Western Times* reported on the outcome of a coronial inquest regarding the death of a young boy named William Francis Harris of Newton Poppleford, in Devon.⁷⁹ Two decades after inoculation was outlawed and almost a decade after vaccination was made compulsory across England and Wales, William Francis Harris was ‘taken ill and seized with virulent small-pox, which speedily resulted in [his] death’.⁸⁰ It was assumed that the coronial inquest would result in an admission from witnesses that the child had been unlawfully inoculated. In fact, the case was deemed to be of such importance to the pro-vaccination cause that the inquest was attended by Dr Edward Seaton, the first vaccination inspector appointed under the 1853 amendment. Although it was obviously anticipated that evidence of William Francis Harris’ inoculation would be presented to the coroner and the jury, no such statements were forthcoming. The *Western Times* reported that all the witnesses, including the boy’s mother, ‘denied any knowledge of such a circumstance upon oath’.⁸¹ The jury returned the verdict that, although the child had died of smallpox, there was no evidence to prove how he had contracted the illness. However, this outcome was not good enough for some who were present, presumably because of the underlying suspicion that, regardless of what the witnesses had said, William Francis Harris had been inoculated. The newspaper concluded its report with the statement that, ‘we are informed that summonses have been granted with a view of bringing out further particulars before the magistrates.’⁸² It is not known for certain to which social class William Francis Harris and his family belonged, but it is possible to make some deductions based on the circumstances of the case and the report that was published by the *Western Times*. Over twenty years before William Francis Harris became the subject of a coronial inquest, William Reid had stated in the same newspaper that ‘disfiguration from small-pox is becoming more and more, an almost infallible mark of a low origin.’⁸³ In 1860, when William Francis Harris died, Reid’s assertion that smallpox tended only to have severe implications for the lower classes, following the almost general acceptance of vaccination higher up the social ladder, still stood. Opposition to vaccination was still at least a decade away from spreading and becoming an issue of widespread middle-class concern. Thus, the fact that William Francis Harris had contacted virulent smallpox, coupled with the suspicion levelled against his mother with regards to inoculation, seems to indicate that the young boy had come from that class of people that still held on to those ‘vulgar’ and ‘ancient’ prejudices.

⁷⁸ *Western Times*, 1 October 1853.

⁷⁹ *Western Times*, 10 March 1860.

⁸⁰ *Western Times*, 10 March 1860.

⁸¹ *Western Times*, 10 March 1860.

⁸² *Western Times*, 10 March 1860.

⁸³ *Western Times*, 9 June 1838.

Another key clue as to the social status of the Harris family comes from the *Western Times* report of the inquest into William Francis' death. It is stated that, when the boy became ill, 'neighbours were called in to attend the child'.⁸⁴ According to Lucinda McCray Beier, this 'mutual aid' was a trademark healthcare practice of working-class communities across England. Beier argues that 'working-class people depended on mutual aid exchanged within family and neighbourhood networks' in times of death, ill-health or medical crisis.⁸⁵ Certainly, the perception that opposition to vaccination and the continued support of inoculation were fuelled by the working-classes and paupers survived well into the era of major middle-class anti-vaccination movements across England. Following the nationwide smallpox epidemic of 1871-1872, pro-vaccinators, including doctors and laypeople alike retained the idea that, if they could just convince the poor of the benefits of vaccination, smallpox could be controlled or maybe even eradicated from English soil. An anonymous correspondent to the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* known only as 'X.Y.Z.' stated as much in September 1873: 'if we wish to stamp out small-pox – and it can be stamped out – we must foster a healthy public opinion, especially amongst the poor, as to the value of vaccination'.⁸⁶ Viewed in the broader perspective of philanthropic attitudes towards the poor with regards to vaccination, these remarks seem to continue the notion that it was up to the higher classes of society to educate their poorer neighbours, to break them free from their 'ancient' prejudices, and to bring them into a new scientific, enlightened medical age. As has been shown, so-called 'prejudicial' attitudes towards vaccination were commonplace amongst the lower classes of the South West, much to the dismay of their supposed social betters. In a letter referred to previously, William Reid claimed that opposition to vaccination was strongest in places 'where the belief in witchcraft and in many antediluvian superstitions' continued to exist.⁸⁷ Whilst he was writing for the Devonian press, it is Cornwall that allows for the fullest examination of Reid's link between vaccine opposition and 'antediluvian superstition'.

⁸⁴ *Western Times*, 10 March 1860.

⁸⁵ Lucinda McCray Beier, *For Their Own Good: The Transformation of English Working-Class Health Culture, 1880-1970*, The Ohio State University Press, Columbus, 2008, 10.

⁸⁶ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 27 September 1873.

⁸⁷ *Western Times*, 9 June 1838.

Chapter 2: ‘Antediluvian Superstitions’: Medicine and Folklore in Cornwall

[Cornwall is] a county where, it must be remembered, a stranger is doubly a stranger, in relation to provincial sympathies; where the national feeling is almost entirely merged in the local feeling; where a man speaks of himself as Cornish in much the same way that a Welshman speaks of himself as Welsh.¹

According to Withey, the historiography of medicine in Wales is often focused on the concepts of folklore and magic.² A similar statement can be made about the limited historiography of medicine in Cornwall. When Cornish medicine has been examined, it has often been in the context of the nineteenth century obsession with the collection of ‘Celtic’ folklores.³ This is evidenced by Brendan McMahon’s book, *A Wreck Upon the Ocean*, which analyses these collections and attempts to place them in a more appropriate historical context.⁴ Particularly studied in this work is the collection put together by Robert Hunt in his volume, tellingly titled *Popular Romances of the West of England*.⁵ As is evidenced by Hunt’s work, the nineteenth century intellectual conception of Cornwall was one of romance, mystery, and intrigue, the county being considered ‘Old Cornwall’, one of the last vestiges of ‘authentic’ Celtic traditions. Thus, Cornwall is imagined as a place outside the modern, industrializing narrative of nineteenth-century England. As with Withey’s account of the Welsh history of medicine, it cannot be denied that folktales, mythology, and magic formed critical components of Cornish society in the nineteenth century; however, it is to be contended that there is more to Cornish social history than these aspects alone. Folk practices and magic are strongly connected to the history of medicine in Cornwall and, as a result, it has been argued by Rod Sheaff that ‘the English state ... played almost no part in Cornish healthcare until the onset of industrialisation’.⁶ The example of vaccination, however, reveals that communities across Cornwall continued to resist state intervention into healthcare well beyond this time.

An examination of conceptions of smallpox vaccination shows that Cornish social attitudes towards disease, medicine, and death were undergoing extensive changes in the nineteenth century; from traditional folklore and mythology that created a kind of communal fatalism amongst the Cornish, to a more industrialised and scientific understanding of the body and of illness itself. These two

¹ Wilkie Collins, *Rambles Beyond Railways*, Richard Bentley, London, 1841, 124.

² Withey, “Persons that Live Remote from London”, 224.

³ An exception to this rule is industrial medicine exemplified by Catherine Mills, *Regulating Health and Safety in the British Mining Industries, 1800-1914*, Ashgate, Farnham, 2010.

⁴ Brendan McMahon, *A Wreck Upon the Ocean: Cornish Folklore in the Age of the Industrial Revolution*, Everttype, Portlaoise, 2015.

⁵ Robert Hunt, *Popular Romances of the West of England, or the Drolls, Traditions and Superstitions of Old Cornwall*, Chatto and Windus, London, 1881.

⁶ Rod Sheaff, ‘A Century of Centralization’, *Cornish Studies*, vol. 4, 1996, 130.

concepts did not exist separately; one did not supersede the other in a clear transition from a state of folk practices to a more 'enlightened' state of universalised scientific medicine. The introduction of compulsory vaccination under the Vaccination Act amendment of 1853 represented a legislative challenge to Cornish perceptions of life, death, and disease; it was, inherently, the collision of traditional beliefs and modern scientific knowledge played out in the periphery of a rapidly industrialising nation. John Rule argues that the so-called 'authentic Celtic folklore', as collected by individuals such as Hunt, was actually a modernised version thereof – an amalgam of traditional folk beliefs about witchcraft, spirits, knockkeys, and piskeys, and religious ideology espoused by the Methodist faith so dominant throughout Cornwall at this time.⁷ In explaining why Methodism was so widespread amongst the Cornish people, Rule states that

Methodism did not so much replace folk-beliefs as translate them into a religious idiom ... In modern British history no church of comparable weight has allowed a greater degree of comprehensiveness or frequency to divine or satanic intervention than did early Methodism. The idea of an omnipotent deity and a malicious devil can explain singularity of misfortune as well as can witches or evil spirits. The retributive anger of God can explain the most widespread of disasters.⁸

Rule's emphasis on the role of both folk-beliefs and Methodism in explaining tragedy and misfortune is not misplaced, given the dependence upon the mining and fishing industries in the county, as 'with[in] a community with such a distinct mortality profile, with death and bereavement at such high levels ... consolation came overwhelmingly in a religious idiom'.⁹ In 1847, a doctor working in the parish of Gwennap, five miles southeast of Redruth, estimated that one in five Cornish miners would be killed at work, and the overall mortality of these miners was estimated to be 'more than two-and-a-half times that of coalminers and half as much again as that of seamen'.¹⁰ Mining accidents claimed the lives of many young men and those who survived to work into middle age were often killed or rendered disabled by what Rule describes as 'the impact of years working in oxygen-deficient underground levels, breathing dust, the exhaustion of hard work in wet and hot places, and in particular the long ladder climbs back to the surface at the end of each shift'.¹¹ In 1851, the proportion of widows amongst the total female population was higher in Cornwall than in any other county throughout England and Wales, and the loss of a breadwinner, no matter how unpredictable his pay may have been under the competitive Cornish tutwork and tribute systems, often had a devastating impact on the family a miner left behind.¹² Cornish fishermen did not fare much better, not only being employed in an industry at the mercy of the unpredictable winds and

⁷ John Rule, 'Methodism, Popular Beliefs and Village Culture in Cornwall 1800-1850', in John Rule (ed.), *Cornish Cases: Essays in Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Social History*, Clio, Southampton, 2006, 163-189.

⁸ Rule, 'Methodism, Popular Beliefs and Village Culture', 181.

⁹ John Rule, 'The Misfortunes of the Mine: Coping with Life and Death in Nineteenth-Century Cornwall', *Cornish Studies*, vol. 9, 2001, 139.

¹⁰ John Rule, 'A Risky Business: Death, Injury and Religion in Cornish Mining c.1780-1870', in John Rule (ed.), *Cornish Cases: Essays in Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Social History*, Clio, Southampton, 2006, 81, 83.

¹¹ Rule, 'A Risky Business', 82.

¹² Rule, 'A Risky Business', 85.

tides at sea, but also dependent upon the regular return of migrating shoals of pilchards off the Cornish coast in order to stave off debilitating poverty for their families.¹³

According to Rule, superstition formed an essential component of Cornish culture because it provided explanations for incidents that would otherwise have seemed inexplicable:

Neither witchcraft nor spirit-agency as an explanation of events precludes commonsense empirical observation. Men die because they happen to be at a moment in time under a fall of rock. What needs explaining is why that man was in that place at that time. Witchcraft ... explains the singularity of misfortune, which the agnostic or scientific mind prefers to see as 'chance'.¹⁴

This concept was of unique importance to Cornish miners as the accidents and misfortunes that befell them were of a different nature to those experienced in the coalmines of Wales and northern England. Coalmines were prone to explosions or other large-scale accidents resulting from the lethal gasses seeping from the coal seam itself. Large numbers were killed or injured in blasts that did not discriminate. Cornish hard rock mining was fundamentally different. Volatile gasses were not such a substantial problem. Rather, accidents in these mines often took the form of falls from ladders, collapsing platforms or shaft openings, falling rock, or incidents with the heavy machinery used for lifting or pumping. Hard rock miners also risked drowning in flooded shafts or being caught by prematurely exploding or improperly utilised gunpowder being employed to blast through the rock face. These types of accidents often claimed individual lives rather than large numbers at once. There were, of course, exceptions to this, as Rule demonstrates with the example of the East Wheal Rose and North Wheal Rose lead mines which flooded in 1846, claiming the lives of 39 miners and leaving seven widows (four pregnant) with a total of 33 children between them to be supported in the parish of St Allen alone.¹⁵ For the most part, though, accidents in Cornish hard rock mines claimed the lives of one or two individuals at a time, leaving those mourning their loss or left supporting maimed and disabled miners to ask why their loved one was seemingly singled out for this particular misfortune when others in the vicinity were left unharmed. These accidents came to be seen as the work of witchcraft, the intervention of the Devil, or the will of God.

An acceptance of 'God's will' was a critical component of Cornish communal fatalism and was based upon a real need to explain why such misfortunes would befall a specific family or community. Life in Cornwall in the nineteenth century was tough. As has already been noted, a higher proportion of women were left widowed in Cornwall than in any other part of England by the middle of the century and, whilst some of these women were widowed in the kinds of mining accidents and disasters that have been previously outlined, 'more were widowed later in middle

¹³ Rule, 'Methodism, Popular Beliefs and Village Culture', 179.

¹⁴ Rule, 'Methodism, Popular Beliefs and Village Culture', 181.

¹⁵ Rule, 'A Risky Business', 83; Rev. George Morris, St Allen Burial Register, no. 383-390; *West Briton*, 17 July 1846.

age by the toll taken by the lung disease which overcame the miners typically in late middle age'.¹⁶ Life expectancy statistics for nineteenth-century Cornish miners reveal the devastating toll that a life of working underground took upon the population. Rule states that in 1837, in the mining parish of Gwennap, the average age of death amongst those who survived beyond the age of 30 was 46 for miners, in comparison to 60 for non-mining males and 64 for women.¹⁷ According to Sheaff, the average age of underground miners in 1857 was low; 29 years 4 months at Balleswidden, 28 years 10 months at Levant, and 26 years 1 month at Ding Dong.¹⁸ This is a reflection of the low life expectancy of men who were engaged in the mining industry as the mean age of deaths amongst miners was reported to have been 47 at St Just between 1837 and 1856 and 43 years 5 months at St Agnes for a similar time period.¹⁹ As Sheaff argues, however, it was not just the miners who had a shortened life expectancy in Cornwall during the nineteenth century:

Miners were the extreme case when it came to occupational ill-health but life-expectancy was apparently little better for Cornish farm workers. In St Agnes in 1859-61 their mean age of death was 55 years and 5 months, only a year longer than the miners there.²⁰

The notion of 'God's will', a form of fatalism shared by entire communities, is of particular relevance for the study of opposition to the smallpox vaccination procedure. Newspaper reports from across Cornwall, the broader south west, and even beyond, reveal that the concept of 'God's will' played a critical role in early opposition to vaccination amongst the lower classes. In 1851, prior to the introduction of compulsory vaccination in England and Wales, the *West Briton* published a statement from the St Ives district registrar claiming that 'people have a superstitious fear of having their children vaccinated; they say "it is taking the cause out of the hands of God"'.²¹ In 1852, the *Bristol Mercury* reported a similar statement from the registrar of the St Augustine district who attributed parents' reluctance to have their children vaccinated to the 'ignorant supposition that it was an attempt to interfere with the will of God'.²² A bereaved mother of a young smallpox victim in Nottingham in 1850 is reported to have informed the registrar there that 'she would rather lose half-a-dozen children by [smallpox] than fly in the face of Providence, in having one vaccinated'.²³ The idea that to vaccinate a child was to oppose God's will was not an entirely original argument; many of those who had opposed the earlier inoculation procedure had also done so on the grounds that it was an example of 'man's interference with the ways of Providence'.²⁴ Just as an understanding of 'God's will' was important to a mining community that expected its men to die young, the concept

¹⁶ Rule, 'The Misfortunes of the Mine', 134.

¹⁷ Rule, 'The Misfortunes of the Mine', 134.

¹⁸ Sheaff, 'A Century of Centralization', 131.

¹⁹ Sheaff, 'A Century of Centralization', 131.

²⁰ Sheaff, 'A Century of Centralization', 131.

²¹ *West Briton*, 15 August 1851.

²² *Bristol Mercury*, 11 December 1852.

²³ *Bath Chronicle*, 15 August 1850.

²⁴ Dorothy Porter and Roy Porter, 'The Politics of Prevention: Anti-Vaccinationism and Public Health in Nineteenth-Century England', *Medical History*, vol. 52, no. 3, 1988, 237.

was of critical importance to communities facing high levels of infant mortality. Sheaff argues that, in Cornwall in 1857, 64.07% of males and 45.73% of females died before they reached the age of five:

At St Cleer the proportion of burials of males under the age of five rose from [19%] in 1813-9 to [50%] in 1850-9; of females under 5, from [5%] in 1813-9 to [48%] in 1850-9. Corresponding figures for St Just-in-Penwith during 1840-9 were [43.5%] for males and [46%] for females.²⁵

Disease was the leading cause of death amongst children in Cornwall in the nineteenth century and measles, smallpox, diphtheria, whooping cough, cholera, typhoid and typhus all took their toll. There are many examples of Cornish folktales that reflect local understandings of health, medicine, illness, and mortality. Perhaps the most easily identifiable of these was the idea of 'changelings'. Jacqueline Simpson and Steve Roud provide an overview of the concept of changelings, stating that 'in societies where the belief in fairies was strong, it was held that they could steal human babies and substitute one of their own race: the latter would never thrive'.²⁶ That is, a healthy baby would be born but, at some point, the infant would be taken from its parents and replaced with a fairy imposter. The imposter would be sickly or poorly-behaved, potentially giving parents a way of explaining their child's appearance, ill-health or behaviour without compromising their own reputation regarding the 'purity' of their bloodline or their own capabilities as caregivers. According to McMahon, the stories of fairy changelings were likely used to 'rationalize the incidence of infantile congenital illnesses, such as Down's Syndrome, which were little understood at the time'.²⁷

That fairy changelings could be conceived of as an accepted rationalisation for genetic illness does not require a great stretch of the imagination when it is remembered that, oftentimes, children with these conditions may have appeared or behaved normally at the time of their birth, only to develop symptoms at a later stage. Thus, in a community with little to no grasp of medical science, particularly amongst the undereducated working and pauper classes, fairy changelings likely seemed as probable an explanation as any for such conditions. McMahon also asserts that fairy changeling stories may have been utilised as a way of rationalising post-partum depression amongst mothers and any subsequent neglect children suffered as a result.²⁸ It is also possible that the presence of a fairy imposter could be used to explain a mother's inability to bond with her child, so often the result of serious mental health issues affecting new mothers. As McMahon explains, life was tough for children and for their mothers at this time; 'certainly young children were very

²⁵ Sheaff, 'A Century of Centralization', 131.

²⁶ Jacqueline Simpson and Steve Roud, *A Dictionary of English Folklore*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2000.

²⁷ McMahon, *A Wreck Upon the Ocean*, 14.

²⁸ McMahon, *A Wreck Upon the Ocean*, 14.

vulnerable in nineteenth-century Cornwall, and the large-scale emigration of working fathers must have made it more difficult for hard-pressed mothers to cope'.²⁹

McMahon refers here to the mass-migration of Cornish miners and labourers across the globe throughout the nineteenth century, due to the rising cost of mine operations in Cornwall and the associated increase in prices for the metals they produced. Whilst it was getting harder to operate mines in Cornwall and the conditions for miners continued to worsen, foreign competition grew and it became more profitable to operate hard rock mines in the Americas, in Australia, and in southern Africa. Although Cornish migration patterns varied widely, the dominant trend was for both single and married men to leave Cornwall in search of better pay and working conditions. These men often sent money home to support their families and some would travel back and forth between Cornwall and the various foreign mining settlements dominated by migrant Cornish workers. Sometimes, it was the women who moved back and forth between their homes in Cornwall and their husbands overseas. Still other women were completely abandoned by their husbands who took the opportunity to start a new life for themselves overseas, severing ties with their wives, children, and other dependents such as elderly parents. For the most part, though, Cornish migrant miners and their families forged a highly mobile transnational community linked by a shared cultural and ethnic identity.³⁰ This mass-migration in the nineteenth century radically changed Cornish society. As Patrick Laviolette argues:

Death also becomes one of the landmarks of this peninsular identification because Cornwall exists through the lamentations for its own lost populations ... This cultural identification with the departed abides by a situation in which migration and diaspora have become defining characteristics of Cornishness.³¹

The nineteenth century was a time of massive social change and upheaval in Cornwall, and this had a substantial impact, not only on the community as a whole, but also within individual families. Thus, McMahon's contention that fairy changeling stories could be utilised by struggling Cornish mothers wishing to provide an explanation for the condition of her children, seems highly plausible. Regardless of whether or not the father was with the family in Cornwall or working overseas, life was tough for mining families and the children often suffered as a result: 'most mining families lived in hovels of cob and thatch, which they often built for themselves. Sanitation and water supplies were poor, smallpox, measles, diphtheria and typhoid fever were rife'.³² Within these communities, the conditions of life exacted an extraordinary toll upon the population.

With such substantial social upheaval and communal grief affecting the population, adherence to traditional folk beliefs can be understood as a coping mechanism in times of great hardship and

²⁹ McMahon, *A Wreck Upon the Ocean*, 14.

³⁰ For further detail of Cornish migration trends and patterns, see Philip Payton, *The Cornish Overseas*, Cornwall Editions, Fowey, 2005.

³¹ Patrick Laviolette, 'Landscaping Death: Resting Places for Cornish Identity', *Journal of Material Culture*, vol. 8, no. 2, 2003, 215-240.

³² McMahon, *A Wreck Upon the Ocean*, 14.

difficulty. However, as McMahon points out, tales of fairy changelings sometimes had more sinister motives behind them. He refers to a report in the *West Briton* of 14 July 1843 which outlines a horrific case of child abuse that occurred in Penzance. 'A man ... called Trevelyan ... was charged with starving and beating his infant son. At Christmas 1841 the child was left out in the cold for hours because his parents believed him to be a changeling'.³³ Although the case against Trevelyan was ultimately dropped due to a lack of evidence, the surrounding community did not allow the parents to get away with abusing their child. The family was driven out of town by their neighbours and, as McMahon shows, it is pertinent to remember that even though some of the Trevelyan family's neighbours likely maintained a genuine belief in fairies and the possibility of changelings existing, they did not allow the parents of an obviously abused young boy to use this folk belief as an excuse to cover up their heinous crime.³⁴

Not all fairy changeling stories involved babies, nor did they all derive from Cornish folklore alone. The murder of Bridget Cleary at the hands of her husband in Ireland in 1895 caused a sensation in the press when Michael Cleary claimed that he had killed his wife because he believed she had been a changeling. Critically for the concept of the clash of traditional folklore and modern medicine, Bridget Cleary had fallen ill with a fever and her husband had initially sought the help of both a doctor and a priest. However, when neither of their solutions had helped his wife, Michael instead turned to a *shanachie* (story-teller) by the name of Jack Dunne. Dunne prescribed a herbal remedy and this was force-fed to Bridget by way of a red-hot poker being brandished close to her face.³⁵ As Philip Payton describes, Bridget's treatment at the hands of these two men only continued to get worse as the evening progressed:

When the herbal medicine recommended by Dunne appeared not to work, Michael Cleary was spurred to adopt more desperate measures. Dunne himself had been shocked when he had first seen the ailing Bridget in bed, exclaiming, 'That is not Bridgie Boland!' (her maiden name). This was not merely a suggestion that Bridget did not look herself but was rather a serious accusation which insisted that this person was *not* Bridget Cleary ... Dunne was now convinced that the person supposed to be Bridget was in fact a changeling planted by the fairies.³⁶

Accusations such as this were not as outlandish to those around Bridget as they might initially seem from a modern standpoint. In fact, as Payton states, Bridget herself had 'unwittingly given credence to this interpretation, when she had mentioned to her cousin Johanna that her fever had come on when she "took like a trembling coming by Kyleneagranah"'.³⁷ Kyleneagranah was a site containing the remains of a long-abandoned ancient settlement. With sites like this dotted across the Irish landscape, they came to be incorporated into local folklore as 'fairy rings' or 'fairy forts' – places where fairies lived. Thus, Bridget's own admission that she had first felt the symptoms of her

³³ McMahon, *A Wreck Upon the Ocean*, 14.

³⁴ McMahon, *A Wreck Upon the Ocean*, 14.

³⁵ Philip Payton, 'Bridget Cleary and Cornish Studies: Folklore, Story-Telling and Modernity', *Cornish Studies*, vol. 13, no. 1, 2005, 196.

³⁶ Payton, 'Bridget Cleary and Cornish Studies', 196.

³⁷ Payton, 'Bridget Cleary and Cornish Studies', 196.

illness as she passed Kylenegranah added further credence to Dunne's accusation that she was, in fact, a fairy changeling.

The young Trevelyan boy in Penzance, had been starved, beaten, and abandoned outside in the cold Cornish winter for hours on end. Greater detail exists regarding the suffering that befell Bridget Cleary when she was accused of being a changeling. Bridget was held over the kitchen fire as a form of interrogation to expose the changeling for the imposter it was. Although she was not burned, her forehead was blemished, 'which may have been the result of brandishing a red-hot poker too close to her skin', and her clothing was singed.³⁸ Michael Cleary and Jack Dunne, believing that they really were dealing with a fairy changeling, faced increasing urgency to reveal the fairy's true identity in order to secure the real Bridget's safe return as Dunne believed that, if the changeling could not be exposed before midnight, Bridget would never be returned. Her own father, Patrick Boland, also attended the interrogation of Bridget that occurred as she had been held above the fire. As midnight passed, Bridget became increasingly delirious and confused and, satisfied that their interrogation techniques had worked and her erratic behaviour was a sign that the fairy had been exposed, the men returned Bridget to her bed. However, Bridget Cleary's ordeal was far from over and Payton reveals the horrors that awaited her when she awoke the following day:

Bridget was quieter and got up from her bed to drink some tea in the kitchen. Michael insisted that she should eat three pieces of bread before she be allowed to drink. She ate the first two but refused the third: a wilfully subversive act so typical of a changeling that Michael Cleary flew into a rage. He knocked her to the ground and grabbed a red-hot stick from the fire, shouting and waving the stick so close to Bridget that within seconds her calico chemise was ablaze ... he doused Bridget in paraffin from the oil-lamp and let her burn.³⁹

Payton contends that Michael Cleary really did have a genuine belief that the creature he had so cruelly killed was not his wife but, rather, had actually been the fairy imposter exchanged for his real wife as she passed by Kylenegranah. Supporting this, Payton reveals that Cleary had been insistent to his father-in-law, Patrick, that Bridget was not really dead and would be returned to them, safe and well, the following Sunday night.⁴⁰ The detail with which Michael described the events that would lead to his wife's return were as follows:

She would be seen at Kylenegranah fairy-fort, riding on a white horse. [Michael] would grab the horse, cut the straps and so rescue her from the fairies. Michael appeared to believe his own story, and spent three nights at Kylenegranah in the genuine expectation that his wife would emerge from the fairy-fort riding a white horse.⁴¹

Of course, Bridget never appeared at Kylenegranah, and there was no white horse or heroic rescue. Instead, her burnt remains were recovered by the police in the shallow grave Michael had

³⁸ Payton, 'Bridget Cleary and Cornish Studies', 197.

³⁹ Payton, 'Bridget Cleary and Cornish Studies', 197.

⁴⁰ Payton, 'Bridget Cleary and Cornish Studies', 197.

⁴¹ Payton, 'Bridget Cleary and Cornish Studies', 197.

buried her in. What is, perhaps, most remarkable about this case is the fact that, in 1895, as the twentieth century is dawning, not only did people like Jack Dunne still exist, but Cleary's apparently genuine belief that his wife was not sick but had actually been taken and replaced by a fairy was enough to see his charge downgraded from murder to manslaughter.

Whilst the fate of Bridget Cleary is both terrifying and fascinating at the same time, the case, of course, occurred in Ireland, a radically different social and cultural context to that of Cornwall. However, some of the fairy changeling stories that appear in Cornish folklore bear striking similarities to her story. One such tale is that of Jenny Trayer, a fictional woman who lived along the road between Penzance and St Just in Penwith. According to Payton, the story begins as follows:

A spriggan (a type of fairy) took the place of Jenny's baby one evening when she was in the fields helping with the harvest. On her return she was surprised to find the child not in its cradle but 'in a corner of the kitchen where in olden days the wood and furze for the then general open fires were kept'. However, exhausted from her labours in the fields, Jenny Trayer did not dwell upon the surprise but went straight to bed and slept soundly to the next morning. Thereafter, there was to be no rest.⁴²

In a similar vein to the Bridget Cleary case, Jenny Trayer's baby did not appear to be the same child and, convinced of her baby's replacement with a spriggan, she asked her neighbours for advice. They suggested she take the changeling to the holy well of St Uny and dip it into the water on the first three Wednesdays of May. This she did twice successfully until, on her third visit, 'the fairy folk, as if from nowhere hailed their changeling brother, who "made answer in similar voice" that he had no intention of returning to the spriggan world'.⁴³ Thus, the Jenny Trayer story includes both an account of actual contact with fairy folk and that most telling sign of the presence of a changeling – an eloquent baby. In a scene reminiscent of Michael Cleary's despair at his wife's apparent situation, Jenny Trayer sought advice from another neighbour who advised her to place the baby on the ashes pile and beat it with a broom before taking the child (naked) and placing it under the church style, to be left alone until morning. This Jenny Trayer dutifully did and she was rewarded with the safe return of her own child, who she instantly recognised, clean, safe, and dressed on a bed of dry straw.

As can be seen from the horrific real-life consequences that befell both Bridget Cleary in Ireland, and young children like the Trevelyan boy of Penzance, folklore stories such as that of Jenny Trayer had powerful implications for many communities. Stories such as these permeated everyday life in Cornwall and articles from the *West Briton* newspaper reveal the extent to which folklore held sway over the average Cornish individual. On 20 October 1815, the *West Briton* reported that the pilchard season had closed and that it had not been a particularly successful one for the fishermen. As was stated previously, the reliance of the Cornish fishermen upon the seasonal return of the pilchards along the coast meant that many families were at risk of dire poverty and starvation if the

⁴² Payton, 'Bridget Cleary and Cornish Studies', 204.

⁴³ Payton, 'Bridget Cleary and Cornish Studies', 204.

fishermen were unsuccessful. In 1815 this was the case and it was revealed that the affected fishermen had some rather unusual explanations for this unfortunate occurrence. For some, the poor season was due to a grudge, long-held by the pilchards, against the fishermen of the region as, some years earlier, several fisherman had been in the habit of catching some of the smaller fish and scarring them, before throwing them back, alive, into the ocean.⁴⁴ Thus, it was reasoned that these injured and mutilated fish must have found some way of communicating with their pilchard brethren to warn them to stay away from the Cornish coast and the cruel fishermen that trawled it. Others pointed to rumours of a great sea monster that had emerged in the eighteenth century in order to avenge the coastal drift fishermen who felt their rights had been impinged upon by an Act of Parliament that had been introduced to prevent them from casting their nets within three miles of the coast, in order to protect the interests of the sean-owners who wanted to catch whole shoals of pilchards as they moved towards the shoreline.⁴⁵ This folktale was carried down into the nineteenth century, when it was assumed that, because the sean-owners had, once again, suffered the greatest losses in the difficult season, the sea monster (or one like it) had returned and devoured the migrating shoals further out to sea, before the sean-owners could catch them, leaving the drifters and their hauls untouched.

Indeed, superstitious beliefs such as these permeated not only the fishing and mining industries, but also Cornish society as a whole. In June 1824, the *West Briton* reported on the misfortune of the French family, residents of the parish of Davidstow. Mr French supported his family by hiring himself and his team of four horses out to work. When all four horses died suddenly, together, and apparently in great pain, French was at a loss as to what may have caused their sudden demise. Generous neighbours lent him another pair of horses in order to keep his work going but, when those horses also died, French came to the conclusion that he had likely been cursed. According to the report, French then travelled to seek the advice of a celebrated wizard living in the north of Devon. There

he was assured that his conjectures as to the cause of the death of his horses was correct; a very particular description of the witch – of course, an old woman – by whom these deeds were perpetrated, was also given, and the dupe returned fully persuaded of the truth of the story and with a resolution to search in the neighbourhood for the person so accurately described.⁴⁶

Ruth M. Barton, who compiled a collection of selected articles from the *West Briton*, provided an additional note as to the outcome of this case, stating that, while Mr French was searching for the witch that had so cursed him, he had no horses to work with and so sold his remaining stock of hay to a local clergyman. The clergyman's three horses then also died in a very similar manner to

⁴⁴ *West Briton*, 20 October 1815.

⁴⁵ *West Briton*, 20 October 1815.

⁴⁶ *West Briton*, 25 June 1824.

French's. An examination of the hay then revealed that it had been contaminated with arsenic.⁴⁷ Although highly toxic, and obviously extremely dangerous to humans and animals alike, the poisoning of French's horses was unlikely to have been the result of any malicious intent, supernatural or otherwise. Arsenic was a common, and indeed profitable, by-product of copper and tin mining throughout Cornwall. Modern geochemical studies have revealed that, even in the twenty-first century, the topsoils around long-abandoned mine sites across Cornwall still contain elevated levels of arsenic.⁴⁸ One such study, undertaken in West Cornwall, around the historic mining sites of Camborne, Redruth and Hayle, indicated that agriculture in the same region, through actions such as ploughing, exacerbated the problem by spreading the arsenic deeper into the soil and this contributed to a greater contamination of the general area and, by extension, to the contamination of any products grown in the agricultural region.⁴⁹

Whilst, ultimately, there was a logical, and scientific, explanation to the French family's misfortune, it is important to realise that witchcraft had seemed to be the only plausible explanation to Mr French and he had even travelled across an entire county to seek advice on how best to deal with his unfortunate situation. Also important to note is the way in which the *West Briton* describes French, namely as a 'dupe'.⁵⁰ This reveals the growing chasm between the learned and educated Cornish classes who read, published in, and edited newspapers, and those poor 'dupes' upon whom they reported. Yet, not all superstitious beliefs were treated with such disdain by the *West Briton*. A report that appeared on 6 July 1827 outlines the reported sightings of several mermaids on the beach at Mawgan Porth, on the Atlantic Coast. Initially reported by one young man who, admittedly late at night, 'saw something in the shape of a human figure staring at him, with long hair hanging all about'; his immediate reaction had been to run away, believing as he did 'that he had seen the devil'.⁵¹ In the days that followed this initial encounter, at least eight supposed mermaids were seen by other men in the same area. Whilst Mr French had been labelled a 'dupe' for believing that he had been cursed by a witch, the men of Mawgan Porth appear to have been regarded with a little more courtesy by the *West Briton*. What follows reads as an attempt at a scientifically-minded observation of these creatures:

⁴⁷Extracts from the *West Briton* Newspaper (1810-1835) in Ruth M. Barton, (ed.), *Life in Cornwall: In the Early Nineteenth Century*, D. Bradford Barton, Truro, Cornwall, 1970, 140.

⁴⁸ For examples see: Duncan Pirrie, Matthew R. Power, Gavyn Rollinson, G. Simon Camm, Susan H. Hughes, Alan R. Butcher, and Peta Hughes, 'The Spatial Distribution and Source of Arsenic, Copper, Tin and Zinc Within the Surface Sediments of the Fal Estuary, Cornwall, UK,' *Sedimentology*, vol. 50, 2003, 579-595; Philip J. Potts, Michael H. Ramsey, and James Carlisle, 'Portable X-Ray Fluorescence in the Characterisation of Arsenic Contamination Associated with Industrial Buildings at a Heritage Arsenic Works Site near Redruth, Cornwall, UK', *Journal of Environmental Monitoring*, vol. 4, 2002, 1017-1024; G.S. Camm, A.R. Butcher, D. Pirrie, P.K. Hughes, and H.J. Glass, 'Secondary Mineral Phases Associated with a Historic Arsenic Calciner Identified Using Automated Scanning Electron Microscopy: A Pilot Study from Cornwall, UK', *Minerals Engineering*, vol. 16, no. 11, sup. 1, 2003, 1269-1277; G. Simon Camm, Hylke J. Glass, Derek W. Bryce, and Alan R. Butcher, 'Characterisation of a Mining-Related Arsenic-Contaminated Site, Cornwall, UK', *Journal of Geochemical Exploration*, vol. 82, 2004, 1-15.

⁴⁹ Camm et al, 'Characterisation of a Mining-Related Arsenic-Contaminated Site', 13.

⁵⁰ *West Briton*, 25 June 1824.

⁵¹ *West Briton*, 6 July 1827.

The mermaids were about 40 feet below the men (who stood on the cliff) and were lying on a rock ... two of them were large, about 4 ½ to 5 feet long, and these appeared to be sleeping on the rock; the other small ones were swimming about, and went off once to sea and then came back again. The men looked at them for more than an hour and flung stones at them, but they would not move off. The large ones seemed to be lying on their faces; their upper parts were like those of human beings, and black or dark coloured, with very long hair hanging around them; their lower parts were of a bluish colour, and terminating in a fin, like fish ... The hair of these mermaids extended to a distance of 9 to 10 feet.⁵²

As Barton notes, this description was amended in the following issue of the *West Briton* in order to emphasise their more human-like qualities. She states that the men who had observed the creatures did not agree with the description of their bodies as 'black or dark coloured', rather, they insisted that 'the colour of the bodies of these creatures was "exactly like that of a Christian"'.⁵³

Despite the apparent consideration granted to the witnesses of the Mawgan Porth mermaid sightings, the *West Briton* did not appear to grant the same courtesy to other local folk beliefs. In 1829, whilst reporting on the phenomenon of a Gypsy woman telling fortunes in the area of Padstow, the women who sought her services were described, like Mr French, as 'dupes'.⁵⁴ However, this story reveals another unfortunate side to the continued reliance upon folklore that was so prevalent in Cornwall at the time. It seems that, in this case, the women really were duped, handing over 'trinkets and articles of wearing apparel, which [the Gypsy] was to return on Monday last with valuable additions'.⁵⁵ Of course, the mysterious Gypsy woman and her accomplice, a Cornishman known as 'The Ferret', did not return at all, having stolen the items that were willingly handed over by women who legitimately believed that she would bring them back with multiple other items of untold value. It seems that this so-called fortune teller was nothing more than a common criminal, with Barton noting that, just a week later, she was imprisoned for assaulting an individual at Port Isaac.⁵⁶

Mysterious fortune tellers were not the only individuals taking advantage of Cornish folkloric adherences and beliefs. There was a great deal of distrust surrounding modern medical practices, particularly the practice of vaccination. This distrust of modern medicine and, by extension, of the trained medical professionals who practiced them, created a fertile ground for those 'quack' doctors who so readily offered the services that lower-class individuals demanded. One such beneficiary was a man known only as the 'French doctor' who set up practice at Mevagissey, near St Austell, described by the *West Briton* as 'a man of about 45 years of age, a perfect stranger, of very common place and very eccentric appearance'.⁵⁷ According to the report of 1830, the 'French doctor' had set up practice at Mevagissey some four years earlier, having taken 'up his abode in a very obscure lodging' and had obtained his rather mysterious moniker due to 'his grotesque

⁵² *West Briton*, 6 July 1827.

⁵³ Barton, *Life in Cornwall: In the Early Nineteenth Century*, 164.

⁵⁴ *West Briton*, 13 November 1829.

⁵⁵ *West Briton*, 13 November 1829.

⁵⁶ Barton, *Life in Cornwall: In the Early Nineteenth Century*, 192.

⁵⁷ *West Briton*, 1 October 1830.

appearance, his imperfect pronunciation of English, and his refusing to give his name'.⁵⁸ It was revealed, under investigation, that the 'French doctor' actually did speak English quite well and he subsequently gave his name as Sydney Guelph Churchill. An extended report appeared in the *London Medical Gazette* of 2 October 1830, as a letter to the editor. In this letter, Lawrence Boyne, a surgeon from St Mawes, near Falmouth, outlines the travesties performed by the 'French doctor' as he continued to be known to his loyal patients in and around Mevagissey.⁵⁹ The 'French doctor's' approach to medicine is described by Boyne as 'barbarous, and his blunders every day palpable and mischievous, yet he retained his ascendancy over [his patients'] minds, and proceeded in a career of practice that was surprising and lamentable'.⁶⁰

The 'French doctor', however popular he may have been amongst the locals, soon found himself in hot water with the authorities. The story of his legal trouble is outlined by Boyne:

A case occurred in the parish of Veryan, which brought this pseudo-medicus under the cognizance of the laws of his country. In the month of April last, the doctor went to a village called Cairn to extract a tooth for some one, when an old man, about 87 years of age, accidentally meeting him, asked his opinion of a small tumor [sic] he had had upon his lower lip for several years. The practitioner, with an air of great gravity and self-importance, told the old man the tumor [sic] was of a most serious nature ... [and] that he would most skilfully operate upon it. ... The old man ... consented, and at a time appointed, the operator came to his house. He commenced, and with a small knife excised the tumor [sic] ... a profuse bleeding took place, which, after some continuance, excited the remonstrances of a by-stander, and induced faintness in the aged patient. The operator ... sent into the village for some cobbler's wax as a styptic [to stop the bleeding], which failed ... he next searched a neighbouring barn for cobwebs, but these also refusing their efficacy, the unhappy patient began to sink, and he was carried up-stairs to bed in an exhausted state.⁶¹

Perhaps the most damning aspect of Boyne's recounting of the 'French doctor's' failings is the practitioner's next step. Rather than applying other remedies, attempting other treatments, or even acquiring the assistance of another practitioner, the 'French doctor' simply abandoned his patient to his impending fate. According to Boyne, he

rather abruptly took leave of the alarming scene, giving the patient's daughter the balmy consolation that "the blood would certainly stop when the sun went down." The haemorrhage, disobedient, however, to the great orb, continued until the faintness of the poor man caused it at length to stop; as, however, the vessels had not been secured, the bleeding returned at intervals and by degrees brought the poor man into a state of debility, under which he eventually sunk and expired.⁶²

Having left his patient to bleed to death, the 'French doctor' was made to account for his actions at a coronial inquest, at which time Boyne, as a surgeon, was called to give his professional opinion on the case. The jury at the inquest concluded that the 'French doctor', now identified as Sydney

⁵⁸ *West Briton*, 1 October 1830.

⁵⁹ *London Medical Gazette*, 2 October 1830.

⁶⁰ *London Medical Gazette*, 2 October 1830.

⁶¹ *London Medical Gazette*, 2 October 1830.

⁶² *London Medical Gazette*, 2 October 1830.

Guelph Churchill, should face trial for manslaughter at the Bodmin assizes. The case against him was ultimately dropped on a technicality, but not before Churchill's complete lack of any real medical knowledge or training was revealed. Boyne states that, when Churchill was giving his own account of the death of the elderly man of Cairn, the following exchange occurred:

[Churchill] "... I performed the operation on the *pubes*."

The learned judge [Baron Vaughan] here interrupted the prisoner, by asking on what part he had said he had operated?

[Churchill] replied, "On the *pubes* – or *lower lip*, my Lord Judge. (Roars of laughter throughout the Court.)"⁶³

Even his manslaughter trial could not dissipate the influence that the 'French doctor' had over the residents of Mevagissey, with Boyne lamenting that, 'notwithstanding the above exposé, [he] retains to this hour admirers and devotees, even among persons from whom a better judgment might be expected ... such is the *gullability* [sic] of John Bull'.⁶⁴

The continued popularity of the 'French doctor', even after his manslaughter trial in the case of the old man from Cairn reveals the propensity for belief in alternative approaches to medicine that existed amongst the broader Cornish population. The influence of people like the 'French doctor' was not limited to specific geographic areas; people across the length and breadth of the county sought advice from such figures. In 1836, the *West Briton* reported on two cases involving witchcraft, also described as 'the occult science'.⁶⁵ The first of these cases was not medical in nature but bears striking similarities to the aforementioned tale of Mr French's misfortune. A farmer residing in the Scilly Isles, an archipelago off Land's End, suffered stock losses and came to the same conclusion as French; that he had been the victim of a witch's spell. The farmer sought the advice of one of his neighbours and the *West Briton* reports with horror that 'the advice given was to burn a calf alive, which the superstitious and inhuman monster actually carried into effect!'⁶⁶ The actions of this farmer, who legitimately believed that the only way to break the spell upon his property was to commit such a horrific act of animal cruelty, is rendered inhuman in the eyes of the educated classes, further revealing the widening gap between the traditional beliefs of 'old Cornwall' and the enlightened and humane understandings of the new, modern Cornwall. Sheaff describes the early nineteenth century as a 'watershed in healthcare' for Cornwall: 'between a reliance on traditional medicine and on modern, scientific medicine; the former with strong idiosyncratic residues of medieval Cornish and indeed older beliefs; the latter based on an increasingly internationalized body of scientific knowledge'.⁶⁷

⁶³ *London Medical Gazette*, 2 October 1830.

⁶⁴ *London Medical Gazette*, 2 October 1830.

⁶⁵ *West Briton*, 28 October 1836.

⁶⁶ *West Briton*, 15 April 1836.

⁶⁷ Rod Sheaff, 'A Century of Centralization: Cornish Health and Healthcare', *Cornish Studies*, vol. 4, 1996, 141.

Belief in witchcraft and the impact of the so-called 'occult science' was not limited to agricultural practices although the second witchcraft story from 1836 once again involves a farming family, this time from mid-Cornwall. This case provides extremely valuable insight into the widespread opposition to modern medical practices and the doctors who employed them, that so heavily influenced the receptivity, or rather lack thereof, of the Cornish working and pauper classes to the smallpox vaccination procedure. The *West Briton* reveals that, in this case, the family had a child described as 'much afflicted in its eyes'.⁶⁸ It is reported that, whilst the child's mother was visiting in Plymouth, in Devon, she encountered 'one [who] denounced the whole tribe of doctors as a pack of fools, and declared that every symptom of the child's disease proved beyond demonstration that the child was bewitched'.⁶⁹ In order to break the spell of the black witch that had cursed the child with ill-health, a white witch was sent for and brought back from Plymouth to attend to the child in what must have been a rather costly exercise. The *West Briton* then goes on to reveal that the child's health could not be restored by the white witch, who instead declared that 'she could not counteract what the black witch had done but she had put a stop to all future influence, and moreover gave the parents a clear idea who was the author of the child's illness'.⁷⁰ Thus, just as had been done in cases of mass hysteria regarding the threat of witchcraft that had so permeated European and American cultures between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries, a specific individual (in this case, rather unsurprisingly, a woman) was singled out as a witch by members of her community and blamed for the misfortunes of others. This case is extremely important as it reveals the enormous sway that the belief in witchcraft held over the people of Cornwall. In denouncing the trained medical practitioners as 'a pack of fools', the resident of Plymouth who had advised the child's mother to seek the services of a white witch emphasises the deep distrust of doctors that was held by the lower-classes across the broader South-West.

As with the 'French doctor', the failings of the white witch in the case of the farmer's child did little to shake local belief in her supernatural abilities. The white witch's journey from Plymouth apparently coincided with a violent storm, which, as the *West Briton* reports, was attributed by many in the area to her powers: 'many firmly believe that the witch ... raised the late severe storm, for it was observed that, on the road as she came, houses were unroofed, and trees torn up by their roots'.⁷¹ Belief in the power of witches, then, was so ingrained in Cornish society that, even in the nineteenth century, natural disasters and illnesses were still attributed to their powers, and farmers remained willing to burn calves alive in order to break their spells. Not all stories of supernatural intervention appear to have ended badly for the parties involved, however. In 1837, it was reported that a Miss Miners, having been bitten by an adder, was 'charmed' by a Mrs Davies from St Stephens in Brannel, some five miles from Miners' home in Ladock. It was reported that Davies'

⁶⁸ *West Briton*, 28 October 1836.

⁶⁹ *West Briton*, 28 October 1836.

⁷⁰ *West Briton*, 28 October 1836.

⁷¹ *West Briton*, 28 October 1836.

charm worked perfectly and Miss Miners was 'cured immediately'.⁷² Sheaff argues that traditional Cornish medical practices can be divided into two categories: 'contagious magic' and 'sympathetic magic'. An example of 'contagious magic' was a traditional Cornish treatment for warts: 'bury the ninth pea from a pod, or a piece of meat ... as the pea or meat decayed, so would the wart'.⁷³ Sheaff contends that practices such as these were likely based upon the concept that disease could be transferred from a patient to another physical object through contact, hence the disease was 'contagious'. Another example of this was the attempt to cure warts by 'touching them with the hand of a dead child', transferring the warts to the dead child and allowing the shared contagion to decay with the body.⁷⁴ Sympathetic magic, on the other hand, was based upon ritual and sacrifice. Illnesses were thus treated using live animal sacrifice, sometimes through fire (in a similar way to the burning of the calf to end a curse). Other methods of treating illness through 'sympathetic magic' included; halving a pigeon and placing it on the soles of the feet to treat certain foot-related ailments, and killing and skinning a cat and wearing the skin on the back to treat lumbago. Some forms of sympathetic magic were more ritualistic than sacrificial. Renowned historian of Cornish mining, A. K. Hamilton Jenkin 'recorded the beliefs that a person could not easily die when lying 'athwart the planshun' [across the direction of the floorboards], and that opening windows and doors would ease his passing'.⁷⁵

As Payton's analysis of the Bridget Cleary case, in comparison with the Cornish legend of Jenny Trayer's changeling child reveals, traditional Cornish understandings of medicine and healthcare shared some similarities with other Celtic traditions. Sheaff describes these as 'pan-Celtic beliefs' and perhaps the most obvious of these is the Cornish adherence to the notion that certain objects and places held specific curative powers. As with many other Celtic cultures, the Cornish retained a belief that holy wells held such powers and, whilst some wells, such as Lady Wells at Mevagissey, and Constantine's well at St Merryn were believed to have generic healing properties, other wells were deemed to have curative powers for specific illnesses and afflictions. Wells such as Castle Horneck at Madron could be used for sore eyes, St Nun's well at Altarnun cured insanity, and St Piran's well at Perranzabuloe cured rickets. Rickets could also apparently be cured through the 'Penwith custom of passing through the hole in the central stone at Men-an-Tol'.⁷⁶ As has been seen through some of the examples previously discussed, the Cornish retained a strong belief in the power of curses, or 'ill-wishes'. Sheaff believes this notion to have been particularly unique to the Cornish and argues that it was this adherence to the notion that an 'ill-wisher' could bring

⁷² *West Briton*, 13 June 1837.

⁷³ Sheaff, 'A Century of Centralization', 128.

⁷⁴ Sheaff, 'A Century of Centralization', 128-129.

⁷⁵ Sheaff, 'A Century of Centralization', 129.

⁷⁶ Sheaff, 'A Century of Centralization', 129. Men-an-Tol is a formation of standing stones, located a few miles northwest of Madron. The name translates literally to 'the hole stone' and refers to the stone in the centre of the formation. It was also believed that Men-an-Tol could reverse a changeling baby spell and that if a woman passed through the centre stone seven times during a full moon, she would soon become pregnant.

sickness or suffering upon an individual that gave those who claimed to have metaphysical abilities (such as the white witches and the fortune tellers) such a prominent role within Cornish society:

A remedy [for a curse] was for the patient or his relative to draw the ill-wisher's blood but to do this one had first to discover who the ill-wisher was. Here 'conjurers' and 'pellars' [sorcerers or wizards] ... could assist, besides being able to prognosticate the outcome of the sickness. John Stevens, a Polperro shoemaker, has been recorded as someone claiming such powers and some pellars, for instance one Anne Jeffries, claimed they could enlist the aid of pyskies in curing distempers, sickness, sores, agues, falling sickness and broken bones.⁷⁷

Returning once again to the theme of witchcraft, seemingly quite a widely held belief throughout the county, wandering witch-finders also made themselves available to the afflicted people of Cornwall. It appears that such witch-finders and others engaged in occult healing proved to be a popular alternative to seeking medical advice from doctors or surgeons. A case from a village in the vicinity of Tywardreath on the Cornish south coast reveals that a travelling witch-finder had been called in to deal with a case of illness resulting from suspected witchcraft. A woman in the neighbourhood was accused by many of being a witch and had been linked to several cases of illness and death. One man who believed his long illness to have been the result of this woman's evil influence, engaged the witch-finder's services to bring his sickness to an end and to remove the evil from his home.⁷⁸ Similarly, in Phillack, the *West Briton* reported with disdain that the cemetery had been 'made the scene of transactions which would have blackened the darkest ignorance of bygone ages'.⁷⁹ A scatterer of witch spells had been brought over from Helston to deal with the spells that many believed had caused their various ailments and diseases. Each participant in the ritual paid a fee to the scatterer, who then set about breaking the curses that beset them. These two cases reveal that, when it came to dealing with chronic illnesses, sudden onset diseases, and various other ailments, recourse was made, not to the doctors or surgeons, but rather to witch-finders and spell-breakers. Witchcraft was a part of the everyday reality for ordinary Cornish folk and it was believed by many, much to the chagrin of the educated classes, that illness and death were the inevitable outcomes of the rampant evil influences of witches across the county. These diseases, therefore, could not be treated or cured by medicine; the spells had to be broken before the patient could recover. This was the environment into which the British Government ventured with its efforts to introduce, popularise, and later to enforce, the practice of vaccination against smallpox. It is little wonder, then, that the various amendments to the Vaccination Act were so unpopular amongst the lower classes of Cornish society.

As early as 1828, pro-vaccination supporters were pressing the British government to expand on the already extant benevolence towards the non-vaccinating lower classes. 'J.H.', writing in the

⁷⁷ Sheaff, 'A Century of Centralization', 129-130.

⁷⁸ *West Briton*, 3 December 1841.

⁷⁹ *West Briton*, 6 September 1844.

Dorset Chronicle of 27 March 1828 claimed that ‘the benefit of vaccination [is] in great measure lost, not from actual opposition, but from a want of decision’.⁸⁰ This indecision, apparently from the governing classes and from medical practitioners with regards to the relative merits of vaccination as opposed to inoculation had, according to ‘J.H.’ terrifying impacts upon society as a whole:

Perceiving the danger, [the lower orders of society] are but too easily advised by a host of old women who with their *stocking needles* succeed to their wishes in propagating from village to village a loathsome disease, which sends hundreds to a premature grave.⁸¹

For ‘J.H.’ then, the lower classes were not actually seeking inoculation to express their opposition to smallpox vaccination; they were merely being influenced by crafty old women in the absence of any official guidelines from the authorities with regards to whether vaccination or inoculation should be practised. A decade later, William Reid appealed to the readers of the *Western Gazette* to help stop the continued practice of folk inoculation, the procedure which ‘J.H.’ had blamed on ‘a host of old women’.

I respectfully solicit the attention of your numerous readers to an abuse which has long prevailed in the West of England, which custom has rendered familiar, and which continues to spread its baneful influences annually among the poorer and uneducated classes of society, without any person attempting to interrupt its progress or to stop the career of those contemptible empirics, who, for selfish purposes, are ready to abet any popular prejudices, thus adding to the evils of poverty with which the poor have to contend, the further grievous infliction of disease, misery, and death – I allude to the practice of innoculation [sic] for small-pox.⁸²

To both ‘J.H.’ and William Reid, the poorer classes of South-West England were mere pawns, subject to the predation of ‘a host of old women ... with their *stocking needles*’ and the ‘contemptible empirics’ who sought to make money off of the prejudices that apparently prevented the lower classes from taking full advantage of the vaccination procedure. Thus, for both of these individuals, government intervention to outlaw inoculation and promote vaccination was sorely needed. However, the prosecutions of Matthew Symes in 1848, Priscilla Menear and Ann Crowle in 1852, and Francis Harris in 1853, reveal that, over a decade after such legislation had been introduced, folk inoculations remained popular throughout Cornwall and the broader south west.

To claim that the poorer classes of Cornwall were mere pawns, waiting for the authorities to save them from shameless profiteers is to deny them all agency in this narrative. The current historiographical approach to vaccine opposition throughout Britain seems to support this notion. For historians such as Durbach, opposition to vaccination emerges in Britain with the rise of the major anti-vaccination leagues in the late 1860s and early 1870s. However, if the refusal of the lower classes to vaccinate their children, and their continued adherence to the practice of folk inoculation is viewed as a form of passive opposition to the procedure, two distinct phases can be identified. Perhaps the most distinctive factor between these two phases is the introduction of the

⁸⁰ *Dorset Chronicle*, 27 March 1828.

⁸¹ *Dorset Chronicle*, 27 March 1828.

⁸² *Western Times*, 9 June 1838.

idea of active opposition through conscientious objection; a notion conspicuous by its absence prior to the growth of anti-vaccination sentiment in the urban middle classes in the 1870s. The continued adherence of many poorer Cornish parents to traditional medical practices, including inoculation, should be read in this light, as passive resistance to the implementation of universalised scientific medicine through vaccination. Despite this, passive resistance to vaccination is yet to feature at all in the historiography of British vaccine opposition. Durbach argues that post-1867 opposition was organised and was much more visible than it was in the earlier phase. Indeed, Durbach is not denying that pre-1867 opposition existed. However, what she dismisses as a law being 'blatantly disregarded by many parents', is evidenced by the Cornish example to have been as much a form of opposition to vaccination as the formation of organised societies to agitate against it was. As has been shown, Durbach's work focuses heavily on the role of class in the vaccination debate, forming a critical component of the 'longer history of the making and re-making of the British working class, and [contributing] to a more complex understanding of the importance of the body in the production of a classed identity'.⁸³ The argument that Cornish adherence to the practice of inoculation constituted a form of passive opposition only seeks to further the goal set forward by Durbach by tracing working-class opposition to vaccination back to a time before the organised anti-vaccination societies, founded and run by middle-class agitators. This emphasises the autonomy of the lower-classes with regards to the earliest stages of vaccine opposition and highlights early efforts to maintain personal control over the body in the wake of a rapidly industrialising and centralising government force.

Whilst some contemporaries of this earlier phase of passive opposition acknowledged that inoculation was not exclusively practised by the lower classes of society, the poor and the uneducated were considered by many to be most to blame for the continuation of inoculation and, as a result, for the ravages caused by the unchecked smallpox virus. 'Verax', writing in the *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*, in 1828, took aim at the higher classes of Devon, stating 'as to such of the higher classes, who ought to know better, as are ignorant enough to have their children inoculated, I rank them among the foes of mankind'.⁸⁴ However scathing their opinion of the inoculating higher classes may have been, 'Verax' was certainly in a minority. For the most part, it was the lower classes that were seen as the barrier to widespread acceptance of vaccination. J. Strang wrote a particularly biting review of the situation as he saw it in 1819:

Neither the example of the more respectable class of the inhabitants, nor the opinions of the professional men, nor the exhortations of the parish officers, have availed in persuading the poor to adopt vaccination; and even now, when they have such decided proof of the fatality of the small-pox, and the almost daily tolling of the parish bell announces to them the numerous victims of the disease, they remain as obstinate as ever, and, with an indifference that marks

⁸³ Nadja Durbach, 'They Might As Well Brand Us': Working Class Resistance to Compulsory Vaccination', *Social History of Medicine*, vol. 13, no. 1, 2000, 46-47.

⁸⁴ *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*, 3 May 1828.

either ignorance or something worse, see their children exposed to the risk of being attacked with the too fatal contagion.⁸⁵

Strang raises quite a valuable point in this statement. Whilst those around him and in subsequent decades proclaimed the need for government action and for a swift decision amongst medical professionals as to the relative value of vaccination as opposed to inoculation, Strang indicates that the working classes were not without altruistic guidance in this matter. While their apparent social betters were being vaccinated and medical professionals and their ilk espoused the benefits of vaccination as a prophylactic, the poor are revealed by Strang to have remained obstinate. Even as smallpox ravaged their communities, the lower classes continued to steadfastly resist the call to vaccinate. To Strang, the poor and the working classes were far from mere pawns sitting idly by and waiting for legislation to be introduced, they were already passively resisting compulsory vaccination three decades before it became the law of the land.

In 1825, William Tucker, a surgeon from Market Lavington in central Wiltshire, was indignant to discover what he believed to be the cause of lower-class opposition to vaccination. Writing to the *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette*, Tucker proclaimed 'a notion prevails among the lower classes of people, that vaccination is morally improper! It would, I think be hard to conceive how a process, which is practically beneficial to mankind can be morally wrong'.⁸⁶ When applied to the Cornish context, it is not at all difficult to see how so many working class individuals came to view vaccination in such a manner. As has been shown, Methodism fed into a long-extant form of communal fatalism that underpinned Cornish society. From the miners facing rock falls, explosions, and other horrifying accidents, to the fishermen at the mercy of the unforgiving seas, and to the widows and children left behind to make sense of their loss, the notion that God and the Devil were heavily invested in the minutiae of everyday life provided a strong foundation for a fatalist worldview. However, the notion that smallpox was God's will and that to vaccinate a child and protect them against the virus was interfering with Providence presents a conundrum. The Cornish, influenced heavily by Methodism, were reluctant to have their children vaccinated as it would interfere with the will of God, but inoculation, a procedure ostensibly designed to achieve a similar goal, remained very popular throughout the county in spite of laws preventing it. Thus, the intersection of two forms of fatalism appears: the belief that God's will ultimately decided an individual's fate with regards to smallpox, and the belief that smallpox was an inevitable part of life and that inoculating a child with smallpox material will 'get it over and done with'. This can be best summed up as the 'inoculate/vaccinate paradox', a dichotomy that initially seems to be at odds with itself but which, through a closer examination of nineteenth-century Cornish society, can potentially be understood.

⁸⁵ *Salisbury and Winchester Journal*, 23 August 1819.

⁸⁶ *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette*, 16 June 1825.

Inoculation is, perhaps not as paradoxical to Methodist-driven fatalism as might initially be expected. That smallpox was an inevitable part of childhood in nineteenth-century Cornwall may have meant that parents came to see the outcome of the illness as God's ultimate will for that child. By vaccinating, parents were preventing their children from contracting the smallpox virus at all. Inoculation, on the other hand, meant that the child still contracted the illness and, although the procedure was specifically designed with the intention of infecting a child with a more mild variation of the illness, it was well-documented, not least of all by pro-vaccination movements, that children could still die from or be permanently disabled or disfigured by the inoculated smallpox virus. In this way, inoculation could be more easily reconcilable with Cornish communal fatalism than vaccination. Methodism, of course, did not entirely supersede traditional Cornish folk beliefs. As was documented previously, myths of mermaids, piskeys, and fairy changelings all survived well into the nineteenth century. Occupational folklore was also very resistant to change: Cornish miners still sought to appease the knockkeys in the mine shafts to ensure their own safe return to the surface at the end of the day, and fishermen continued to explain poor pilchard seasons with tales of sea monsters and long-held grudges amongst the pilchard populations. Perhaps the most enduring of these traditional folktales is one which directly relates to vaccine opposition amongst the working classes and the continuation of inoculation: witchcraft. As has been evidenced, people across Cornwall retained a belief in the powers of white witches, witchdoctors, and spellbreakers when it came to dealing with both sudden and prolonged illnesses. Although not explicitly described as such in the reports of his manslaughter trial, the 'French doctor' of Mevagissey fits many of the characteristics of the witchdoctor in nineteenth-century Cornwall. Trained surgeons reported in disbelief that, despite his obvious ineptitude for medicine, the people of Mevagissey and its surrounds continued to flock to the mysterious and unappealing-looking stranger for medical advice, treatment, and even surgical procedures such as the one that claimed the life of the unfortunate old man from Cairn.

The 'French doctor' and folk inoculators such as Matthew Symes and Francis Harris were not the focal point of a great proportion of pro-vaccination ire with regards to the perpetuation of the inoculation procedure for one simple reason: they were not women. For many pro-vaccination commentators around the time of the introduction of the Vaccination Act in 1840, it seems that women were both the perpetrators and the victims; misinformed old women or midwives provided primitive inoculation services, sometimes at the expense of their patients' lives, and the poor, ignorant mothers did not know any better than to seek the services of such women within their own communities. The role of women, particularly of widows and older women, in community-based healthcare is a well-documented phenomenon in historiography of the British working-classes. Although her work explicitly examines the phenomenon of female healthcare providers in the latter stages of the nineteenth century and well into the mid-to-late twentieth century, Beier's study of

working-class health culture in urban Lancashire has important implications for the situation in distant, rural Cornwall.

Beier examines the importance of women within the healthcare culture of working-class Lancashire, revealing the intricacies of community life amongst her subject population. In this setting, women formed the backbone of a 'mutual aid' approach to birth, death, and everything in between. According to Beier, this was considered to be "natural", associated with women's essential roles as nurturers of children and supporters of men'.⁸⁷ The range of tasks performed by women within this culture extended beyond their immediate responsibilities inside their own homes, and into the community as a whole. As Beier explains,

in addition to the mothers, grandmothers, aunts, and sisters who cared for family health within the home, there were other women who served as health authorities in working-class neighborhoods. These women tended to be middle-aged or elderly and to be married or widowed. Sometimes paid, often unpaid, they included in their ranks unqualified midwives ... and monthly nurses (who cared for mothers during the lying-in period); layers-out of the dead; and primary care experts who diagnosed and treated minor ills but also advised on whether the sufferer needed to see a doctor.⁸⁸

Women also played a role in the production of home remedies and treatments for injuries and illnesses,

many remedies were made in the kitchen, usually by women who had had the experience and informal training to support their own ideas about prevention and cure. Those ideas were empirical, in the sense that people perceived the effectiveness of a prophylactic or therapeutic treatment and repeated it if it were deemed successful. Home care was also based on tradition and faith.⁸⁹

Durbach also draws attention to the importance of home medical care in the nineteenth century, arguing that 'most medical care ... until World War I, happened within the home. Mothers pulled teeth with thread and used paraffin to destroy lice and nits. They practised home remedies and dosed their children with licorice powders and cod-liver oil to maintain regularity'.⁹⁰ The role of women in healthcare was critical in the nineteenth-century Cornish context and Sheaff contends that 'primary healthcare at this time consisted largely of self-care on the traditional lines ... or dosing oneself with patent medicines'.⁹¹ Sheaff also notes the popularity of itinerant doctors amongst the population, despite the determined opposition of their more orthodox counterparts. It seems that there was very little room in Cornish populist medicine for the higher-class, highly educated outsider.

⁸⁷ Beier, *For Their Own Good*, 35.

⁸⁸ Beier, *For Their Own Good*, 37.

⁸⁹ Beier, *For Their Own Good*, 64.

⁹⁰ Durbach, *Bodily Matters*, 26.

⁹¹ Sheaff, 'A Century of Centralization', 133. Sheaff notes a wide variety of patent medicines that were popular in Cornwall during the nineteenth century, including "Solomon's drops" for various skin diseases; cephalic snuff, Ching's worm lozenges and Rozeate Powder for Superfluous Hair; Lane's Haemacarthic Tincture for scrofula, cancer, leprosy, and scurvy; and Dr Boerehaave's Infallible Red Pill.

For many pro-vaccinationist commentators, it was obvious where the blame for the perpetuation of inoculation practices should be placed. In the *Dorset Chronicle* of 29 March 1828, 'J.H.' placed the blame squarely on 'a host of old women ... with their *stocking needles*'.⁹² The consistent theme throughout the pro-vaccination letters of William Reid, of Kentisbeare, Devon, was the role played by old women in sustaining inoculation. In 1838, he accused 'cobblers and old women' of being responsible for mis-educating the already undereducated lower classes on the issue.⁹³ Five years earlier, Reid had been particularly vitriolic in his assessment of medical professionals who gave in so easily to the beliefs of the lower classes and continued to inoculate children rather than vaccinate them. He claimed that

this vile practice of self-interest, instigates these men to convert themselves, in this instance into a real curse to their race. If the apothecary is asked why he practices inoculation [sic] the usual reply is "The old women *will* have it." It was a crowd of these said old women in male and female attire, who set fire to the dwelling-house of the immortal Harvey, because he had discovered the circulation of the blood, and who treated the illustrious Jenner with nearly as little ceremony, when he first promulgated his doctrine of vaccination.⁹⁴

To Reid, then, the old women and the cobblers of the rural English south west were the problem, and, indeed, they had always been the problem. The link between the work of William Harvey in the seventeenth century and the discoveries of Edward Jenner at the end of the eighteenth indicates that Reid believed this issue to be far more ingrained within society than had otherwise been acknowledged. The old women who stood in the way of vaccination were the same as those who had always stood in the way of progress, and who, perhaps, always would to some extent. For Reid, like many around him, the solution to this ongoing resistance to new discoveries in medicine was simple; legislate against it. Taking further aim at practitioners, who, he believed, should be enlightened enough to overcome the 'backwards' ideas of the communities around them, Reid proclaimed that

the *Faculty* almost in a body, are advocates for the practice. Why, then, should a few apothecaries in a corner of enlightened England, oppose themselves to the whole weight of a modern opinion, and be permitted to carry the variolous venom into every cottage, and into every poor man's family? It is an abuse which the Magistracy and the guardians of the poor ought immediately to put an end to.⁹⁵

However, the 1840 introduction of the Vaccination Act, outlawing inoculation and promoting vaccination in its place, did little to slow the practice of the former in Cornwall. Perhaps, then, this is evidence that England was far from the wholly 'enlightened' nation that Reid implied it should be. This is also a direct challenge to much of the accepted history of England during the Industrial Revolution. Reid's observations that Enlightenment understandings of medicine and science were

⁹² *Dorset Chronicle*, 27 March 1828.

⁹³ *Western Times*, 9 June 1838.

⁹⁴ *Western Times*, 23 February 1833.

⁹⁵ *Western Times*, 23 February 1833.

still overtly rejected by the lower classes challenge the notion of England as an 'enlightened' nation in the nineteenth century. It was not only rural communities that resisted modern medicine in the form of vaccination. The urban centre of the English south west, Bristol, also saw continued passive resistance to the procedure. According to an 1852 report of the registrar of the St Augustine parish of the city, traditional, un-Enlightened folk beliefs about medicine persisted well beyond the introduction of laws promoting vaccination. The *Bristol Mercury* reported that

[the St Augustine registrar] had reason to believe that its prevalence [smallpox] now had been greatly encouraged by prejudices against vaccination in the first place, and, next, against medical treatment. Upon the first case being brought to him for registration, he had instituted inquiries and he found that vaccination was objected to upon the absurd plea that it introduced other diseases into the system, and also upon the still more ignorant supposition that it was an attempt to interfere with the will of God. In one case medical advice had been pertinaciously abstained from, because some old women in the neighbourhood considered themselves possessed of greater curative powers than regular doctors.⁹⁶

Thus, even urban Bristol was not immune to the kind of 'unenlightened' thinking that William Reid decried from his residence in rural Devon. Although little is known of his life, Reid's letters to the *Western Times* during the 1830s have implications for the story of vaccine opposition in the neighbouring county of Cornwall. In particular, Reid's complaints of 'ancient prejudices' and 'antediluvian superstitions'⁹⁷ amongst the lower classes are certainly indicative of the situation in Cornwall at the time. As Sheaff reveals, the passage of time did not lessen the influence that traditional medical practitioners and healers had in Cornwall, with such beliefs still being held widely amongst the population throughout the nineteenth century and traditional practitioners continuing to ply their trade into the twentieth century.⁹⁸ With a continued reliance upon witch doctors, magical healers, quacks, and elderly women for medical advice and treatment, in combination with the perpetuation of traditional folk beliefs in phenomena such as fairy-changelings still so prevalent across the county, it is not difficult to comprehend how opposition to vaccination came to be seen by so many pro-vaccinators in this early phase as merely another superstition soon to be swept up and lost forever under the advancing tide of modernity.

⁹⁶ *Bristol Mercury*, 11 December 1852.

⁹⁷ *Western Times*, 9 June 1838.

⁹⁸ Sheaff, 'A Century of Centralization', 130.

Chapter 3: 'The Mistaken Fatalism of an Ill-Informed People': The Impetus for Compulsion

The failure of the 1840 Vaccination Act to prevent the practice of inoculation, particularly amongst the lower classes, left many vaccination supporters calling for more stringent laws on the issue. Chief amongst those calling for stricter laws were district registrars. Across Cornwall, registrars recorded their disbelief at the lack of vaccination amongst the communities they were responsible for. This disbelief was generally followed by a call for the government to make vaccination compulsory. In August 1851, the report of the St Ives registrar appeared in the *West Briton*. In this report, the impact of adherence to traditional folk beliefs and the unique form of communal fatalism extant in Cornwall at the time are laid bare:

The registrar suggests that some stringent measure should be enacted to compel people to have their children vaccinated. He says, "People have a superstitious fear of having their children vaccinated; they say, 'it is taking the cause out of the hands of God.'" This the Registrar General remarks, "is an instance of the effects of the mistaken fatalism of an ill-instructed people."¹

This statement was prompted by an outbreak of smallpox that had claimed 11 lives at St Ives and reveals that both local registrars and those with more authority, as is evidenced by the statement of the Registrar General, knew the extent to which vaccine opposition was impacting upon Cornish communities, and also shows that they knew which underlying facets of Cornish society were driving the opposition: communal fatalistic beliefs. This statement proves that, even a decade after the first Vaccination Act was introduced, resistance to smallpox vaccination was still considered by many authority figures to be a form of superstition; something that could be overcome by tightening legislation, even though the legislation that already existed had been intended to serve the same purpose and had clearly failed. Just three months after the report of the St Ives registrar appeared in the *West Briton*, the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* published a strikingly similar report, this time from the registrar of the Penryn district, on the opposite side of the county. The Penryn registrar reported that, 'the lower classes are against having their children vaccinated. It should be made compulsory on them to have it done'.²

The issue of compulsion was to become the dominating factor in the debate surrounding vaccination for the rest of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth, both inside Cornwall and throughout the rest of England and Wales. A registrar from Bristol was particularly scathing of the constant refusal to vaccinate amongst the inhabitants of his district. Published in the *Cheltenham Chronicle* in August 1852, his notes explain his own thoughts on the issue:

After many years experience, both as a district vaccinator and surgical superintendent of one of the most extensive vaccine institutions in the provinces, I feel assured the only remedy

¹ *West Briton*, 15 August 1851.

² *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 7 November 1851.

against the ignorant prejudices and criminal neglect of parents of the lower orders is to make vaccination compulsory.³

These registrars would not have to wait long to have their calls for compulsion answered by the government. In early 1853, a bill was brought before the House of Lords to make vaccination compulsory throughout England. The *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette* report of 24 March 1853 read ‘we hail with pleasure the Bill in the House of Lords for compulsory vaccination. As every union medical officer can certify, some more stringent measure was necessary to compel the poorer class to accept vaccination as a boon’.⁴ This report also reveals that very little had changed in the minds of many pro-vaccination commentators with regards to which members of society most blame for non-vaccination should be directed: the ignorant lower-class mothers in rural areas. The *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette* correspondent, in stating their case for the necessity of compulsory vaccination used the following case to demonstrate their point:

I know an instance, very recently, of small-pox raging in a village in Wilts, where a union surgeon was visiting, who actually saw a mother sitting with her child in her lap unvaccinated between two who had the small-pox, and, as a matter of course, she has now that loathsome disease in her own family.⁵

Typical of its time, this second-, or perhaps, even third-hand account of the ignorance displayed by poor mothers in rural areas was designed to drive home the necessity of compulsory vaccination - not as a law to mete out harsh punishments, but as the gentle, guiding hand of a benevolent government instructing ignorant women in how to appropriately care for their children’s health. In fact, some even took the benevolence argument a step further, describing compulsion, not as guiding instruction, but rather as a means of protecting the poor from their own ignorance. In the parliamentary debate that followed the introduction of the compulsory vaccination bill, Lord Palmerston, then Home Secretary, described the proposed measures in the following fashion: ‘the object was to prevent a fearful disease by timely foresight and precaution, and the classes most in need of this protection were the poorest and most ignorant – those least likely, by their own impulse to adopt precautions’.⁶ Durbach argues that, whilst the introduction of compulsory vaccination under the Vaccination Act amendment of 1853 necessarily meant that all children in England and Wales, regardless of their class status, had to be vaccinated, the impetus for the introduction of compulsion was largely generated by the apparent need to protect the children of the lower-classes from their parents’ ignorance. According to Edward Seaton, the first vaccination inspector to be appointed under the 1853 amendment, ‘the poor ... needed to be compelled to vaccinate as they were apathetic, indifferent, and neglectful parents’.⁷ Durbach, therefore, contends that the compulsory aspects of the Vaccination Act amendment of 1853 were specifically designed to target

³ *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 5 August 1852.

⁴ *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette*, 24 March 1853.

⁵ *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette*, 24 March 1853.

⁶ *Salisbury and Winchester Journal*, 23 July 1853.

⁷ Durbach, *Bodily Matters*, 23.

the lower classes and force them to vaccinate their children. The State was assuming the role of the protector of lower-class children, enforcing compulsory vaccination to protect these children from their 'ignorant mothers'.

Palmerston's approach to the subject, and the views expressed by the correspondent to the *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette*, have long formed part of the accepted historiography of vaccine opposition in England; the lower classes were not anti-vaccinators, they were merely ignorant of the benefits vaccination entailed and, thus, had to be 'protected' by legislation. Perhaps this is why historians such as Durbach have been able to dismiss pre-1867 vaccine opposition so swiftly. However, the reports from Cornish registrars from the same time period present a very different picture of vaccine opposition amongst the lower classes. In August 1853, the Vaccination Act was amended, making vaccination compulsory for all infants before the age of three months. The amendment tied the process of enforcing vaccination to the duties already performed by district registrars, those officials who had been so vocal in their support for compulsory measures. Upon the registration of a birth in their district, the registrars were required under the new law to provide the parents of the child with a blank vaccination certificate, to be filled out and signed by either the public vaccinator for the area or a private practitioner. The certificate was then to be returned to the registrar before the child reached three months of age, and the registrar would then record the child as having been successfully vaccinated. Failure to do so would mean the parents of an unvaccinated child would be brought before the local petty sessions court and potentially face a fine of up to 20 shillings (£1) plus costs.

Initially, Cornish registrars were optimistic of the benefits that this new amendment would bring. In early August 1853, the report of the registrar for the district of St Agnes, in Truro, was published in the *Royal Cornwall Gazette*. Following the deaths of three individuals from smallpox in the previous quarter, the St Agnes registrar reported, 'The Bill for compulsory vaccination will be a boon to the people'.⁸ Already, though, issues of individual liberty were being raised by some in the broader English society. Enforcing vaccination as a compulsory medical procedure, it was argued, was infringing upon the inherent individual rights granted to every freeborn Englishman. As early as 1837, concerns regarding the liberty of the subject were being raised in response to calls for vaccination to be made compulsory. An anonymous commentator, known only as 'A Guardian', wrote to the editor of the *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette*, defending compulsion, claiming that 'the liberty of the subject is indeed affected when interested, illiterate, unskilful, ignorant, uneducated persons will offer the lower class to inoculate their children with the small pox at a shilling per head'.⁹ To 'A Guardian', individual liberty was not complete autonomy with regards to medical procedures. Rather, individual liberty was the freedom to act on sanctioned medical advice without the risk of exploitation at the hands of quack doctors or other conniving individuals taking money

⁸ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 12 August 1853.

⁹ *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette*, 5 October 1837.

from the poor to perform a potentially dangerous procedure. Once again, the issue of higher-class benevolence is raised in the debate; the poor must be 'protected' from themselves and given strict guidelines to adhere to in the case of vaccination.

When the first amendment to the Vaccination Act was introduced in 1853, these arguments against compulsion reared their heads once more. In response to revitalised claims that enforcing compulsory vaccination upon the population infringed on the individual freedoms of the subject, an editorial appeared in the *Western Times* presenting a stunning defence of the role of the state in this matter. This editorial, published on 1 October 1853 by Exeter journalist Thomas Latimer, a man with an incredible zeal for reform, is over a century ahead of its time, reflecting Giorgio Agamben's theory of biopower with regards to the role of the sovereign as having the power of death over their subject.¹⁰ The editorial reads:

The [first amendment to the Vaccination Act] is in every respect wise and beneficial, for it is a humane measure. The State, as the protector of all, steps between the ignorant parent and his helpless offspring, and demands that Society shall not be deprived of a living member, or burthened with a feeble and weakly one, through the ignorance of the natural guardian of the child at a period when it is utterly helpless. It may appear harsh and tyrannical proceeding the parent that he should be coerced and controlled in his mode of dealing with his child; but every member of a civilised community surrenders many of his natural rights; and inasmuch as the whole community is charged with the support of feeble and sickly members, it has a right, so long as a parent continues a member thereof, to enforce upon him such regulations as shall prevent him from inflicting upon the general community a feeble and incompetent member of the commonwealth.¹¹

In *Homo Sacer*, Agamben argues that modern biopower originated with the beginnings of industrialisation as the State became interested in ensuring the health and longevity of its citizens to keep the production of goods and the progression of technological advances within the state ahead of their competitors.¹² This was ultimately achieved by government regulation through legislation. Latimer's editorial is clear evidence of Agamben's theory in action during the vaccination debate of the mid-nineteenth century. Latimer also had plenty to say with regards to which members of society the state was acting to protect:

The poor, in ignorance, and reasoning by false analogies, conclude that it is not proper to subject their children to a disease which the Almighty intended for cattle [referring to cowpox], and that it is wicked to attempt to parry the attack of the disease by bringing in another, though infinitely milder ... the Legislature has rendered it penal to import the small pox into any district, and in order that the public may be protected against its ravages, gratuitous vaccination has been provided for the poor, and vaccination is rendered imperative in every parent. The cottagers in this district, animated by ancient prejudices, have been resisting the enforcement of the act by subjecting their children to the small pox.¹³

¹⁰ Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, 1998, 6.

¹¹ *Western Times*, 1 October 1853.

¹² Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 9-10.

¹³ *Western Times*, 1 October 1853.

Despite such staunch defences of the role of the state in vaccination as Latimer's, the introduction of compulsion to the legislation would continue to be controversial throughout the rest of the nineteenth century, with opponents growing ever more vocal as the twentieth century dawned.

Initially, though, pro-vaccinationists in Cornwall were heartened by the progress made immediately following the introduction of compulsory vaccination. In the first few years following its introduction, reports of almost 50 prosecutions under the new amendment appeared in various sources across Cornwall. Surviving archival records of court proceedings, especially for petty sessions hearings where most vaccination cases were heard, are few and far between. However, it is possible to identify 48 cases of individuals being brought before Cornish authorities for not complying with the provisions of the Act, utilising a combination of surviving court records and newspaper reports of proceedings. After the introduction of the amendment in August 1853, seven cases were brought before the St Austell petty sessions in December of the same year. All seven of these cases were brought against men, marking a sudden change from the prior held belief that women were most responsible for the lack of vaccination in Cornwall. This change was seemingly a permanent one, with the vast majority of defendants against the compulsion clauses of the Act in Cornwall being men.¹⁴ In what was to become a recurring theme of such prosecutions, the seven defendants – Nicholas Coom and John Brown (occupations unknown), Thomas Hore (an iron miner), James Grose (a carpenter), Thomas Lawry (a copper miner), Thomas Harvey (a sawyer), and Joseph Tucker (a farm labourer), all from the parish of St Austell – were summoned for not vaccinating their children and

these being the first cases brought before the bench, the parties were let off with a light fine and paying the costs, but the Justices made it known that in all future cases that might come before them, the parties charged would be fined in the full penalties, as the magistrates were determined to carry out the Act.¹⁵

The following year saw at least 22 cases brought before various petty sessions hearings across Cornwall. Eight men were brought before the magistrates at Penryn, charged with not vaccinating their children. George Brown, Thomas Richards, William Stevens, John Nettle, and Thomas Williams (of unknown occupations), as well as three miners, Thomas Morcom, Richard Williams, and Edward Stodden, all of the parish of Gwennap – were given mitigated fines on the same grounds as those stated previously for the seven men at St Austell. However, in reporting the case, the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* included the following statement to drive home the message that no leniency would be given by the Penryn Bench in any further cases brought before them:

¹⁴ See [Appendix 1](#).

¹⁵ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 9 December 1853.

This is inserted as a caution to the public, as the smallpox is in the neighbourhood, and the registrars have issued the lawful notices to some hundreds of parents in Illogan, Gwennap, and Redruth, who have not yet had their children vaccinated.¹⁶

This statement reveals the dire situation facing public health authorities amongst the working-class mining communities of West Cornwall: smallpox threatened the inhabitants whilst hundreds of children remained unvaccinated. The following year, in Camborne, the number of blank vaccination certificates given to parents following the registration of a birth was reported to have been 539 for the previous quarter. Of these, only 140 had been returned to the registrar, leaving some 400 children unvaccinated.¹⁷ The Penryn Bench was adamant that any future cases of the same nature that were brought before them would be dealt with to the full extent of the law. However, despite the terrible situation amongst these mining communities, there are no further records of parents from Illogan, Gwennap, or Redruth being prosecuted for not vaccinating their children until long after the Vaccination Act had been amended once more in 1867. Herein seems to lay the problem for the enforcement of compulsory vaccination in Cornwall. As is evidenced by the above statement, there were hundreds of parents left open to prosecution under the Act and yet there is no existing evidence that any of them ever were. Records may be sketchy for this time period, but the insistent statements made by the magistrates at St Austell and Penryn as to the prospects of anyone brought before them on similar charges in the future, indicates that, if subsequent cases had been brought before the courts, the parents would have received much larger fines and the cases reported as warnings to others.

A further eight unnamed individuals were prosecuted for not vaccinating their children at the Falmouth petty sessions in 1854. Once again, all eight defendants were given mitigated fines and the same warning for future prosecutions was given. However, a substantial outbreak of scarlatina (scarlet fever) in the Falmouth district may have temporarily distracted public health authorities from the importance of enforcing compulsory vaccination.¹⁸ A further six documented cases of prosecutions under the Act came from the Callington district. Two men -William Lucas and Henry Pomeroy (both of unknown occupations) - were charged with not vaccinating their children, whilst four others – John Toms (a miner), alongside Henry Jowl, William Rogers, and Samuel Peters (all of unknown occupations) – were charged with neglecting to return their vaccinated children to the medical officer for examination eight days after the procedure had been carried out.¹⁹ An essential part of the vaccination procedure in the mid-nineteenth century, it had been made an offence to not present a child to the medical officer eight days after vaccination under the third section of the Vaccination Act for two critical reasons. Firstly, it was essential to ensure that the child had, in fact,

¹⁶ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 9 June 1854.

¹⁷ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 9 February 1855.

¹⁸ *Bristol Mercury*, 11 February 1854. The report stated that scarlatina was particularly prevalent in the sub-district of Constantine, with approximately 100 cases and 16 deaths recorded. The severity of the outbreak was attributed to the proximity of 'dung-pits' to the houses of the inhabitants. Thus, public health officials in and around Constantine were likely heavily preoccupied with the scarlatina outbreak.

¹⁹ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 11 August 1854.

been successfully vaccinated and that the procedure would not have to be repeated and, secondly, vaccination at this time was still carried out using the arm-to-arm method, with expelled matter from a successful vaccination site being passed along from one child to the next. In failing to present their children after they were vaccinated, the four Callington defendants not only risked their own children's vaccination procedures being ineffective and thus, useless as a means of protection if smallpox were to break out, but they also broke the chain by which the vaccine matter was passed on to other children in the community. Once again, the magistrates took leniency on the defendants as they were the first to be brought before the Callington Bench. Mitigated fines were issued and the same statement regarding more severe fines for future offenders was published once again.²⁰

It seems, though, that, far from serving as a warning to other non-vaccinating parents, these statements of future harsh penalties were not even heeded by the magistrates themselves when further cases were brought before them. This was the case in St Austell, the first district recorded to have threatened heavier fines for future prosecutions under the Act. In 1855, a further 18 unnamed individuals were brought before the St Austell Bench, all charged with not vaccinating their children. The *Royal Cornwall Gazette* reported the proceedings in the following way:

at the St Austell Petty Sessions on Tuesday last, 18 persons were summoned for neglecting to get their children vaccinated. Fifteen were fined with expenses; but the magistrates in most of the cases inflicted but a nominal fine, as they thought great blame lay with the medical officers of the district.²¹

Instead of following through with their threat to punish non-vaccinators to the full extent of the law following the first eight prosecutions in 1853, the St Austell Bench instead declared that the defendants themselves were not at fault entirely and placed the blame directly on to the medical officers of the district for not carrying out their designated roles under the Act effectively.

The only apparent example of a woman charged with a crime under the 1853 amendment in the first two years after its implementation was Mary Ann Dennis, a stone mason's wife from the village of Paul, two miles south of Penzance. Like four of the defendants from Callington in 1854, Dennis was charged with not presenting her child to the vaccination station after the procedure had been carried out. The prosecution proved that Dennis' son, John Thomas had been vaccinated but that the child had not been returned for his follow-up inspection. According to F. Boase, the public vaccinator for the districts of Penzance and Paul, Dennis was told to bring her child back to the station 'but she refused, saying its arm had not risen, she would not have it cut up, and the matter used was bad'. However, Boase countered this, saying that he then left the vaccination station and visited the Dennis family at home, where he found that John Thomas' arm 'had risen and was going on successfully'.²² In her defence, Mary Ann Dennis claimed that the matter had not risen until the twelfth day, four days after she was required to bring her son back to the vaccination station.

²⁰ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 9 June 1854.

²¹ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 8 June 1855.

²² *Cornish Telegraph*, 11 July 1855.

However, Boase once again dismissed her argument, stating that he had seen the child on the eighth day and his arm appeared to be in a satisfactory state. Dennis went on to claim that she 'didn't think it of any consequence to carry the child to the station', suggesting the level of effort that was required for a mother in making multiple trips to the vaccination station. As a result of John Thomas not being presented to the vaccination station, and of Dennis' initial refusal to have her child inspected when Boase visited their home, the public vaccinator had not signed off on his vaccination certificate, meaning that, under the law, he was still considered to be unvaccinated.

The report of Mary Ann Dennis' appearance before the West Penwith Petty Sessions that was printed in *The Cornish Telegraph* reveals that, although parents such as Dennis may have been let off with mitigated or lightened fines, the atmosphere in the courtrooms could be anything but forgiving. According to *The Cornish Telegraph*, the Chairman of the Bench addressed the defendant in the following manner:

We are willing to believe that this arises somewhat from ignorance on your part, and yet this can hardly be a sufficient excuse, because you had notice delivered to you and all the circumstances were explained. Persons in your station of life ought to be exceedingly thankful that gentlemen are appointed gratuitous vaccinators to the children of the district ... We are willing to treat you as leniently as possible, especially as Mr. Boase expresses a wish that no penalty should be inflicted, it being his only object to caution others. You ought to be thankful to him for going out of his way to visit your house, a kindness he is not compelled to do under any circumstances.

This report also reveals that it was not always the magistrates themselves who chose whether or not to inflict the harshest penalties available under the law - they often acted in accordance to the instructions given to them by the prosecuting party, usually the public vaccinator for the district. In this case, Boase did not seek any penalty at all and the Bench issued a very familiar statement to Dennis, to be publicly reprinted as a warning to others:

you will have to pay the expenses of the warrant, but it should be generally known that a fine of 20s. is incurred by any person who does not bring their child to the proper station to be vaccinated, or a second time for examination, and after this public notice it will be a serious offence for anyone to neglect this.²³

As the case of Mary Ann Dennis exemplifies, the language employed in the reports of these cases should not be overlooked. Parents brought before the petty sessions hearings in these districts were not accused of 'refusing' to have their children vaccinated, they were accused of 'neglecting' to have their children vaccinated or 'defaulting' on their responsibility as a parent. These terms have heavy implications for the narrative of pre-1867 vaccine opposition in Cornwall. Whereas district registrars had reported that, in various districts, across the county, vaccination was 'objected to' by the lower classes,²⁴ or that their opposition to the procedure stemmed from

²³ *Cornish Telegraph*, 11 July 1855.

²⁴ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 12 August 1853.

'superstitious fears'²⁵ and that they were 'against having their children vaccinated',²⁶ this language was not reflected by the law. Instead of being the result of outright opposition to the procedure, the non-vaccination of Cornish children was rendered a symptom of neglect; another example of why it was considered to be in the best interests of the lower classes to legislate and force them to carry out a procedure which they would otherwise, in their ignorance, not bother to have done. This is yet further evidence that, even amongst contemporary commentators, the notion of being an 'anti-vaccinator', one who opposed the procedure or refused to have it done on a range of different grounds, was not something that could be applied to the lower-classes. Instead, the lower-classes were seen as ignorant, neglectful parents who needed the law to tell them how best to care for their children's health.

Regardless of the language that was used to describe them, the 48 recorded cases from the first two years after the amendment was introduced represent an early rush to prosecute so-called 'vaccine defaulters' across Cornwall. Despite ample evidence of large numbers of parents open to prosecution under the Act, or perhaps even because of it, the initial flurry of prosecution reports soon dwindled. There were no further reports of vaccine defaulters in the Cornish press again until 1859, when Richard Bettis and John Hodges (both of unknown occupations) were brought before the Launceston Bench for non-vaccination, and John Lobb (an agricultural labourer), Henry Bettenson (a copper ore labourer), and Richard Marshall (a fisherman) were prosecuted for the same offence before the Trecaan Gate Petty Sessions.²⁷ The outcomes of these cases certainly do not reflect the statements made by other magistrates in the county with regards to the harshness of penalties to be applied. In Launceston, the case against Hodges was dismissed, presumably as his child had subsequently been vaccinated, and Bettis pleaded his ignorance at the provisions of the Act and walked away with a fine of just one shilling, plus costs.²⁸ At the Trecaan Gate hearings, both Lobb, of Morval, and Bettenson, of West Looe, were given the same lenient fine of one shilling plus costs. Marshall, also of West Looe, was given a slightly harsher fine of five shillings plus costs because he 'had used offensive language' towards the district registrar.²⁹

The only recorded cases for 1860 were a further four at Trecaan Gate. Richard Symons, Charles Bettinson, William Best, and William Williams (all of unknown occupations), were each charged with not vaccinating their children, receiving a fine of 2s 6d plus 8s 6d costs, totalling 11s each.³⁰ In 1862, only three cases were reported, all in the district of West Kerrier. William Johns and William Danstone (of unknown occupations), as well as Bennet Oppy (a copper miner), all of Wendron, were fined £1 each plus costs.³¹ This was the first reported instance of any Cornish defendants

²⁵ *West Briton*, 15 August 1851.

²⁶ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 7 November 1851.

²⁷ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 4 February 1859; *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 17 June 1859.

²⁸ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 4 February 1859.

²⁹ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 17 June 1859.

³⁰ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 7 September 1860.

³¹ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 28 November 1862.

being given the harshest possible punishment available under the law. In 1863, a full decade after vaccination had been rendered compulsory by the amendment to the Act, only three cases of prosecution were reported in the Cornish press. The first of these occurred at the West Penwith Petty Sessions, where Mary Ann Dennis had been let off with only costs to pay some eight years earlier. Charles Stone, a miner from Marazion, was charged with the non-vaccination of his two children, John Teague and William Charles. In a similar fashion to Dennis' case, the district registrar, a Mr Congdon, gave evidence that he had visited the Stone family home in order to vaccinate the boys, 'but the parents had refused to have them done'.³² Stone contended that his sons had been too unwell to have been vaccinated when Congdon visited and that, since his visit, one of the boys had been vaccinated and, as a result, 'had broken out badly about the body'. However, Congdon challenged this, arguing that he believed the children to have been in perfect health when he had visited them. Once again, the prosecution did not wish to punish the parents, but rather to see the Stone case serve as an example to the rest of the population. Unlike Mary Ann Dennis, however, Charles Stone was not subjected to a lecture from the Bench stating that people in 'his station of life' should be 'thankful' for the work of public vaccinators. Rather, the magistrates at West Penwith in 1863 seemingly had much more respect for Stone than they had previously shown for Dennis. In summing up, *The Cornish Telegraph* reports that:

The Chairman then said that he, as well as the other magistrates on the bench, were astonished to see such respectable persons come before them charged with refusing to have their children vaccinated. He should have been most happy to have inflicted the full penalty in such cases, had he not thought the refusal was done through ignorance and obstinacy. The next person brought before them would be fined the full penalty; but as Mr. Tippet [the prosecutor] did not wish to press for this, and was only instigated to make the present enquiry serve as an example to others, the defendant was dismissed with a caution.³³

The remaining two cases occurred in Truro, and were also amongst the few overall to feature women; although it is possible that some of the unnamed defendants from Falmouth or St Austell that had occurred were women. Neither Elizabeth Tiddy nor Elizabeth Ann Uren, both of Chacewater, chose to attend their hearings. The *Royal Cornwall Gazette* reports,

Mr Marrack, who prosecuted, asked the bench to inflict a fine on them, in order to show others that the law compelled it to be done; and after a suitable caution to the public assembled in court, the chairman said they would be fined 2s. 6d. each and costs, or one month's imprisonment.³⁴

It seems, however, that these prosecutions and the subsequent warnings issued by magistrates did little to stem the tide of the so-called 'vaccine defaulters' of Cornwall. Even the threat of a month in prison for an unpaid fine seems to have done little to deter others from refusing to have their children vaccinated. After the initial flurry of prosecutions under the Act in the first two years after

³² *Cornish Telegraph*, 14 October 1863.

³³ *Cornish telegraph*, 14 October 1863.

³⁴ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 6 November 1863.

the amendment was enacted, reported prosecutions had dropped to just two in 1863. Whether there are records of other prosecutions waiting to be found or if the Cornish press simply stopped publicising vaccination cases remains to be seen, but the outcome remains the same: prosecution under the Vaccination Act amendment of 1853 did little to stop the anti-vaccination attitudes so prevalent across Cornwall, especially amongst the working classes. It is important here to note that lower-class non-vaccinators in mid-nineteenth century Cornwall were anti-vaccinators, not ignorant defaulters who neglected their duties as parents. It has been shown that, even if the resistance across Cornwall during this early phase was passive, it was resistance all the same and historical agency must be returned to these early, grassroots anti-vaccinationists.

There can be no doubt that the concept of being an 'anti-vaccinator' was not foreign to Cornwall at this time. Rather, it was a term apparently reserved only for those of middle-class or higher status. A pertinent example of this is the coverage of two cases against a resident of Gorran Haven at the St Austell Petty Sessions in 1864 and 1867. Initially, William Wallace Walker, a pensioner of the Royal Navy, a coastguard officer, and a landowner, was accused, like so many others, of 'neglecting' to vaccinate his child. However, following a dramatic display before the St Austell Bench in early 1864, the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* subsequently came to describe Walker as an 'anti-vaccinator' and not as an 'ignorant' or 'neglectful' parent. Walker and his family were not native to Cornwall. He was born in Scotland, his wife Emily Anne (more than 20 years his junior) was from London, and their eldest child, Clara, had been born in Ireland.³⁵ By 1862, the family was in residence at Gorran Haven where their second child, Clement St Gorran Braddyl Wallace Walker, was born. At the Petty Sessions in 1864, Walker was charged with 'neglecting' to have his young son vaccinated. However, it soon became clear that Walker had been defiant, not neglectful. The registrar for the Mevagissey district appeared and gave evidence to prove that proper procedure had been adhered to following the birth of Clement; he had registered the birth and provided the blank vaccination certificate as was required under the Act, but it was never returned to him. Similarly, the public vaccinator was brought before the Bench to attest that he too had carried out the duties required of him; the vaccination station had been staffed at the proper times and the Walker family had plenty of opportunities to have Clement vaccinated. It was also confirmed that the public vaccinator had personally visited the Walker family home to vaccinate the child but had not been allowed to do so.³⁶

During his appearance before the magistrates in St Austell, Walker had failed to make a good impression upon them and they granted him few favours in return. As the proceedings opened, Walker was asked whether he plead guilty or not guilty to the charges against him. The *Royal Cornwall Gazette* reported that 'the defendant with a considerable show of temper, said that he did not believe in Dr. Jenner, and would take himself and his family off to the antipodes before he

³⁵ 1871 England Census for the parish of Gorran. ED10, 2269/47, 8.

³⁶ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 4 March 1864.

would have his child vaccinated'. The Bench, it is reported, 'took this as a plea of "Not guilty"'.³⁷ When the public vaccinator, surgeon Benoni Timothy Ball, confirmed that he had personally made those visits to the Walkers at home and had not been able to vaccinate the child, Walker interjected to voice his protest at what he described as 'Mr Ball's interfering with his domestic arrangements'.³⁸ In actuality, Ball had not done anything wrong in approaching the Walker family at home to have their child vaccinated - public vaccinators regularly did so on the assumption that a child's parents may have simply forgotten to attend the vaccination station or may have been unable to make the journey there due to work or family commitments. However, Walker was apparently so concerned by the perceived intrusion of Ball into his family's affairs that he informed the bench that he had since removed young Clement from Cornwall to prevent further harassment and had not yet decided on when he would be returned.

In a final dramatic display before the magistrates, Walker apologised for his earlier outbursts of temper and attempted to provide the Bench with a copy of an anti-vaccination pamphlet. When the magistrates refused to waver on the subject of the extensive fine they had ordered - the full £1 penalty plus additional costs of £1 13s, to be raised by distress (the selling of property) if required, or one month's imprisonment – Walker once again became irate. According to the *Royal Cornwall Gazette*:

the defendant then threw a purse on the table, and desired the clerk to help himself to the fine, &c., and to keep the purse, as the purse itself without the money was of no service to him.³⁹

Despite his obvious flair for the dramatic, Walker's final outburst backfired as, when the clerk opened the purse that had been thrown, 'there was not enough money' to cover the amount owing 'and the defendant had to borrow of a friend'.⁴⁰

The heavy fine did little to sway Walker's opposition to vaccination. If anything, it only encouraged him to continue. In 1867, he was once again brought before the St Austell Petty Sessions, this time charged with refusing to have his child vaccinated. In the language now being employed, William Wallace Walker of Gorran Haven was no longer a neglectful or ignorant parent, he was an anti-vaccinator. This time around, though, Walker was much better prepared for his day in court. Having been charged for another unvaccinated child, likely one of the three listed in the 1871 census as 'names not definitely decided' (quite peculiar, given that one of these unnamed children was already six years old by the time of the census), Walker called upon the support of likeminded individuals.⁴¹ As a fee-paying member of William Hume-Rothery's newly-formed Anti-Compulsory Vaccination League, a position that further separates Walker from the 'neglectful' and 'ignorant' lower classes, Walker was provided with legal representation in this case. The League-sponsored

³⁷ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 4 March 1864.

³⁸ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 4 March 1864.

³⁹ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 4 March 1864.

⁴⁰ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 4 March 1864.

⁴¹ 1871 England Census for the parish of Gorran. ED10, 2269/47, 8.

lawyer he was provided with, Mr Meredith, was far more effective at avoiding a fine than Walker had been in 1864. The *Royal Cornwall Gazette* reported that Meredith had gotten ‘the case dismissed on a technical objection to the notice given by the registrar’.⁴²

Following the dismissal of his case in May 1867, William and Emily Walker added another ‘unnamed’ child to their family. In August, the *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, expressing obvious distaste at Walker being allowed to walk away unpunished in May, reported that Walker was now refusing to even register the birth of this latest child with the registrar for the district. In a move likely heavily influenced by the Anti-Compulsory Vaccination League’s advice, Walker had taken advantage of a legal loophole to avoid any further prosecution for the non-vaccination of his children. Whilst the Vaccination Act of 1853 had made the procedure compulsory throughout all of England and Wales as of 1867, there was no law in operation to make the registration of a child’s birth compulsory.⁴³ If the child was not registered, they did not have to be vaccinated. This simple oversight in the law allowed Walker, and likely countless others, to avoid the provisions set out in the Vaccination Act. Incensed by this blatant flouting of the law, a contributor to the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* argued that desperate measures should be taken to prosecute Walker. In 1867, non-registration of a birth was illegal in Scotland and, due to Walker’s Scottish origins, it was suggested that he could be indicted back to the country of his birth to face prosecution under their laws.⁴⁴ This idea was apparently even suggested to the Registrar-General and, although no outcome is reported, it is highly unlikely that it could even have been considered as an option, given that the child had been born in Cornwall and was thus administered under English law; the birthplace of their father was of little consequence.

Between William Wallace Walker’s first appearance before the magistrates in March 1864, and his second in May 1867, just 15 other cases were reported across the entire county. Ten of these cases occurred in December 1864 alone – six at Liskeard, and four at Treacan Gate. The six cases at Liskeard were brought against Captain Robert Knapp (a mine agent), Charles Smith (a miner), John Peek (a tanner), George Sherlew (a carpenter), as well as Joseph Abrams and Thomas Pascoe (both labourers). All six men lived in Liskeard and all were charged with the non-vaccination of their children. However, the outcomes of their cases varied. Smith and Pascoe had already taken the necessary action needed to prevent any consequences under the Act. Smith had obtained a medical certificate that proved his child was too ill to undergo the procedure at that point in time, giving himself extra time to have the child vaccinated. Pascoe, on the other hand, had had his child vaccinated just a couple of days before he had been issued with his summons. The cases against Smith and Pascoe were subsequently dropped. For three of the remaining four defendants, the outcomes were identical. Captain Knapp, along with Peek and Sherlew had not had their

⁴² *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 9 May 1867.

⁴³ The registration of births would not become compulsory in England and Wales until the introduction of the Births and Deaths Registration Act of 1874.

⁴⁴ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 15 August 1867.

children vaccinated since the summons and had not obtained medical certificates to defer the procedure. They were each fined under the Act and, in a familiar story, the registrar for the district, Mr Allen, did not want to prosecute the defendants to the full extent of the law as they were the first cases he had brought before the court. The three were each fined just 1s for their actions and the magistrates once again made it known that 'in all cases that may henceforth be brought before them' they would inflict the full penalty.⁴⁵ Joseph Abrams (alternatively Joseph Abraham) was a different story, however. Abrams chose not to appear before the Bench, a move that the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* inferred as his intention to 'treat the summons of the court with contempt'. As a result, the magistrates adjourned the hearing until later in the afternoon and issued a warrant for his apprehension. He was found and brought before the later session of the court, where he was fined 10s, with the potential for seven days' imprisonment if he defaulted on the payment.⁴⁶ By the beginning of January, Abrams' fine of 10s remained unpaid and, as *The Cornish Telegraph* reveals, the Liskeard magistrates took action and followed through on their threat to send him to prison.⁴⁷ Abrams was sentenced to the full seven days, the first such instance reported to have occurred throughout the whole of Cornwall under the 1853 Vaccination Act amendment. Despite the dramatic turn of events, the language used to describe Abrams remained the same; he was not an 'anti-vaccinationist' like his social better, William Walker Wallace. Rather, as a common labourer, he was simply described as a 'neglectful' parent, despite the abundant evidence that Abrams had made several conscientious efforts to thwart the provisions of the Act by not vaccinating his children, refusing to appear before the magistrates, and subsequently refusing to pay the resulting fine.

There were three further cases reported in mid-1865. In June, Edward Williams (occupation unknown), from Wendron, appeared before the Helston County Petty Sessions, charged with not presenting his two children for inspection eight days after they had been vaccinated.⁴⁸ Once again, the fine was far less than could be expected under the Act, a charge of 4s and 6d in total, representing two separate violations of the law. A month later, before the magistrates of West Penwith, a Mrs Bowden, of Marazion, and Isaac Penberthy, a tin miner from Ludgvan, were charged with 'neglecting to vaccinate' their children.⁴⁹ Bowden presented no explanation in her defence and the Bench fined her 4s. Penberthy, however, claimed that his child, by this time already seven years old, was unwell and that the public vaccinator had refused to perform the procedure on such a sickly child. Rather than immediately inflicting a penalty for non-compliance with the provisions of the Act, the magistrates adjourned Penberthy's case, informing him that he needed to obtain a medical certificate from a doctor to prove that the child was not in a fit state for vaccination. If he failed to do this, he would be fined 10s. One of the magistrates in the Bowden

⁴⁵ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 9 December 1864.

⁴⁶ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 9 December 1864.

⁴⁷ *Cornish Telegraph*, 4 January 1865.

⁴⁸ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 9 June 1865.

⁴⁹ *Cornish Telegraph*, 12 July 1865.

and Penberthy cases commended the authorities for their diligence in bringing the parents before the court, saying that he hoped they 'would be careful to bring up all persons refusing or neglecting to have their children vaccinated, as it was a matter of great importance, and the Magistrates would see the law was enforced against those neglecting to comply with the requirements of the Act'.⁵⁰

Despite such instructions from the magistrates, however, the number of Cornish parents being charged for violating the Vaccination Act dropped even further, with just one case being reported across the whole county throughout the entirety of 1866. Occurring in October, the case against Sarah Hill, of Kea, was brought before the West Powder Petty Sessions. Although the subsequent report that appeared in *The Cornish Telegraph* informed readers that Hill had 'neglected to have her child vaccinated within three months', the actual specifics of the case prove extremely interesting for an understanding of grassroots opposition to vaccination across Cornwall at this time. Hill's case reveals that many parents were getting away with not vaccinating their children for quite some time. Just as Isaac Penberthy had not been charged under the Act until his child was already seven years old, Hill's child was already three years old by the time she was brought before the court. It seems likely that, had Hill not taken the course of action that she did, her case may never have been tried, given the fact that hers was the only vaccination case appearing for the year. However, in a manner reminiscent of the continued practice of folk inoculation amongst the broader Cornish society that had been so concerning for the registrars and public health officials a decade earlier, Hill had gone outside of the established vaccination system and sought the services of an 'unqualified practitioner'. After letting her child go unvaccinated for almost three years, Hill had apparently decided to have the procedure done just one month before she was brought to face the magistrates. However, Mr Hugo, the medical officer of the Truro Union, had apparently been absent from his post when Hill had brought the child for vaccination. Instead of waiting or returning at another time, Hill 'had the child vaccinated by an unqualified person'.⁵¹ It is unclear as to who exactly this 'unqualified person' may have been, but Hill provided partial explanation for her actions, saying that she had let the window of opportunity for vaccination under the Act lapse for so long because 'she did not like to have the child vaccinated as the father died in fits, and she was afraid the child would have fits also', although this explanation does little to shed light on why, if she was so concerned about the possible consequences of vaccination, she sought out an 'unqualified person' to perform the procedure.⁵² Whatever Hill's reasoning, though, Hugo had not intended for the case to be a punitive one. Hill was fined just 1s and the magistrates issued a warning that 'the public should know that their children must be vaccinated within three months of birth by qualified persons, and that its being done by unqualified practitioners would not exempt them'.

⁵⁰ *Cornish Telegraph*, 12 July 1865.

⁵¹ *Cornish Telegraph*, 12 July 1865.

⁵² *Cornish Telegraph*, 12 July 1865.

In the 13 years that passed after the Vaccination Act was amended to make vaccination compulsory, cases against individuals such as William Wallace Walker, middle class citizens, remained in a minority across Cornwall. The vast majority of cases under the Act were brought against the lower classes of the county, the working families of the mining, fishing, and agricultural industries, and the paupers. As has been seen, the numbers of parents either neglecting or refusing to have their children vaccinated in Cornwall was much higher than the court system could deal with, particularly in the areas surrounding major towns and industrial areas, around Penzance and Truro, as well as in the mining districts of Redruth, Camborne, and Illogan. In this context, the continually repeated and often unsubstantiated threats of magistrates to prosecute violators of the Vaccination Act more harshly 'next time', while allowing the offenders before them to walk away with lessened penalties, can be understood. Quite simply, there was never meant to be any further cases in the districts which so publicly advertised their prosecution of these individuals. This is particularly true for the Boards of Guardians around the major mining centres who lamented the number of children who went unvaccinated in their districts, but did not have the means to prosecute every single case. In what rapidly became a consistent theme regarding prosecutions under the Act, these were show cases, meant to reduce the number of non-vaccinated children in the district.

Whilst the public health authorities hoped that the publication of warnings for future non-vaccination cases brought before the various Petty Sessions in Cornwall would stem the tide of offenders under the Act, it seems that, across the Tamar in Devon, some members of the public were more realistic regarding the impact that such cases were having on the numbers of unvaccinated children. In 1859, an anonymous correspondent identifying themselves only as 'R.C.W.', wrote to the *Western Times*, a newspaper published in Devon, but also widely circulated in Cornwall. In the letter, 'R.C.W.' questioned whether public vaccinators and other officials were being effective at all in their attempts to quash anti-vaccination sentiment in the area:

Understanding that there are proper officers appointed to carry into effect the *compulsory* Vaccination Act, I was somewhat astonished to hear that in Friernhay-street [in Exeter], there have been about twenty recent cases of small-pox, entirely owing to the parents' prejudice against vaccination. Can the medical men be ignorant of this?⁵³

In this statement, 'R.C.W.' expresses frustration that, despite the mechanisms for prosecuting non-vaccinating parents being established by law, outbreaks of smallpox continued to occur in impoverished areas of the city. 'R.C.W.'s' letter quickly attracted the attention of at least one authority, with another anonymous letter, this time signed 'A District Medical Officer', appearing in the *Western Times* the following week. According to 'A District Medical Officer', the problem of smallpox breaking out amongst the unvaccinated children of Friernhay Street had been

⁵³ *Western Times*, 9 July 1859.

appropriately dealt with: 'some weeks since I directed the attention of the proper authorities to the prevalence of the above disorder [smallpox], and that I thought measures should be taken to enforce the provisions of the Vaccination Act'.⁵⁴ 'A District Medical Officer' goes on to explain that, beyond the actions already taken, a medical officer could do little more, explaining that, once the proper authorities had been informed, it was up to the sanitary board and its lawyer to initiate legal proceedings. As to the root causes of the non-vaccination in Friernhay Street and others like it, 'A District Medical Officer' stated their belief that medical authorities had

for the last few months been striving most actively and earnestly to arouse that stolid indifference, and overcome that almost unfathomable ignorance, which pervades the minds of a large number of persons as to the inestimable benefit to be derived from the protective power of Vaccination.⁵⁵

Thus, according to 'A District Medical Officer', the problem of 'stolid indifference' and 'unfathomable ignorance' remained, not as a result of disinterested medical officers, but rather as a result of an inefficient legal system that was not capable of handling such large numbers of violations under Vaccination Act. Interestingly, it was also noted by 'A District Medical Officer' that, although medical authorities had been doing their utmost to ensure more children were vaccinated in their districts, any increase of such numbers were more likely due to 'the sickening, disgusting evidences' of smallpox appearing amongst communities, than to the 'efforts of the medical men'.⁵⁶

As was expressed in the 1830s by William Reid, of Kentisbeare, in Devon, and numerous registrars across Cornwall in the 1840s and 1850s, the problem of anti-vaccination was still perceived to be a problem plaguing the lower classes of society in the mid-1860s. George Elgar Sloper, a landed proprietor, from Devizes in Wiltshire, wrote in 1864:

It is no less lamentable than true, that many of the pauper population in this kingdom are exceedingly obstinate and unwilling to adopt those measures with regard to the vaccination of their children, which are not only necessary for their own safety, happiness, and comfort, but also for the safety, security, and comfort of the public generally.⁵⁷

Just seven years earlier, the situation in Cornwall had seemed particularly dire to some commentators. In 1857, an article appeared in the *Kentish Gazette* that presented the opinion of a Mr. Hughes, described as 'the clergyman of a very out-of-the-way place in Cornwall, called Looe'.⁵⁸ According to the article, 'Mr. Hughes complains of the difficulty of inducing the poor of Cornwall to adopt vaccination generally, on account of their doubt as to the protection it affords against small-pox'.⁵⁹ Hughes believed there were logical reasons as to why the poor of Cornwall would not be able to truly appreciate the benefits associated with vaccination. Firstly, there were a handful of examples across England and Wales of smallpox infecting some vaccinated individuals, long after

⁵⁴ *Western Times*, 16 July 1859.

⁵⁵ *Western Times*, 16 July 1859.

⁵⁶ *Western Times*, 16 July 1859.

⁵⁷ *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette*, 6 October 1864.

⁵⁸ *Kentish Gazette*, 3 March 1857.

⁵⁹ *Kentish Gazette*, 3 March 1857.

the procedure was carried out. Hughes pointed to examples of cases such as these as strengthening 'the pre-existing prejudices of the poor'.⁶⁰ Adding to this, the newspaper points out that poor parents living in country areas were often required to undertake long journeys with their children, both to have them vaccinated and then to have the vaccine site inspected the following week. Many parents in such a situation would often choose not to return to the vaccination station and, as a result, the public vaccinator was unable to perform the procedure again if a particular child's vaccine did not take, leaving them unprotected if smallpox broke out in their community. The extent of this problem was detailed in a meeting of the Launceston Board of Guardians in late November 1865. Dr Felce, the medical officer for the district of South Petherwin, reported to the Board that he was aware of a number of children who had been vaccinated but had never been returned for the follow-up inspection.⁶¹ As a result of Felce's information, the Board attempted to set in motion the very legal process that others, such as 'A District Medical Officer' claimed were ineffective for solving the problem of non-vaccination amongst the poor. For reasons such as these, it was argued, the poor of Cornwall often saw the failures of the vaccination procedure, rather than the successes, and took this to mean that vaccination was of little benefit.

These were not the only reasons for the acuteness of the problem in Cornwall, however. The *Kentish Gazette* also reports

that the doubts and suspicions alluded to by Mr. Hughes are extremely prevalent amongst the poor cannot be denied ... but in accepting his statements it is to be remembered that the folks who come specially under his notice have been as famous, from time immemorial, for the strength of their prejudices as for their boldness and determination.⁶²

Once again, Cornish folk beliefs and traditions were at the forefront of the problem. The 'prejudices' of the Cornish poor meant that many of their children remained unvaccinated. Although the *Kentish Gazette* does not expand further on these prejudices, it can be seen that the same traditional practices that led so many Cornish parents to turn away from gratuitous vaccination and instead place their trust in the inoculation procedure continued to haunt the county as the 1850s draw to a close. The report of his complaints, however, argues that it was up to Hughes to assist 'in the eradication of this evil'.⁶³ Through the intervention of the local clergymen, the *Kentish Gazette* believed that the children of the poor could be educated out of their parents' prejudices, turning their backs on the old ways of their communities, and realise the benefits of modern medical procedures like vaccination.

Through the combination of an ineffective law and the strength of the opposition to the procedure in Cornwall, as evidenced by the report in the *Kentish Gazette*, the county suffered greatly from smallpox during this period. The *Luton Times and Advertiser*, of Bedfordshire, reported in August

⁶⁰ *Kentish Gazette*, 3 March 1857.

⁶¹ *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*, 24 November 1865.

⁶² *Kentish Gazette*, 3 March 1857.

⁶³ *Kentish Gazette*, 3 March 1857.

1861 that Cornish registrars were struggling to deal with the abundance of unvaccinated children in districts across the county.⁶⁴ According to the report, the district of St Clement in Truro had seen a period of 18 months elapse with no vaccinations carried out by the public vaccinator, and at St Austell, vaccination procedures were still being performed but it was having little effect on the high number of unvaccinated children in the town. As a result of this, 'a large mortality in these districts from small-pox' was reported.⁶⁵ One way in which Cornwall differed from other regions of England and Wales following the introduction of compulsory vaccination in 1853 was the apparent inability, or perhaps unwillingness, to prosecute any parent in anything more than a show case. As has been shown, almost all non-vaccinating parents in Cornwall brought before petty sessions hearings between 1853 and 1866 were not punished to the full extent of the law, often on the advice of the prosecution who wished for the case to serve as an example only. In this way, Cornwall did not face the same problems as other areas of the country. Specifically, there were no cases of the authorities attempting to charge a parent multiple times under the Act for the same child remaining unvaccinated.

The case of *Pilcher v Stafford* at the Court of Queen's Bench in London in 1863, described by Durbach as a 'landmark' vaccination case, is a perfect example of the issue of repeat offences under the Vaccination Act of 1853.⁶⁶ The defendant, Stafford, was charged with not having his child vaccinated but, in answer to the charge brought against him, stated that he had already been convicted for not vaccinating the same child at an earlier court appearance. In the previous case, Stafford had received a fine, which he had paid along with the court costs. He therefore claimed, according to an account published in 1871 by Algernon C. Bauke of the Local Government Board, that 'he was entitled to the protection extended to the persecuted by the old maxim *nemo debet bis puniri pro uno delicto* [no one ought to be punished twice for the same offense]'.⁶⁷ This clearly caused many issues for prosecutors seeking to enforce the Vaccination Act in the most effective way possible. What Stafford's defence amounted to, according to Bauke, was the perception that the government would 'exonerate parents and guardians from a duty imposed upon them by the statute ... once the penalty of 20s. should be paid'.⁶⁸ As a result, parents like Stafford could persist in their opposition to having their child vaccinated and, as long as they had already been tried, fined, and paid the necessary fees, they could simply refuse to have their child vaccinated without having to fear any further prosecution for that individual child. This was a major concern for the legislature who had intended for the Act to force parents to vaccinate their children, not to pay a fee to avoid having it done and, although it was clearly not an issue in Cornwall at this period, the

⁶⁴ *Luton Times and Advertiser*, 17 August 1861.

⁶⁵ *Luton Times and Advertiser*, 17 August 1861.

⁶⁶ Durbach, *Bodily Matters*, 8.

⁶⁷ Algernon C. Bauke, *The Vaccination Act, 1867, and the Vaccination Act, 1871*, Shaw and Sons, London, 1871, v.

⁶⁸ Bauke, *The Vaccination Act*, v.

problem was of such concern to authorities that swift action was taken to amend the law, making it more effective in enforcing the compulsory components of the Act.

In 1866, a bill was presented to the House of Commons to 'consolidate and amend the law relating to vaccination', but it was not passed.⁶⁹ The following year, 1867, a similar bill was proposed, this time passing through the select committees of both houses and receiving the royal assent on 12 August. Bauke provides a summary of the provisions of this new amendment to the Vaccination Act, repealing all previous legislation:

The Act provides (s. 29) that every parent or person having the custody of a child, who shall neglect to take it to be vaccinated, or to be inspected after vaccination, without rendering a reasonable excuse for such neglect, shall be guilty of an offence, and be liable to be proceeded against summarily, and upon conviction to pay a penalty not exceeding 20s.; and (s. 31) gives power to a justice of the peace, upon receiving an [sic] information in writing, made by the officer appointed by the guardians ... to enforce the provisions of the Vaccination Act, 1867, that such officer has reason to believe that any child under the age of fourteen years has not been vaccinated, and that notice has been given to the parent or person having the custody of such child to procure its being vaccinated, and that such a notice has been disregarded, to summon such parent or person to appear before him with the child.⁷⁰

Under the new regulations, parents like Stafford would no longer be able to hide behind the legal maxim *nemo debet bis puniri pro uno delicto*; instead it became possible to charge parents repeatedly for not vaccinating the same child as many times as possible or necessary, until the child reached the age of 14. Stanley Williamson relates one of the first cases to test the new legislation. In 1869, a defendant by the surname of Allen was charged with 'disobeying an order to have his daughter, Eliza, vaccinated'.⁷¹ In his defence, Allen claimed that he had already been fined for not vaccinating Eliza just two months earlier and that, in accordance with the verdict in the case of *Pilcher v. Stafford*, he could not be prosecuted for the same offence again. However, the magistrates dismissed this argument on the grounds that, under section 31 of the new Vaccination Act, each prosecution could be considered a separate offence. Williamson states that the magistrates were of the opinion that section 31 had 'been inserted with the object of preventing the unsatisfactory situation found to exist when *Picher* [sic] v. *Stafford* was decided.'⁷² This signalled the beginning of a new era in the vaccination debate. As Williamson states,

each order disobeyed ... constituted a new and separate offence and could become the subject of a fresh conviction and penalty. The offender could be prosecuted, as the legal Latin phrase had it, *toties quoties*, meaning "as many times as" he committed the offence.⁷³

⁶⁹ Bauke, *The Vaccination Act*, vi.

⁷⁰ Bauke, *The Vaccination Act*, viii.

⁷¹ Stanley Williamson, *The Vaccination Controversy: The Rise, Reign, and Fall of Compulsory Vaccination for Smallpox*, Liverpool University Press, Liverpool, 2007, 161.

⁷² Williamson, *The Vaccination Controversy*, 161.

⁷³ Williamson, *The Vaccination Controversy*, 162.

In 1867, a formal anti-vaccination group was established, the first of its kind to appear in Britain. It was led by a clergyman from Manchester, William Hume-Rothery and many of its arguments against the enforcement of compulsory vaccination were drawn from the ideas put forward by anti-vaccinationist doctors. In 1870, Hume-Rothery wrote to the *Cornubian* to publicly advertise his Anti-Compulsory Vaccination League to the already staunchly anti-vaccinationist West Cornish mining districts. From a medical standpoint, the League opposed vaccination because it 'emanate[d] from a narrow medical school ... in the face of the dissent of a considerable body of enlightened and experience medical men', as well as the notion that it was 'an outrage upon all the known laws of health and physiology'.⁷⁴ Additionally, vaccination was believed to be no prophylactic against smallpox and was 'a means of conveying foul and loathsome disease, far more to be dreaded than small-pox itself'.⁷⁵ Ultimately, Hume-Rothery and his followers believed that the only way to prevent any disease, smallpox included, was through 'enlightened and faithful compliance with the laws of life and health'.⁷⁶ That is, abiding by the moral code of society and embracing sanitation. There was also a legalistic aspect to the League's opposition to the enforcement of compulsory vaccination. It was claimed that the Vaccination Act was 'tyrannical and unconstitutional, depriving parents of their sacred and legitimate rights of control and protection over their offspring' and that it was 'cruelly unjust' for a government to inflict any form of punishment, regardless of how lenient it may be, on parents exercising this right.⁷⁷

Anti-vaccination societies shared many similarities with other movements in Britain from the same time period. Oftentimes, members of anti-vaccination organisations were also anti-vivisectionists, vegetarians, or involved in the temperance movement.⁷⁸ Durbach reveals that the organised anti-vaccination leagues had their largest supporter base in the industrial north of England, particularly around Lancashire and into Yorkshire. However, outside of these organised movements, anti-vaccinationist thought permeated society. Anti-vaccinationists came from all walks of life; they were working-class and middle-class, male and female, and often tapped into what Dubach describes as 'a larger culture of dissent'.⁷⁹ In areas where the organised anti-vaccination societies were less influential, such as Cornwall, anti-vaccinationist ideology often went hand-in-hand with religious dissent and non-conformity. Even before the amendment of 1867 was introduced, authorities in the south west of England were beginning to question whether compulsion was really a necessary

⁷⁴ *Cornubian*, 24 June 1870.

⁷⁵ *Cornubian*, 24 June 1870.

⁷⁶ *Cornubian*, 24 June 1870.

⁷⁷ *Cornubian*, 24 June 1870.

⁷⁸ Examples of anti-vaccinationists involved in other social and cultural movements at the time: Frederick Askey was involved in Radical politics; William Beurle and Richard Butler Gibbs were vegetarians; Charles Doxat and Charles Thomas Pearce were Freemasons; Edith Evans was an anti-vivisectionist; Mary Hume-Rothery and Alfred Osler were feminists; William Tebb opposed premature burial; and William Gibson Ward was a union organiser. Thomas Allinson was a vegetarian, a feminist, and supporter of birth control and the temperance movement; John Burns was a socialist, a Liberal politician, union organiser and supporter of the temperance movement; and Walter Hadwen was an anti-vivisectionist, a vegetarian, a supporter of the temperance movement and an opponent of premature burial.

⁷⁹ Durbach, *Bodily Matters*, 41.

measure in the promotion of vaccination. In April 1867, an Exeter Guardian, Henry Besley, wrote to the *Western Times*, stating that, although there had been discussion amongst other Guardians of the Board about opposing compulsory vaccination under the Act, he maintained that ‘compulsory powers *are necessary* for the efficient working of those laws’.⁸⁰ The problem of anti-vaccination attitudes had, by this time, though, already spread far beyond the working and pauper classes, as the cases against individuals such as William Wallace Walker, who maintained a higher social status than those traditionally blamed for non-vaccination, indicate. Indeed, those in much more privileged positions were beginning to express their opposition, not only to the compulsory measures Henry Besley was defending, but also to the vaccination procedure itself.

In the Parliamentary debate that followed the introduction of the Vaccination Act amendment bill of 1867, Conservative member for South Nottinghamshire, William Hodgson Barrow, expressed his opposition to vaccination, claiming that ‘it was unnecessary to render vaccinations compulsory’ and that ‘there was a very strong feeling against it throughout the country’.⁸¹ What is, perhaps, more intriguing, is the fact that Barrow, clearly far removed from the ‘antediluvian superstitions’ and ‘ancient prejudices’ that caused the lower classes, particularly those on the periphery of English society, to fear vaccination, subsequently claimed that ‘he believed that many children had suffered death, or had their constitution permanently injured by the practice of vaccination’.⁸² Barrow was far from alone in holding such views in upper-class society, and the opposition to vaccination even crossed party lines, with Sir Jervoise Clarke Jervoise, the Liberal MP for South Hampshire, expressing similar beliefs. In his statement before the House of Commons, Jervoise declared, not only his opposition to compulsion, but also his opinion that ‘instead of freeing children from disease, [vaccination] was actually at the present moment inoculating with the cattle plague’.⁸³ At the same time as this debate was ensuing, Conservative member for East Cornwall, Nicholas Kendall, admitted that, amongst his constituents, there was a widespread dislike of vaccination, likely due to the ‘writings of many medical men who alleged that the poison that was diffused by means of vaccination was undermining the constitutions of the people of the country’.⁸⁴ Kendall is described in the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* as ‘not believ[ing] that this poison was so prevalent as was alleged’, but this is far from a complete dismissal of such ideas as ‘superstition’ or ‘ignorance’, as was so common for individuals in his position just a few years previously.⁸⁵

An explanation for this apparent concern with maintaining the constitutions of country people can be found in the rapidly changing demographics of Cornwall during this period. In May 1867, a mass exodus of Cornish miners was described by the *West Briton*, with 7,380 men reported to have left

⁸⁰ *Western Times*, 18 April 1867.

⁸¹ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 20 June 1867.

⁸² *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 20 June 1867.

⁸³ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 20 June 1867.

⁸⁴ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 20 June 1867.

⁸⁵ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 20 June 1867.

the county in the space of 12 months, with some heading overseas, to America, Australia, and New Zealand, and others heading north to the coal and iron mines of Scotland and Northern England.⁸⁶

The population losses for each mining district can be seen in Table 1:

Table 1: Number of miners leaving Cornwall by district, 1866-67⁸⁷

Mining district	Number of miners leaving (1866-67)
Lelant and St Just	1,590
Redruth and Camborne	1,390
Liskeard and Callington	1,200
Gwennap, Stithians, Illogan and Phillack	880
St Austell	220
St Agnes and Perran	205
Wendron and Sithney	80
Unspecified	1,815

Indeed, this was just the population loss during one year of a mass exodus that spanned the better part of six decades in Cornwall. Between 1840 and 1900, between 460,000 and 470,000 Cornish people left the county, either for overseas destinations or for locations within Britain. As Payton states:

Between 1861 and 1900 Cornwall as a whole lost no less than 10.5 per cent of its male population overseas and 7.0 per cent to other counties, far and away a greater loss than that of any English or Welsh county, with a corresponding loss of 5.3 per cent of the female population overseas and 7.1 per cent to other counties.⁸⁸

With such a substantial loss of population ongoing, it is little wonder that individuals such as Kendall expressed concern about the constitutions of their constituents, especially when one considers that the greatest population losses throughout Cornwall during this time occurred amongst men between the ages of 15 and 24. Payton describes this as Cornwall being ‘robbed of the younger, more energetic and better trained elements of its population’, and reveals that:

Between 1861 and 1900, 44.8 per cent of the Cornish male population aged 15 to 24 had left for overseas, with a further 29.7 per cent leaving for other counties. Over the same period and in the same age group, 26.2 per cent of Cornish females went overseas while 35.5 per cent departed for other parts of Britain.⁸⁹

⁸⁶ *West Briton*, 17 May 1867.

⁸⁷ *West Briton*, 17 May 1867.

⁸⁸ Payton, *The Cornish Overseas*, 28.

⁸⁹ Payton, *The Cornish Overseas*, 28.

Not only were the strongest and healthiest members of Cornish society leaving in such high numbers but those that were left behind were struggling to make ends meet. A report in the *West Briton* in August 1867 reveals that the situation was only getting worse for Cornish miners. Wages were low and food prices were high, meaning that miners were unable to feed and clothe their families and many were reported to have been functioning at subsistence levels. According to the report, 'in the districts which are suffering most, many families are reported to be without under-clothing, sleeping upon straw, and living upon coarse dry bread ... there is a general apprehension that in the coming winter there must be very severe distress and great destitution'.⁹⁰ Tin and copper prices continued to fall as the year progressed and calls were made for aid contributions from the benevolent higher classes. There can be little wonder that people across the county, including political figures such as Kendall, were becoming concerned with the constitutions of the working classes in country areas and were so keen to protect what little health there was. It was not only the mining communities that were being affected; fishing communities often lived dangerously close to the poverty line, with their livelihoods so dependent on the harsh seas. At the end of November 1867, fishermen from Newlyn joined their mining counterparts in the exodus. With their fishery at a standstill, the crews of the fishing boats headed to Plymouth in search of work, leaving behind a number of families in 'deep poverty'.⁹¹

For a few Cornish women, left to feed and clothe their families in such conditions while their husbands sought work overseas, the situation became increasingly dire.⁹² In 1868, two women, having spent their money on emigration fees for their husbands, found the poverty in Cornwall too much to bear and petitioned Queen Victoria for assistance in paying their passage to join their husbands in Nova Scotia. The two women, Mary Dadds and Jane Tremewen, relayed the story of their poverty to the monarch and, according to the *West Briton*, 'inquiries were at once made as to the accuracy of their statements, the result being that her Majesty, with that kindness of heart which has always characterised her, commanded £10, the sum needed ... for the use of the two humble applicants'.⁹³ With such difficult economic and social conditions prevailing in Cornwall, it seems hardly surprising then that enforcing the compulsory aspects of the Vaccination Act was of little importance to the authorities. At the meeting of the Launceston Board of Guardians in June 1867,

⁹⁰ *West Briton*, 16 August 1867.

⁹¹ *West Briton*, 29 November 1867.

⁹² Lesley Trotter argues that this was far from the norm for all women left behind in Cornwall, instead revealing that, in reality, many of the women whose husbands left Cornwall to find work overseas were actually quite successful in maintaining decent standards of living at home and many would be reunited with their husbands when they returned or would join them overseas once they were established. Trotter contends that the existing historiography of miners' wives in Cornwall simply perpetuates the myth of the abandoned and struggling woman left behind that is based on anecdotal evidence at best. See Lesley Trotter, 'Desperate? Destitute? Deserted? Questioning Perceptions of Miners' Wives in Cornwall During the Great Emigration, 1851-1891' in Philip Payton (ed.), *Cornish Studies Nineteen*, Exeter University Press, Exeter, 2011, 195-224.

⁹³ *West Briton*, 7 May 1868.

Reverend Charles Rodd raised concerns about the extent to which the Vaccination Act was being enforced in the district. According to Rodd, only one vaccination had been recorded in his parish, North Hill, for the first six months of the year. Additionally, only 2s 6d had been paid for the same time period to the medical officer in vaccination fees for the entire parish of Werrington, which included 600 residents, indicating that the procedure was woefully underperformed there as well.⁹⁴ Rodd contended that strict enforcement of the law should be undertaken to ensure that people complied with the Act but his fellow Guardians were less than enthused to do so. The clerk of the Board stated that he believed 'more might be done by leaving the matter to the medical officers than by imposing a fine', and instructions were eventually given to contact the medical officers, rather than undertake any prosecutions for non-vaccination in the district.⁹⁵ Thus, as members of Parliament were discussing the future of the Vaccination Act across the country, a debate that led to the introduction of the 1867 amendment, enforcement of the existing Act was already grinding to a halt in Cornwall.

Amidst the great upheaval of the mass exodus of Cornish men and their families from the county, and the ensuing poverty that gripped those who remained, vaccination remained as unpopular with the lower classes as ever, even after the introduction of the 1867 amendment. In August 1869, some two years following the introduction of the amendment, the Guardians of Truro were just as unsure of how to enforce the Act as their counterparts in Launceston had been previously. A Guardian by the name of Truscott asked for instruction in the matter, claiming that there was 'a very long list of persons – some hundreds – from the various parishes in the Union, who were liable to be prosecuted for non-compliance with the Compulsory Vaccination Act'.⁹⁶ However, no one appears to have been willing to provide Truscott with any information as to how they planned to proceed, the question was simply adjourned to be discussed at a later date. While hundreds were getting away with not vaccinating their children in the Truro Union, folk medical practices such as those discussed previously continued to proliferate throughout the county. In 1870, folk medicine was reported in St Erth in the case of a young girl bitten by a bull terrier. In an attempt to cure her severe leg wound, a dressing was applied that was made from the hair of the dog that had bitten her, but the treatment was unsuccessful.⁹⁷ As people from across Cornwall continued to rely on common herbalists, quack doctresses, folk remedies, and the like, the extreme poverty and distress in many areas made many Cornish families more susceptible to the ravages of serious diseases. The lack of covered sewers at St Ives at the beginning of 1870 meant that the sewage of the town ran 'in black rivulets across the broad white sands into the sea'.⁹⁸ A similar situation existed at Penryn, where fever broke out in March 1870. A sanitation inspector who visited the district to report on the outbreak described the following situation at Penryn:

⁹⁴ *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*, 28 June 1867.

⁹⁵ *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*, 28 June 1867.

⁹⁶ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 28 August 1869

⁹⁷ *West Briton*, 3 May 1870.

⁹⁸ *West Briton*, 18 January 1870.

The roadways are in a state of great neglect; stagnant pools, decomposing vegetables, and other filth lie about, and until the commencement of the present year it had been the prevailing custom to render the condition of the town even more disgusting by emptying the contents of privies, middens, and cesspools into the streets, leaving them there until removed by carts ... behind the houses, and thus lining every street, were tons upon tons of filth and refuse; and dirt, poverty, and wretchedness prevailed in a large number of the cottages, many of which were unfit for human habitation.⁹⁹

Conditions were also appalling at a settlement called Goosey Town, outside Lostwithiel, which was home to the bargemen of the River Fowey and their families. Apart from neglected houses that seemed poised to collapse at any given moment, windows were rarely opened, 'a sort of green fungus hangs about them' and 'the drains are all open, and so badly constructed that the animal and vegetable matter stagnates in them, and is left to putrify [sic] in the burning rays of the midday sun ... fish are cleaned within doors, and the reeking refuse is thrown upon the dunghill or into a cesspool hard by'.¹⁰⁰ It was not just small settlements that were at risk from poor sanitation either. The water supply to Truro was variable given the conditions of the season. As Barton states, the pumps and wells were locked in summer when the water supply was low, leaving many residents to source their water from a filthy stream that ran through the lower part of the town.¹⁰¹ According to the *West Briton* of 13 July 1871, this stream 'with other impurities, carries with it such additions as come from a water closet, the washing of cattle's intestines, &c'.¹⁰² Barton further notes that, even when the wells and pumps were available for use, the water supply was questionable; one 'yielded brackish water and another, that at High Cross, was in an old graveyard. An old skull had been retrieved from it on one occasion'.¹⁰³

These unsanitary conditions across the county were of great concern for public health officials, not least of all because of the high risk of cholera that accompanied such filthy water supplies. Cholera was one of the most dreaded diseases in England in the nineteenth century, likely because Asiatic cholera was a relatively new import to the nation and often struck suddenly and with terrifying ferocity, killing many victims within hours of the first symptoms appearing. To many in Britain, cholera was a completely alien disease which, according to Patrick Zylberman 'was transmitted not by ships' passengers, but rather by sailors, pilgrims, Asian or African laborers, immigrants; in a word by the poor, the tired, the malnourished'.¹⁰⁴ Newspapers from across Britain tracked cholera outbreaks as they spread across continental Europe, counting down the days until it once again arrived in British ports. As Geoffrey Bilson argues:

⁹⁹ *West Briton*, 31 March 1870.

¹⁰⁰ *West Briton*, 17 August 1871.

¹⁰¹ Ruth M. Barton (ed.), *Life in Cornwall: In the Late Nineteenth Century: Extracts from the West Briton, 1855-1875*, D. Bradford Barton Ltd, Truro, 1972, 210.

¹⁰² *West Briton*, 13 July 1871.

¹⁰³ Barton, *Life in Cornwall, 1855-1875*, 210.

¹⁰⁴ Patrick Zylberman 'Civilizing the State: Borders, Weak States and International Health in Modern Europe', in Alison Bashford (ed.), *Medicine at the Border: Disease, Globalization and Security, 1850 to the Present*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, 2006, 21-40.

Cholera made a massive impact on the imagination of people in the nineteenth century. They feared its sudden, painful, and arbitrary attack. They were horrified by the rapid course of the disease which did not allow a gentle decline into a peaceful death. They were baffled by the pattern of spread of the disease which fitted no known model of contagion. They grew contemptuous of the doctors who could do nothing for the victims and in some places they turned on the doctors and accused them of spreading the disease. The death rate, often approaching 60 per cent of those affected helped to create panic.¹⁰⁵

Similarly, Durbach argues that cholera was the unknown, a disease for which medical professionals had no explanation. Indeed, doctors and public health officials seemed to be at a loss to explain how cholera was even transmitted, let alone how to prevent it.¹⁰⁶ In the face of such a widespread fear of cholera, it seems that many forgot how dangerous that familiar disease, smallpox, could be. An article in the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* of 21 August 1869 attempted to drive home the danger that smallpox still presented to society, particularly in areas where vaccination rates were consistently low.

Let any one listen to the fearful tales that some of our old medical practitioners can tell of the ravages of this disgusting disease; of the horrible sights and stench that it produces; of the loathsome sights that it leaves behind, disfiguring handsome features, making scars, and drawing the expression into the hideous faces that we sometimes see after burns, and then say which he would prefer – to have those times back again, or to run the risk (a very slight one) of infecting the system (if possible, and it has by no means been proved) with consumption, syphilis, and other hereditary blood diseases.¹⁰⁷

Here, the article addresses the growing fear, expressed by William Hodgson Barrow and Sir Jervoise Clarke-Jervoise, amongst numerous others, that the arm-to-arm vaccination method was spreading diseases like syphilis from the lower orders into the 'pure' blood of their social betters. It is clear from this distinct language change that vaccine opposition in England had begun to evolve into a very different beast. Gone were the days when non-vaccination could be blamed on 'ignorant mothers' and 'neglectful parents', a time when opposition to the procedure was linked to superstition or just general backwardness. A new era was dawning; the era of the 'conscientious fathers'.

¹⁰⁵ Geoffrey Bilson, *A Darkened House: Cholera in Nineteenth-Century Canada*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1980, 4.

¹⁰⁶ Durbach, *Bodily Matters*, 22.

¹⁰⁷ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 21 August 1869.

Chapter 4: ‘Conscientious Fathers’ and the Rise of the Vaccine Martyr

The 1867 amendment to the Vaccination Act, allowing for multiple prosecutions for the same offense, had a profound effect on the nature of the vaccination debate in England. Prior to the amendment, much of the blame for low vaccination rates had been placed on women, mostly those living outside of the metropolis, generating the notion that the ‘ignorant mother’ was the biggest problem facing pro-vaccinationist health authorities. However, the possibility of multiple prosecutions gave added incentive to a new breed of anti-vaccinationist, the ‘conscientious father’. Unlike his female predecessor, the ‘conscientious father’ of the post-1867 vaccination debate demanded respect from authorities and challenged the Vaccination Act openly and in full view of the general public. Cornwall had played host to one of the earliest versions of this new phenomenon; William Wallace Walker, the Naval pensioner, coastguard, and farmer who first appeared in the Cornish vaccination debate in 1864. Following his refusal to vaccinate his son Clement, Walker had been described by the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* as an ‘anti-vaccinator’ rather than as an ‘ignorant’ or ‘neglectful’ parent, the terminology applied to so many of his predecessors. In his continued campaign to prevent his children from being vaccinated, Walker also assumed a role that had been newly created amongst anti-vaccinationist agitators; that of the ‘vaccine martyr’.

A ‘vaccine martyr’ was an individual, almost exclusively a middle-class father, who was willing to take any potential punishment that magistrates could force upon them in order to prevent having their children vaccinated. As early as 1864, Walker had declared his intention to avoid the compulsory aspects of the Vaccination Act at any cost, stating at the Petty Sessions hearing that he ‘would take himself and his family off to the antipodes before he would have his child vaccinated’.¹ Following the uproar over his refusal to even register the births of his subsequent children, Walker came to keep this promise. In 1880, the Walkers, then parents to a total of 11 children, were part of a group of 23 families who boarded the SS Nyanza at Southampton, travelling to Natal. Upon their arrival in Durban, the families, part of a planned settlement of British agricultural families, travelled inland to Wilgefontein (Willowfontain) where they were to establish farms. However, the land at Wilgefontein was largely unsuitable for agriculture and many of the original 23 families failed to establish themselves there. The Walkers struggled both personally and financially, with an inspector from the Natal Land and Immigration Board visiting after the first twelve months and finding several families, including the Walkers, struggling to keep themselves afloat.² In 1881, the *Natal Witness* records the death of their eldest son, Clement, aged just 18, at

¹ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 4 March 1864.

² Donald William Bosch, *The Wilgefontein Settlement 1880*, 1949. MA Thesis, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg.

Wilgefontein.³ After the death of Clement, the family name was changed; the Walkers of St Gorran adopted the name of their Cornish hometown and became the St Gorrans of Wilgefontein.

If the departure of William Wallace Walker to the failed Wilgefontein settlement left a void in the Cornish anti-vaccination movement, it was quickly filled. Taking his place was a pair of brothers from Truro who would fundamentally change the way that vaccination was discussed in the English periphery. The first evidence of this 'changing of the guard' in Cornwall came just over five months after the Walkers had arrived at Wilgefontein. The new figureheads of the anti-vaccination movement in Cornwall were the Cragoe brothers. At the end of December 1880, the Truro Guardians charged Thomas Adolphus Cragoe and his younger brother Albertus Martin Cragoe with not vaccinating two children each. R. Marrack, the clerk for the Board of Guardians was responsible for the prosecution and stated that he understood the 'defendants had conscientious objections to obeying the provisions of the Acts, and to having their children vaccinated.'⁴ Marrack, however, was not going to let the Cragoes set a precedent by allowing a conscientious objection to prevent a prosecution under the Vaccination Act. It was made clear from the very beginning that the Cragoe brothers were unlike anyone the Truro Guardians had prosecuted before. To begin with, Albertus himself had been serving on the Truro Board of Guardians since 1878 and would continue to hold this position throughout the duration of his legal troubles in the 1880s before he vacated the role in 1892. Thomas, a self-described gentleman living on a property named Woodbury in the district of Kea, and Albertus, farming a property named Penhellick in St Clement were both in a financial position that allowed them the luxury of paying a subscription fee to an organised anti-vaccination society that, in turn, provided them with a lawyer and paid any legal fees and fines if they were charged with an offence under the Act. Thomas was the first to have his case heard by the magistrates. He was charged with not vaccinating his three-year-old son Alfred Spencer and his 11-month-old daughter Isabel. The brothers' lawyer, Robert Dobell, described Thomas as 'the last man in the world who would break the law unless he had some conscientious ground for doing so'.⁵ Dobell then attempted to launch into a speech regarding the apparent dangers of vaccination but was stopped by the magistrates before he could do so. Dobell then attempted to cite precedent, stating that, although he was aware that both brothers had broken the law regarding vaccination, they were not the first to do so in England. Rather, he argued that in other cases, when 'conscientious motives were shown, the magistrates have inflicted the least possible penalty'.⁶ Here, then, is the first indication that the Cragoe brothers were part of the new breed of anti-vaccinationists in Cornwall; they did not deny that they had broken the law; they simply wanted to incur the lowest penalty possible because they considered themselves to be conscientious objectors.

³ *Natal Witness*, 25 January 1881.

⁴ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 24 December 1880.

⁵ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 24 December 1880.

⁶ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 24 December 1880.

In response to Dobell's argument, the magistrates claimed that there was no case to cite precedent as they had never heard a conscientious objection plea before but Dobell had an answer to this, claiming that nominal fines had been inflicted in similar cases by the Bedford magistrates and that thousands of people remained unprosecuted under the Act in Leicester. Thus, Dobell stated 'his clients submitted to the bench that as they had conscientious objections they ought not to be fined; and he (Mr Dobell) was also instructed to say that no fine would compel them to have their children vaccinated'.⁷ Following this statement, the magistrates heard the summons against Albertus Cragoe. Younger than his brother by five years, Albertus was summoned for not vaccinating his two daughters, two-year-old Percy Adelaide and one-year-old Alberta Mary. By late 1880, Albertus and his wife Emma had a third child, William Sydney Neville, but he was not of the appropriate vaccination age by the time Albertus appeared in court. With Dobell having already summed up the defence of both brothers, the magistrates moved straight on to their punishments; Thomas was fined 10s regarding Isabel and a vaccination order was issued for Alfred. Both of Albertus' children were ordered to be vaccinated as well. The brothers were then warned that they faced the full penalty of 20s in each case if they disobeyed the vaccination orders. The activities of Albertus in the month before his cases were heard in court were a strong indication of the course of action the brothers intended to take regarding these vaccination orders.

A letter from Albertus Cragoe appeared in the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* on 17 December 1880, revealing his support for a doctor who opposed the arm-to-arm vaccination method that was rapidly falling out of favour in many medical circles. Cragoe claimed that this doctor, Charles Cameron, had provided proof 'that vaccinating from arm to arm was fraught with the greatest peril, inasmuch as the foulest disorders had been spread by that means'.⁸ Cameron's argument, however, had not gone far enough for Albertus' liking as the alternative Cameron had proposed was vaccination with calf lymph, a method gaining popularity across the country. Quoting other anti-vaccinationist doctors, Cragoe contended that 'calf-lymph would be likely to convey to human beings numerous bovine diseases, such as murrain, foot-and-mouth disease, [and] pleuro-pneumonia'.⁹ He then urged doctors to abandon vaccination altogether, claiming that the key to curing smallpox was 'to be found in improved sanitary arrangements'.¹⁰ Albertus Cragoe was not content to let this letter stand alone. Shortly before he was due to have his day in court, he mailed a letter to his fellow Truro Guardians, informing them that he had been made aware that a six-month-old child named William Barkla had died in St Agnes and that his parents believed the cause of his death to have been vaccination.¹¹ Thus, Albertus Cragoe was positioning himself as a defender of the poor; those whose apparent ignorance had initially led pro-vaccinationists to call for their government protection were now perceived to be in need of protection against the very same government that now forced

⁷ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 24 December 1880.

⁸ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 17 December 1880.

⁹ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 17 December 1880.

¹⁰ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 17 December 1880.

¹¹ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 24 December 1880.

them to submit to an apparently dangerous and unnecessary procedure. In assuming the role of the 'protector of the poor' through his fervent anti-vaccination campaign, Albertus Cragoe was subverting the more mainstream understandings of anti-vaccinationism. As Durbach argues in *Bodily Matters*; 'for the men involved in the anti-vaccination cause, their protest was part of much larger working-class campaigns for political rights'.¹² For the Cragoes, as firmly middle-class individuals, the anti-vaccination movement was less an extension of the growing working-class political movement, and more a result of middle-class benevolence and philanthropy. Whether the brothers truly believed they were fighting to protect the lower-classes or whether they were simply hijacking the rhetoric to add legitimacy to their own cause remains to be seen. However, regardless of the reasoning behind their attitudes, the Cragoe brothers certainly did not fit the mould that was outlined by Durbach.

Instead, the Cragoe brothers fit more easily into another of Durbach's categories, that of the middle-class liberal. Both Thomas and Albertus were active members of the Liberal Party and campaigned for Cornish Liberal politicians to take up the anti-vaccinationist cause. In April 1884, both brothers attended a meeting of the Liberal Committee at Redruth. One of the brothers, it is unclear which, took the opportunity to challenge the members of the Committee on their apparent support for vaccination. He rose to address the room 'in the interest of constitutional rights and in the name of civil liberties', proclaiming his desire to have his anti-vaccinationist convictions acknowledged by his fellow liberals:

Vaccination was filthy disease; what the people wanted was sanitation. Important measures of hygiene; rather than vaccination. They wanted the dark slums and blind alleys of their big towns cleaned up and their people supplied with better water, better board, and with the means of living together in a more cleanly way ... He was sure they must all believe that their members had expressed their views from their inmost conviction; but, if they had their convictions, was there to be no room for his (the speaker's) convictions? (Applause).¹³

In this statement, the unidentified Cragoe aligns himself, and his brother, with the growing movement of disillusioned liberals that were seeking to redirect the Liberal Party. Of particular concern for individuals such as the Cragoes, was the fact that the Liberal Party had 'sustained and strengthened' the hated 1867 Act that had made repeat prosecutions for the same offence possible, a move that many anti-vaccinationists believed had amounted to nothing more than unjustified persecution.¹⁴ Disillusioned with the direction that the Liberal Party was taking, the Cragoes were part of a nationwide movement to return the Party to its original values of personal liberty and individual rights. For anti-vaccinationists, no politician could truly call themselves a Liberal if they refused to fight for the repeal of the Vaccination Act.

¹² Durbach, *Bodily Matters*, 58.

¹³ Cornishman, 3 April 1884.

¹⁴ Durbach, *Bodily Matters*, 85.

Although the Truro Guardians dismissed Albertus Cragoe's letter regarding the death of young William Barkla as nothing more than 'another anti-vaccination letter', the medical authorities were keen to prevent such a rumour from spreading any further.¹⁵ William Whitworth, the physician who had attended the infant at the time of his death, wrote to the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* to dismiss any allegation that vaccination had caused the death of the child. His explanation for the death read as follows:

There was an epidemic of scarlet fever in the village where this family resides. An elder child of the Barklas caught it and when the baby was vaccinated this child was still suffering from scarlatina nephritis. It was a very unwise proceeding, but done through ignorance of the law by which vaccination can be postponed, that the parents had the child vaccinated whilst the contagion of scarlet fever was still prevalent in the house. The unhappy result was this: - During the period the vaccine vesicles were maturing the child contracted scarlet fever, which produced such debility that phlegmonous inflammation and abscesses occurred around the vesicles, and, extending to the arm-pit and body, the child died.¹⁶

Thus, according to Whitworth, vaccination alone had not killed William Barkla; it was simply a contributing factor. Rather, it was contended that the ignorance of the child's parents had essentially killed him, as they insisted on vaccinating while their older child still suffered from scarlet fever, leading to the fatal infection of the baby. Albertus Cragoe refuted Whitworth's argument, stating that the Barklas had been threatened with prosecution by the vaccination officer and so were forced to have their son vaccinated while their older child was sick. Once again, Cragoe adopted the role of the defender of the poor, arguing that 'the postponement of [vaccination] is not easy to cottagers'.¹⁷ It was clear to Albertus Cragoe that vaccination was to blame for the death of William Barkla; 'In all human probability if that child, William Francis Barkla, had not been vaccinated he would have been alive to day; as it is, he has, by a miserable death, met with an untimely grave'.¹⁸ Indeed, Albertus was far from alone in this belief. A letter in support of his claims was published by the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* from a supporter named B. Hooper in Trevallas Downs, St Agnes. Hooper argued that his child had been left horrendously ill following vaccination:

My own child, some three months ago, was vaccinated; and for perhaps 14 days the case apparently appeared favourable. But afterwards it rose, and the child's arm became so inflamed that I at once called the attention of the doctor to it ... the child continued to grow worse, until its arm, face, and head became a perfect mass of wounds, issuing matter continually, and causing the child, for about two months to undergo the most excruciating agony, and even now it is suffering from its horrifying effects.¹⁹

Certainly, adverse reactions to the vaccination procedure were well-documented in medical literature, as is evidenced by [Figures 4, 5 and 6](#). These cases were likely due to the nature of the procedure, involving several deep cuts to a child's arm and, with little to no extant knowledge of

¹⁵ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 24 December 1880.

¹⁶ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 7 January 1881.

¹⁷ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 7 January 1881.

¹⁸ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 7 January 1881.

¹⁹ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 7 January 1881.

germ theory, children were dangerously exposed to infection through their open wounds. Indeed, even the vaccine matter could cause an infection, given that it had often passed through the bloodstreams of countless children, picking up any number of infectious materials along the way. The suffering that Hooper describes his child going through was likely the result of such an infection, leading to septicaemia. This was always a risk for children living in areas like St Agnes, a deprived and impoverished part of the Truro district where children were often living in filthy conditions. According to Durbach, 'this invasive, insanitary, and sometimes disfiguring procedure' was particularly dangerous for working-class children as 'the[ir] relatively poor nutrition ... made them more vulnerable to adverse reactions'.²⁰ In addition to this, blood diseases were readily passed between children through the arm to arm method and, even those doctors who attempted to screen their vaccinifers – the individuals from which the vaccine matter was taken - could not hope to eradicate the risk as some diseases were either symptomless or did not present any external signs on the child's body. In July 1881, Dr Robert Cory, head of the Local Government Board's calf vaccine station, attempted to prove, through self-experimentation, that arm-to-arm vaccination could not pass syphilis from an infected child to a healthy one, given that the transmission of syphilis between children was a major concern for anti-vaccinationists. Cory had performed vaccination experiments upon himself several times before and this time he took 'blood-free lymph from a vaccination vesicle of an 84-day-old female infant'.²¹ The girl had exhibited symptoms of congenital syphilis within ten days of her birth and Cory was confident that, if the lymph did not contain blood, he could not contract syphilis from the procedure. Within 20 days of his experiment, Cory was diagnosed with syphilis. Authorities, however, were not entirely convinced that Cory had contracted syphilis through the procedure alone and, as a result, continued to promote the arm-to-arm method.

²⁰ Durbach, *Bodily Matters*, 3.

²¹ Philip Mortimer, 'Robert Cory and the Vaccine Syphilis Controversy: A Forgotten Hero?', *The Lancet*, vol. 367, no. 9516, 2006, 1113.

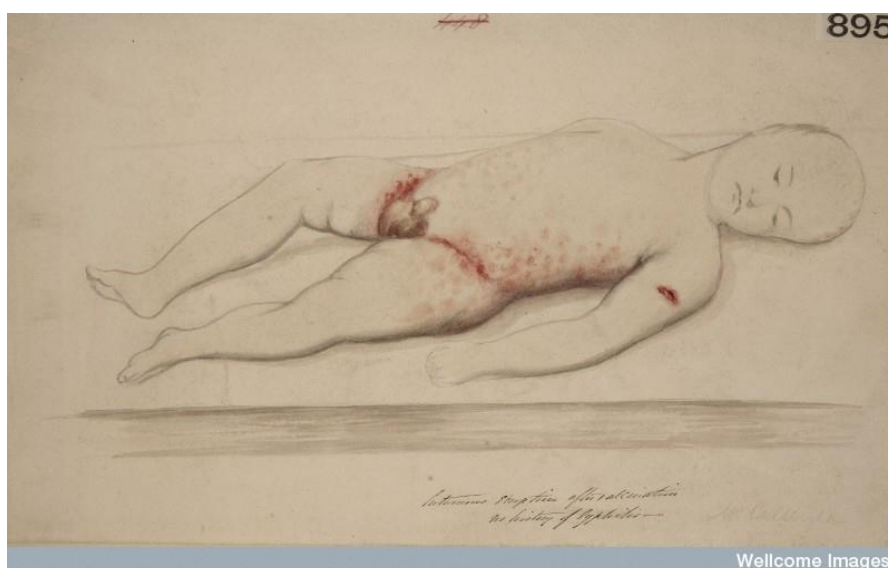
Figure 4: Watercolour drawing of a case of idiopathic gangrene, occurring on the back of a child after vaccination. Condition could also possibly be varicella gangrenosa. Thomas Godart, January 1884. St Bartholomew's Hospital Archives and Museum, Wellcome Images.



Figure 5: Watercolour drawing of an eruption which appeared on the arm of a child after vaccination. Thomas Godart, 24 March 1884/1885. St Bartholomew's Hospital Archives and Museum, Wellcome Images.



Figure 6: Watercolour drawing of a male child showing a cutaneous eruption (vaccinia?), occurring after vaccination. No history of syphilis. Thomas Godart, 1862-1875. St Bartholomew's Hospital Archives and Museum, Wellcome Images.



The above figures from the St Bartholomew's Hospital collection indicate that terrible reactions to vaccination were well documented, even if the caption of one, indicating 'idiopathic gangrene' shows that doctors were yet to truly understand the actual causative factor. The controversy surrounding the apparent case of vaccine-related blood poisoning in the St Agnes district enticed another outspoken Cornish anti-vaccinationist to enter the debate in the public press. In early 1881, letters appeared in two Cornish newspapers, authored by a photographer from Falmouth by the name of Charles Truscott. Unlike the Cragoe brothers, Truscott had no apparent personal reason to become so passionately involved in the vaccination debate in the early 1880s. The Cragoe brothers both had growing families and their young children were likely to be directly impacted by compulsory vaccination. Truscott, on the other hand, was already in his 60s at the time his letters were published. He and his wife, Susanna, had seven children, all born between 1850 and 1865, making his youngest child, William George, at least 15 years old when his father entered the vaccination debate. Crucially, no letters predating the 1881 output have been found that can be attributed to Charles Truscott, indicating that he was either a recent convert to the anti-vaccination movement, or that he had, at the very least, remained silent about his opinions until the Cragoe brothers emerged into the spotlight as potential martyrs for the anti-vaccination cause.

On 10 February 1881, the *Cornishman* published a letter from Truscott, clearly outlining his support for the Cragoes. In this letter, Truscott congratulated the brothers 'for their manliness in the stand they have taken' and, employed the old Cornish motto 'One and All' to urge others throughout the county to do the same: 'I say to one and all – stand up and protect your children from this disease-producing curse'.²² It was not only his support for the Cragoe brothers that makes Charles Truscott stand out in the vaccination debate. In the month before the *Cornishman* letter was published, two other letters appeared in the *Cornubian*, a newspaper published in Redruth and encompassing the

²² *Cornishman*, 10 February 1881.

broader western mining district of the county. Truscott's decision to send his letters to this newspaper is an important one as the *Cornubian* occupied a unique position in the wider Cornish press; its editors, contributors and correspondents were often openly supportive of the anti-vaccinationist sentiment that was published in its columns. Unlike other newspapers, such as the *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, which often published disclaimers alongside anti-vaccinationist contributions, or the *West Briton*, which openly criticised the movement, the *Cornubian* not only welcomed anti-vaccinationists into the fold, it published numerous editorials, columns, and notes in support of their arguments. Truscott's first *Cornubian* letter, published on 14 January, also praises one of the Cragoe brothers (it is not specified which, but is likely to be Albertus) for his 'manly courage' in bringing the suspected case of vaccination poisoning in St Agnes to the attention of the public.²³ Further to this, Truscott goes on to criticise medical professionals who questioned the testimony of the child's parents and neighbours. Referring specifically to a medical man from Somerset who entered into the debate through a Devonian newspaper, Truscott says:

On what authority does [the medical professional] question their statements? It appears that they were all living witnesses of certain facts which they have stated. If their united testimony is of no weight, what in the name of common sense can be the use of testimony coming from one living fifty or more miles away who never saw the case? He says the statement of the mere belief of persons is not sufficient to convince him of the cause of death. Well that may be very probable; but when he goes before a jury, at a coroner's inquest for instance, and tells the coroner that from certain appearances he believes so and so was the cause of death, what would he say if the coroner laughed at him and said we must have something more than your belief.²⁴

Here is evidence of Charles Truscott's sincere belief that the opinions of parents and other untrained observers should hold the same weight, if not more, than that of an actual trained medical professional. This may seem like a radical notion, but Truscott is a product of his environment. As has already been demonstrated, Cornish society, as a whole, harboured a deep suspicion towards scientific medicine and those individuals who practised it. If this was not the case, then people like the 'French Doctor' and other witchdoctors and mystic healers would not have held the positions of trust and authority that they did. Indeed, Truscott went on to question whether a practising doctor could truly profess to hold any sort of higher knowledge on the subject of disease and medicine than any other citizen, stating: 'Medical men claim theirs to be a scientific profession; if therefore medical men cannot demonstrate scientifically the cause of disease, how can they claim the credit of being able to cure that disease on scientific laws and principles?'.²⁵

Charles Truscott certainly believed that he knew the exact cause of smallpox and other similar diseases. In his second *Cornubian* letter, published two weeks later, Truscott outlines his theory of disease transmission:

²³ *Cornubian*, 14 January 1881.

²⁴ *Cornubian*, 14 January 1881.

²⁵ *Cornubian*, 14 January 1881.

Small Pox is a skin eruption produced by Nature's efforts to eliminate a quantity of pus matter which has been in part borne with all of us whose parents have been inoculated and lived upon improper food. It has also been accumulated in part by disobedience to God's law of health, until the system becomes so surcharged with this pus matter that the first favourable condition (such as an epidemic state of the atmosphere) calls it forth, or sets it all into a state of ferment; and all who are sufficiently charged with this predisposition so as to cast out the eruption of variole, are said to be attacked with "small pox." In this we see that Nature seeks to rid herself of accumulated disease and dirt, by setting up a fermentation of the blood, and throwing the additional pus matter thus engendered by the atmosphere of the blood, and throwing the additional pent up matter, through the pores of the skin, forming pouches or pustules.²⁶

This extract shows that the 'latent seed' theory, the idea that people are born with various diseases inside that will periodically erupt from within if they are not good, clean, moral citizens, was central to Truscott's understanding of disease. Although this is an archaic understanding of the nature of disease, the next extract reveals the permeability of theories of disease held by everyday individuals such as Truscott. In contrast to the archaic 'latent seed' theory, Truscott follows on with a proto-germ theory. The old world and the new were clashing and mixing and forming complex ideas in the minds of the general population, as Truscott shows: 'this pus matter consists of innumerable minute living animal organisms, having enormous powers of reproducing their kind, in thin or poor blood'.²⁷

When new theories of disease transmission are proposed by scientists, some of these fundamentals trickle down to the general public – but older ideas are not replaced. Oftentimes they sit side by side, creating an intricate patchwork. Sheaff also notes this phenomenon in the broader context of healthcare in Cornwall, arguing that so-called 'modern' medical approaches overlay traditional practices, rather than extinguish them outright.²⁸ However, this is not always as benign as it may initially seem. From this point, Truscott's theory of disease transmission becomes more sinister as he indicates his staunch belief that doctors and other medical professionals had long been inflating the severity of smallpox, exaggerating symptoms and death statistics to force the population to accept vaccination as not only necessary, but essential:

It is a remarkable fact which many have no doubt observed, that every one who has passed successfully through an attack of small pox becomes wonderfully improved in general health afterwards as if they had a new lease of their lives given them. Their increased vitality is very remarkable, proving that the eruption has cleared them of an incubus they were infinitely better without ... Consequently, in this light, small pox should be regarded as a blessing, and not as a curse, as is generally the case. If people would thoroughly understand the lesson which small pox teaches, they would then seek to apply a purely natural and scientific mode of treating themselves without the intervention of doctors, and thus come out of the furnace [sic] unscathed and unspotted, feeling all the better for their cleansing; and having learned a salutary lesson as to the future, how to live in harmony with God's laws.²⁹

²⁶ *Cornubian*, 28 January 1881.

²⁷ *Cornubian*, 28 January 1881.

²⁸ Sheaff, 'A Century of Centralization', 142.

²⁹ *Cornubian*, 28 January 1881.

For Truscott, smallpox was not so much a medical issue as it was a moral caution, the result of straying too far from God's teachings. Thomas Cragoe appeared to have a similar interpretation of the moral nature of the anti-vaccination movement to his counterpart in Falmouth. In a letter to the *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, published on 25 February 1881, Cragoe wrote:

Character must be determined by general tenour of conduct ... and he who, whilst holding the law of the State in great respect, yet feels impelled to repudiate what he deems, from experience and from profound reflection, to be an evil practice ... is, I boldly assert, a better man and safer citizen, than the grovelling creature who would betray his conviction and his conscience, and a living principle, at the foot of a law because it is written.³⁰

The language employed by Truscott and Cragoe also reveals the extent to which the vaccination debate was moving away from traditional understandings of the relationship between anti-vaccinationist thought and gender. Where previously, the anti-vaccinationist had been perceived negatively as an 'ignorant mother', a poor and misguided woman who needed to be legislated against for the protection of her children, the figure of the anti-vaccinationist as a 'conscientious father' was swiftly gaining momentum amongst the opponents of the procedure themselves. Truscott praised the Cragoes for being 'manly' in their fight against vaccination, and he was far from the only individual to employ this terminology. As Durbach notes, 'male anti-vaccinators constantly affirmed their masculinity, claiming to be "Manly" men'.³¹ Anti-vaccinationist thought was hereby inextricably intertwined with the role of the father in the family unit; a true father, a 'conscientious father', would suffer any punishment brought upon him in order to protect his children from harm. The perception of the anti-vaccinationist as a 'conscientious father' also drew upon the Christian notion that the father, as the head of the family, was answerable only to God for any measures that he took to protect his children. As George Newman wrote to the *Gloucester Citizen* in September 1883, 'nobody supposes there are any vaccinators in Heaven', a clear reflection of the belief that men who refused to vaccinate their children would be rewarded by God for the stand they had taken to protect their children.³² Here was a clear differentiation between the laws of the State and the laws of God. John Lewis, the founder of the department store, claimed that 'no rational man can argue that the State has a right to compel me, as a father, to jeopardize the health and lives of my children', whilst an anonymous correspondent to the *Western Times* argued that a father was bound to 'safeguard at all hazards that health which the Divine beneficence has endowed his child'.³³

Under this new interpretation of the anti-vaccinationist as the 'conscientious father', women were believed to play a subordinate role. Although the health and wellbeing of children traditionally fell within the domestic sphere of life, and thus under the responsibility of the mother, Durbach argues

³⁰ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 25 February 1881.

³¹ Durbach, *Bodily Matters*, 58.

³² *Gloucester Citizen*, 25 September 1883.

³³ *North Devon Journal*, 5 January 1888; *Western Times*, 25 April 1892.

that the politicisation of the vaccination debate had created an environment into which men dictated to their wives whether or not the procedure would be performed upon their children:

An 1880 cautionary tale that first appeared in the *Weekly Times* ... advised mothers to yield to their husbands' desires regarding non-vaccination of children. Here the wife of a respectable South London working man vaccinated her child against her husband's wishes while he was away. The child fell sick and died. "Joe" eventually forgave his wife after the funeral, but she was haunted by her actions, for she knew "how much of the hope and promise of his manhood lay buried in the tiny grave".³⁴

Whilst anti-vaccinationist men asserted that the protection of their family from the imposition of the state was part of their 'manly' duty, many pro-vaccinationists retained a belief that women remained responsible for the high number of unvaccinated children, not because they were openly anti-vaccinationist, but because they were too sensitive to understand that such a painful procedure would actually benefit their child. According to Francis T. Bond, the medical officer of health for Gloucester and prominent pro-vaccinationist, the 'anti-vaccinationist' was definitely male, but the mother who resisted the vaccination of her child did so because 'it was mandated within the first three months of life, when babies still had "fair" and "unspotted skin" and were doted on and "lavished" with "sympathy"'.³⁵ The solution to this problem, according to Bond, was to make vaccination compulsory only for children upon reaching school age, reasoning that their mothers would be less attached to the idea of preserving the purity of their child's body by the time they were old enough to attend school. This was based upon a gross misreading of the role that women played in the anti-vaccination movement, one which borrowed heavily from the earlier notion that government legislation was all that was required to change the minds of the 'ignorant mother'.

As Durbach reveals, the anti-vaccination campaign attracted both men and women, albeit through the assignment of separate, but complementary, roles designed to appeal to 'Victorian ideals of masculinity and femininity'.³⁶ Whilst Bond correctly identified the outspoken, political anti-vaccinationist as being a role adopted predominately by men (with a few notable exceptions such as Mary Hume-Rothery), women were expected to be as fervently opposed to vaccination as their male counterparts as it was believed that the procedure ran contrary to a mother's natural instincts to protect her child from harm. Bond erroneously believed that this attachment to a child could be overcome by simply waiting until the child was older, but for the female anti-vaccinationist, the desire to protect a child from the horrors of vaccination did not diminish with age. Men were expected to oppose vaccination in the public sphere, attacking the political and medical bodies that enforced the procedure on a national level. Women, however, were expected to oppose the procedure within their own home, refusing to allow the vaccinator access to their children and preserving the sanctity of the family home from the intrusion of the State. This state of affairs closely resembles earlier gender-enforced roles in the sanitary reform movement, as Alison

³⁴ Durbach, *Bodily Matters*, 58.

³⁵ Durbach, *Bodily Matters*, 55.

³⁶ Durbach, *Bodily Matters*, 55.

Bashford indicates, as women were expected to be responsible for 'inside the house ... which included the bodies of the house-dwellers'.³⁷ There was, however, a domestic dimension to the role of the 'conscientious father'. Anti-vaccinationist fathers often promoted themselves as 'emotional and selfless', men who were wholeheartedly devoted to their children.³⁸ This was certainly the way in which the Cragoe brothers presented themselves. Their 'manly' duty may have been to attack the State and challenge its authority to enforce compulsory vaccination, but their 'fatherly' duty was to care for their children and keep them safe from harm. Thomas Cragoe's assertion that he was a 'better man' than any pro-vaccinationist could ever be reflects his understanding of the role that his anti-vaccinationist beliefs played in establishing himself as a good father and husband.

Within organised anti-vaccinationist societies, women too could engage on a political level, albeit in a slightly different way to their male counterparts. Durbach contends that these societies provided an environment within which women could flourish politically, whilst maintaining their femininity. Anti-vaccinationist propaganda appealed to this femininity, featuring 'images of a decidedly domestic, emotional and instinctual femininity' that were designed to appeal to the anti-vaccinationist mother. A great deal of emphasis was placed upon the concept of the 'maternal instinct':

Women attacked the notion that a doctor could evaluate the health or sickness of their children better than they could. Mothers could tell which children were healthy and which were not, and which had been corrupted by vaccine "poison" ... for no "doctor watches over the life and health of any person, like a mother over her child".³⁹

Women expressed their anti-vaccinationist views both overtly and covertly. 'Mother's marches' were a popular tactic for the organised societies, often in reaction to reports that a child had been killed by vaccination. However, anti-vaccinationist mothers often found less noticeable ways to avoid having their children vaccinated. Providing false addresses or falsifying birth records were common ways in which women subverted attempts by authorities to enforce the Vaccination Act.⁴⁰ These actions were particularly common amongst working-class mothers and hark back to the subversive actions of the so-called 'ignorant mothers' of the earlier phase who would express their opposition to the vaccination procedure by having their children inoculated instead. Vaccination registers and report books have unfortunately not survived for Cornwall and it is, therefore, impossible to gauge how often women in the county employed these kinds of measures to avoid the vaccination of their children. Without these records, women are largely invisible in the history of Cornish anti-vaccinationism as the prominent anti-vaccinationists were men, particularly William Wallace Walker as well as Thomas and Albertus Cragoe. The latter two men had a substantial

³⁷ Alison Bashford, *Purity and Pollution: Gender, Embodiment and Victorian Medicine*, MacMillan Press, Basingstoke, 1998, 16.

³⁸ Durbach, *Bodily Matters*, 59.

³⁹ Durbach, *Bodily Matters*, 61.

⁴⁰ Durbach, *Bodily Matters*, 66.

public platform upon which to air their views on the procedure, yet neither of them ever made mention of the opinions or beliefs of their wives. As ‘manly’ men, defending their families from the incursion of state-enforced medicine, the Cragoes fit well within the mould established by Francis T. Bond. However, the roles that women did play in the anti-vaccination movement, as outlined by Durbach, are conspicuously absent from the Cornish story. There are no reports of women’s marches, no appeals made directly to mothers to protect their children from the vaccinator’s lancet, no prominent female anti-vaccinationists invoking the values of ‘femininity’ and promoting the importance of ‘maternal instincts’. It is likely that Cornish anti-vaccinationist women were restricted to the domestic sphere largely because of the absence of any organised society within which they could express their beliefs politically. Cornish women, instead, acted covertly, subverting attempts to have their children vaccinated.

Despite his determined assertions that he and his brother were ‘better [men] and safer citizen[s]’, Thomas Cragoe once again found himself facing the magistrates at the West Powder petty sessions in February 1881. Alongside his brother, Thomas was charged with not complying with the vaccination orders that had been issued in December. They had, between them, ignored all three orders to have their children – Alfred, Percy, and Alberta – vaccinated and, as such faced the full penalty of 20s in each case, as the magistrates had stated at their previous appearance. As before, the brothers were represented in the proceedings by their lawyer, Dobell, who again contended that the law had not been obeyed due to conscientious objection. Unlike the case in December, however, Dobell was allowed to present evidence to the magistrates that the Cragoes believed could prove their right to go unpunished or, at the very least, incur a minimal fine. It was reported that Dobell ‘read an extract from a newspaper, in which it was reported that no less than 100 cases were brought before the Bedford magistrates for refusing to have their children vaccinated, and a fine of 6d in each case was imposed’.⁴¹ Marrack, appearing once again as prosecutor, indicated that the Guardians intended to press for the full penalty to be imposed in each case. It was determined by the magistrates that the Cragoe brothers were not eligible for a mitigation of their fines, as ‘the Bench could only mitigate the penalty for people who were not in a position to pay a heavy one ... Messrs. Cragoe occupied good positions, and were well able to pay the full penalty’.⁴² Each case thus resulted in a full penalty of 20s; Thomas fined 20s (£1), and Albertus 40s (£2).

The words of one of the magistrates at West Powder in February 1881 rankled with Thomas Cragoe, who was apparently keen to see his reputation amongst the public remain untarnished. According to the *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, the Chairman of the Bench, T.R. Polwhele, had indicated that he believed that ‘Messrs Cragoe were in a good position, and able to set a better example’.⁴³

⁴¹ *Cornish Telegraph*, 3 February 1881.

⁴² *Cornish Telegraph*, 3 February 1881.

⁴³ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 4 February 1881.

Thomas took exception to this statement, writing to the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* to both complain about his treatment before the Bench at West Powder, and to provide some explanation of his reasoning. In his letter, Thomas states:

When from the Bench falls a remark that I, from my privileges, should have set a better example, it is then incumbent on me to explain that I profoundly feel that I am acting from the best of motives, and considering what has come to my knowledge, pursuing the only justifiable course open to me.⁴⁴

Thomas Cragoe's concern over protecting his reputation amongst the broader public stems from his obvious desire to spread his anti-vaccination message to the masses. Across England, rural and metropolitan communities were giving rise to local branches of major anti-vaccination leagues and the Cragoes intended to be at the forefront of any attempt to establish such a branch in Cornwall. In January 1881, the Cragoes had organised for a lecture, supported by the Anti-Vaccination League, to be delivered in the Truro Concert Hall by Amos Booth, one of the famed 'vaccine martyrs' from Leicester who had been imprisoned for their objections to the procedure and had, as a result, made Leicester the symbolic heartland of the anti-vaccination movement in England. However, the lecture was not exactly the success that the Cragoe brothers had intended, with the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* reporting that 'there was a very small attendance, less than fifty people assembling'. The low turnout was blamed on the combination of recent snowfall, an apparent disinterest amongst the people and the 'high prices charged for admittance'.⁴⁵ Whatever the reason may have been for the poor attendance, the lecture went on regardless, and the evening was deemed to have been a success. Despite this, the Cragoes fell short of their apparent goal to establish a branch of the League in their hometown. In fact, Cornwall would not be home to a formal branch of any anti-vaccination association until 1902, when the Penryn and District Anti-Vaccination League was founded under the leadership of R. S. Hosken. This League, however, was apparently of little consequence as no records of its existence beyond its foundation are to be found in the historical record.

Albertus Cragoe made another attempt to generate greater involvement in the broader anti-vaccination movement amongst the Cornish population, creating a petition to be circulated throughout Truro. In a letter to the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* at the beginning of April 1881, Cragoe outlined his actions, claiming that he had 'been collecting signatures to form a petition to Parliament for the repeal of the compulsory Vaccination Acts'.⁴⁶ Despite his claim that he was 'well pleased with the result', it is clear that Cragoe's attempts once again fell far short of the mark; 'out of 73 [people] asked 9 only have refused to sign, and curious enough five of the nine have no children'.⁴⁷ By his own admission then, Albertus Cragoe's petition only had 64 signatures, not nearly enough to force Parliament to overthrow a law that had been in existence in one form or another for more than

⁴⁴ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 11 February 1881.

⁴⁵ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 21 January 1881.

⁴⁶ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 1 April 1881.

⁴⁷ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 1 April 1881.

four decades. If the attempts of the Cragoes in 1881 to bring down the Vaccination Act or to even establish a League branch in Truro seem slightly comical in their outcomes, the conviction of the brothers to resist the law within their own families was staunch. Following their February convictions for disobeying vaccination orders, 1881 became a busy year for the Cragoes on the legal front. Albertus faced the magistrates twice more before the end of the year, charged in April with not vaccinating his youngest child, William, and in November with continuing to resist the vaccination of all three of his children.⁴⁸ For his part, Thomas would appear once more during 1881, charged alongside his brother in the West Powder petty sessions of November, this time for the non-vaccination of just one of his children, although the identity of the child is not made clear.⁴⁹ For his three appearances before the magistrates for the year, Albertus faced fines totalling £6 (not including court costs), and Thomas' two appearances incurred penalties totalling £3.

The Cragoes certainly were not going to let these repeat prosecutions defeat them. If anything, the press attention that the prosecutions brought gave the brothers a whole new platform from which to spread their message further. At the end of 1881, the Cragoes found themselves with an audience for their increasingly hostile anti-vaccinationist views. Not every reader was impressed by them, however. In September, an anonymous correspondent known simply as 'A Reader' critiqued the Cragoes in the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* stating, 'it appears clear to my mind that the Messrs Cragoe wish to be made martyrs of, and would like the magistrates to commit them to prison for violating the law concerning vaccination'.⁵⁰ This was, of course, exactly what at least one of the Cragoe brothers was searching for. In his response to 'A Reader', Thomas Cragoe began by mocking his critic; "It appears clear to my mind" that your correspondent upon this subject in last week's paper wants educating in manners, morals, and medicine', claiming that 'A Reader' had no right to publish his opinion as if, by some inherent right bestowed upon him by a higher power, only Cragoe himself had a right to enter his own opinion into the public debate.⁵¹ However, it is much later in his letter that the most telling aspect of Cragoe's personal investment in the vaccination debate appears. In response to the previously-noted claim that the Cragoe brothers were searching for martyrdom, Thomas replied: 'No! Messrs Cragoe do not court martyrdom, and yet it may come to pass, after all, that they *are of the stuff that martyrs are made*'.⁵² Whilst this would certainly be a glowing review if it had come from a fellow anti-vaccinationist, it seems overtly egotistical coming from Thomas himself. Why, though, would two comfortably middle-class men from Cornwall want to court martyrdom in such a way? It could be argued that the so-called 'vaccine martyrs' were much more effective at getting their message across than the major anti-vaccination leagues could ever hope to be through their pamphlets and publications. This was certainly the case in other regional areas, outside the influence of major metropolitan areas. In 1891, William Tebb described the

⁴⁸ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 1 April 1881; *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 4 November 1881.

⁴⁹ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 4 April 1881

⁵⁰ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 30 September 1881

⁵¹ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 7 October 1881.

⁵² *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 7 October 1881.

impact that vaccine martyrs had on the promulgation of anti-vaccinationist sentiment throughout England. He argued, in the *Western Daily Press*, that fine, upstanding English citizens, often from very good family backgrounds, were being subjected to terrible experiences in gaols across the nation, with their only crime being their refusal to vaccinate. In his letter, Tebb presents some examples of this phenomenon:

Alfred Stansfield, of Middleton, described a short time ago how he was incarcerated in a gloomy cell with drunkards and notorious criminals, kept on a prison diet, and compelled to wear prison clothes. Mrs Walton, of Appleby, a most intelligent lady, who holds the diploma of the Edinburgh Maternity Hospital ... was stripped naked and subjected to every indignity ... Joseph Stavely, of Bingley, on a similar charge, was sentenced to 14 days' hard labour, his hair and beard were cropped while he was in a nude state; he was kept to oakum picking ten hours daily, his food being chiefly bread and water.⁵³

The experiences of the vaccine martyrs that Tebb described were meant to shock the reader, most likely a middle class individual themselves. As Tebb argues, these were not common criminals; they were well-educated and respectable citizens who were subjected to some of the most degrading punishments possible in the English penal system, short of actual physical harm. The 'vaccine martyr' was a noble and heroic figure to those who shared such beliefs.⁵⁴ Individuals like Tebb, and the organisations that they represented, found that such stories of the suffering of vaccine martyrs were often more effective in gaining the attention of the general public than other forms of propaganda. Even if they were unsympathetic to the anti-vaccinationist arguments the leagues and societies were putting forward, many within the general public would see the treatment of these people, individuals just like them, and agree that the punishment didn't seem to fit the crime. Albertus Cragoe was keen to show that these martyrs were but symbolic; they were individuals who chose to be subjected to the terrible conditions in the prisons and they could pay their own way out if they so desired. In a letter to the *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, also in response to the words of 'A Reader', Albertus argued that, although he and his brother did seek to become martyrs for their cause, they would never be committed to prison as 'A Reader' had suggested due to their wealth and position. Refusal to comply with the conditions of the Vaccination Act incurred fines, not prison sentences and it was only in cases where the fines remained unpaid (either through necessity or deliberate action) that an individual would be sentenced to serve time in a penal facility. Thus, while the vaccine martyrs of Tebb's later argument had the means to avoid prison sentences and had chosen not to, Albertus argued that 'with shame to our laws be it said, only the *very poor* are cast into prison for not complying with this foul compulsory Act'.⁵⁵ Durbach argues that it was, indeed, the working-classes that suffered the most through the infliction of the Vaccination Act as 'it was this population that the government deemed most likely to catch and

⁵³ *Western Daily Press*, 3 August 1891.

⁵⁴ Durbach, *Bodily Matters*, 103.

⁵⁵ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 7 October 1881.

spread disease and accused of being irresponsible parents'.⁵⁶ Even the fundamental mechanics of the Act seemed to be targeted to specifically punish the lower-classes as the wealthier members of society could easily afford to pay the fines inflicted upon them. The introduction of repeat penalties under the 1867 Act had resulted in a shift away from the prosecution of the Cornish working-classes and towards their middle-class counterparts. Prior to 1867, the majority of vaccination cases in Cornwall were brought against the lower-classes (fisherman, agricultural labourers, and mine workers). In the years that followed, the number of these individuals appearing in Cornish courts to face such cases began to dwindle and they were, in turn, replaced by the more well-to-do members of society (farmers, accountants, and schoolmasters). The lower classes were still being prosecuted but the vast majority of repeat prosecutions were being brought against their wealthier counterparts who could better afford to continually resist compulsory vaccination.⁵⁷

Although the brothers had been unable to establish a branch of an organised anti-vaccination society in Cornwall, this did not mean that they remained uninfluenced by such societies. In November 1881, several members of the Truro Board of Guardians reported receiving letters from their fellow Guardian, Albertus Cragoe, asking them to rethink their stance on prosecuting those with conscientious objections to vaccination. As has been seen, this was not an unusual event; the Guardians had described Albertus' previous correspondence regarding the death of William Barkla as just 'another anti-vaccination letter'.⁵⁸ His November 1881 correspondence, however, drew an amused response from the Board. The letters were described in the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* as having each been sent in 'an envelope bearing upon its face a representation of death operating as vaccinator, the child lying on its mother's lap, whilst the parent is prevented from interference by the law, here represented by a police constable'.⁵⁹ These envelopes were distributed widely throughout England; with anti-vaccinationists across the country bombarding their local representatives and Guardians with the macabre image. The Cragoe brothers continued to send such letters complaining of their treatment by the Truro Guardians throughout December, with their actions drawing the following responses from some of the Guardians:

Mr C BLAMEY proposed that that the Clerk reply to the letters in a legal manner. He thought a great many gentlemen liked to be notorious, and if they could not do it one way they would in another ... Mr BAWDEN always thought they wanted notoriety [sic], and now he felt convinced of it.⁶⁰

If the Cragoe brothers wanted notoriety through vaccine martyrdom, however, the Truro Guardians would never let them have it. Neither of the brothers was ever imprisoned for disobeying the Vaccination Act and, after the spate of letters attacking the Guardians for their actions, no further

⁵⁶ Durbach, *Bodily Matters*, 91-92.

⁵⁷ A list of all recorded prosecutions under the Vaccination Act in Cornwall can be found in [Appendix 1](#).

⁵⁸ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 24 December 1880.

⁵⁹ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 25 November 1881.

⁶⁰ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 23 December 1881.

prosecutions were brought against either of the brothers until 1885. Although this may seem like a victory for the Cragoes, it meant they never achieved their ultimate goal of sacrificing themselves publicly for the cause. With no obvious explanation, the brothers remained silent on the issue of vaccination throughout the entirety of 1882 and most of 1883, with no letters to the editor or opinion pieces published in any of the major Cornish newspapers. Only one letter, from Thomas, appeared in 1883 in the *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, urging the paper to keep its columns open to a continued debate regarding vaccination.⁶¹ In 1883, many prominent names in the broader anti-vaccination movement, including William Tebb and John Burns, turned to the Cornish newspapers for publication of their opinions, with Tebb praising the *Cornubian* for being one of the few outlets 'dealing impartially with vital questions relating to the public health'.⁶² Other anti-vaccinationists, too, would come to echo Tebb's comments as the Cornish press, on both sides of the political divide, remained open to the inclusion of letters opposing vaccination that were often rejected from other publications throughout the country. While the Cornish press was becoming popular with prominent anti-vaccinationists from some of the largest metropolitan areas of England, particularly from London, Manchester, and Leicester, the Cragoe brothers were notable by their absence. If the Truro Guardians hoped the brothers had faded into obscurity, however, they were gravely mistaken. At the end of 1884, the brothers would be thrust back into the forefront of the vaccination debate in Cornwall, in a way that even the most vehement pro-vaccinationists of the Truro Board of Guardians could never truly have wanted.

On 12 December 1884, the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* reported startling news; the first outbreak of smallpox in thirteen years had been reported in the Truro district. In an almost mocking tone, the report outlines the tragic story of the outbreak:

Strange to say the case occurred at the residence of a gentleman who has made himself notorious by his determined opposition to the Vaccination Act. I refer to Mr. Albertus Cragoe, of Penhellick, who with his brother, Mr. Thomas Cragoe, of Woodbury, have both been prosecuted for their persistent refusal to have their children vaccinated. The former gentleman has now to mourn the loss of one of his offspring who has succumbed to the deadly malady. The other children have been removed from the premises, and it is to be hoped have not caught the infection. I am told that the case can be traced to London.⁶³

By the end of 1884, Albertus and Emma Cragoe were parents to six children. Since the initial prosecutions for Percy, Alberta and William, they had added Thomas Stanley (1881), Harold Easdown (1883) and Arthur Douglas (1884) to their young family. It is not explained how the case was linked to London, but as Emma's family lived in the capital, it is likely that the virus was brought to the property by a visiting relative. Regardless of how it got there, smallpox claimed the life of the couple's eldest son, William, at just four years of age. According to his death certificate, William's death had not been an easy one. The official witness was listed as his father, Albertus, who could

⁶¹ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 8 June 1883.

⁶² *Cornubian*, 2 February 1883.

⁶³ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 12 December 1884.

only watch on as his young son suffered through confluent smallpox.⁶⁴ The confluent form of smallpox was severe and [Figure 7](#) demonstrates the damage that it could do to an unvaccinated individual. John D. Fisher, an American physician, published his observations of confluent smallpox in 1829, providing some insight into the kinds of symptoms young William Cragoe would have suffered before his death. According to Fisher, 'the invasion of confluent small pox is marked by the same general symptoms as that of the distinct variola ... the symptoms, however, are usually much more violent and succeed each other with great rapidity'.⁶⁵ Fisher's description reveals that confluent smallpox usually began with an intense fever, featuring a debilitating headache, back pain, swollen buboes in the loin, throat soreness, and stomach tenderness. In addition to this, the fever brought on nausea and vomiting more intense than in the distinct (also known as the discrete) form of smallpox and these symptoms would only increase in ferocity as the disease progressed. Breathing would then become more difficult, and some sufferers would be struck down with convulsions and delirium. Occasionally, these symptoms would kill the victim before the eruption of the pocks even began.

Once the eruption began, individuals with confluent smallpox would suffer from severe diarrhoea and the rash of pocks would rapidly spread across the body in just a few hours. The pocks that appeared were much closer together than in the distinct form and often clustered together so closely that they touched one another. Confluent smallpox affected the face more than any other area of the body, as is demonstrated in [Figure 7](#), and often also affected internal organs. After two days, Fisher stated, the pocks would group together, forming large vesicles which then spread out rapidly across the affected surface area; Fisher described this as an 'eruptive patch' that 'frequently resembles a broad and slightly distended blister'.⁶⁶ While this patch developed, the face continued to swell and pocks would develop on the eyelids, on the inside of the mouth and nose, and along the pharynx, larynx and trachea, as well as on the tongue.⁶⁷ This resulted in an additional irritation of the already sore throat and caused a severe and painful cough. Oftentimes, this also led to a total loss of speech. Although the fever that signalled the beginning of the illness often died off a little when the pocks appeared, it never really went away and could even become more violent as the illness progressed. After four or five days, the liquid in the pustules turned yellowish or brown, the swelling increased and the fever grew ever more intense. Fisher describes the effect the disease had on the face of the victim: 'by the seventh or eighth day, the eyelids become so puffed up, and the nose, cheeks and lips so tumid that all the regular features are lost and the whole face

⁶⁴ General Register Office, 1884, Dec quarter; Registration district of Truro, Sub-district of St Clement; Vol. 05, Page 103.

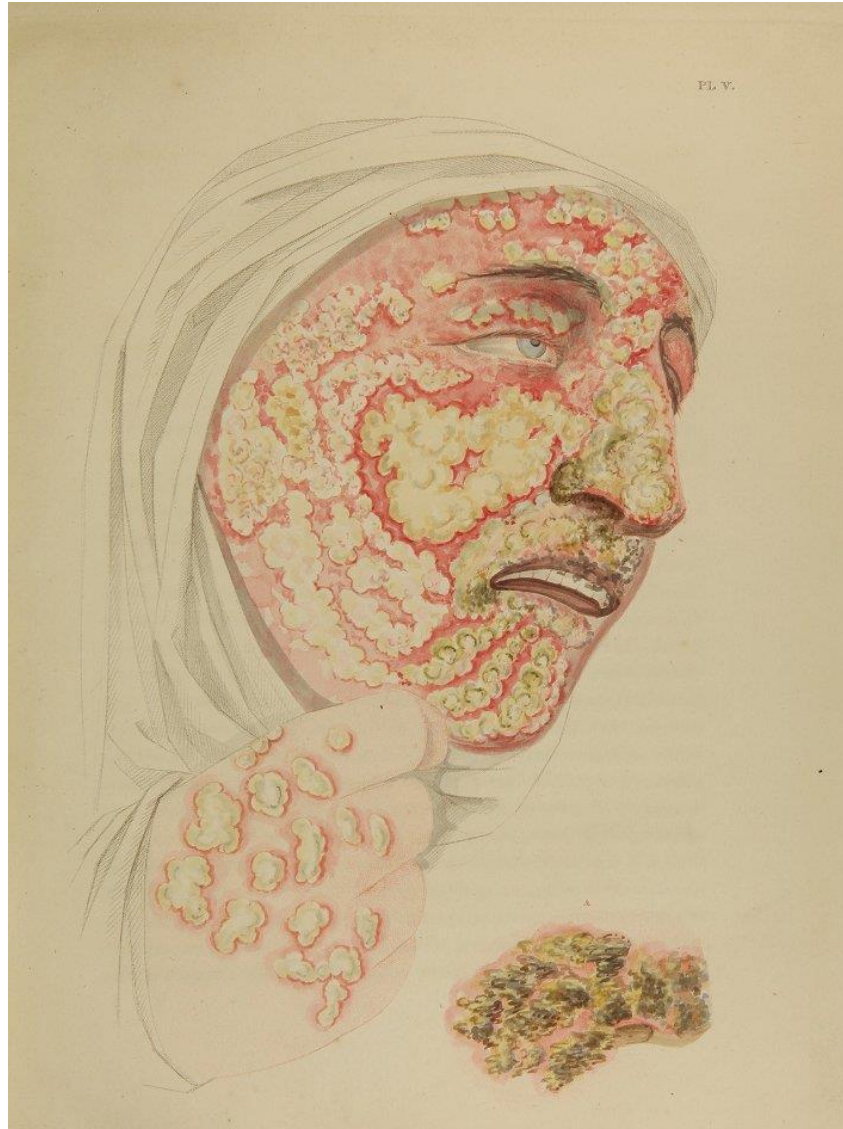
⁶⁵ John D Fisher, *Description of the distinct, confluent, and inoculated small pox, varioloid disease, cow pox, and chicken pox*, Wells and Lilly: Boston, 1829, 21.

⁶⁶ Fisher, *Description of the distinct, confluent, and inoculated small pox*, 23.

⁶⁷ George Gregory, 'Small-Pox' in John Forbes, Alexander Tweedie and John Connolly (eds), *The Cyclopædia of Practical Medicine*, vol. 3, 1834, Sherwood, Gilbert, and Piper, and Baldwin and Cradock, London, 739.

presents one misshapen and disgusting mass'.⁶⁸ The victim's eyes would become very sensitive and the eyelids would become stuck together, as if with glue, from constant secretions, rendering the sufferer blind, usually by the fifth day of infection.⁶⁹ The tongue would swell and fill the mouth, causing excessive salivation.

Figure 7: Confluent smallpox eruption (tenth day) on the face and hand of a 25 year old unvaccinated and uninoculated woman in the smallpox ward of La Pitié Hospital, Paris. She survived the illness after five weeks of suffering but left the hospital badly deformed as a result. From John D. Fisher, *Description of the distinct, confluent, and inoculated small pox, varioloid disease, cow pox, and chicken pox*, Wells and Lilly, Boston, 1829, Plate V.



If the patient survived until the eighth day, the eruption would die down, but their suffering would not end there. As the patches dried, they formed enormous scabs, sometimes resembling scales. As Fisher again describes, the scabs would continue to 'grow drier, harder and darker, and in the

⁶⁸ Fisher, *Description of the distinct, confluent, and inoculated small pox*, 24-25.

⁶⁹ Gregory, 'Small-Pox', 739.

course of a few days it separates from the skin beneath' in large sheets or flakes.⁷⁰ The sensation of the sheets of scabs separating from the skin caused great discomfort to the patient. When the scabs peeled away, the skin underneath was ulcerated and emitted a foul stench. Once the scabs started to separate, the fever and bodily swelling would die down but the excessive salivation continued to worsen, with the saliva becoming viscous, making it even harder for the sufferer to breathe; 'this is the period of the greatest danger, and the patient, at the time the saliva becomes viscid, frequently passes into a comatose state, and dies in a fit of apoplexy'.⁷¹ In his entry for the third volume of the *Cyclopædia of Practical Medicine*, published in 1834, George Gregory (himself later an opponent of vaccination) reveals more details of how death from confluent smallpox typically occurred, indicating that these fatal outcomes generally occurred when the throat became so inflamed that it narrowed, allowing the built-up viscous saliva and mucous to completely block the patient's airways, causing them to suffocate. Before death brought an end to their suffering, it was common to see patients in this end-stage of confluent smallpox descend into a 'low muttering delirium'.⁷² It is not known just how many of these symptoms young William Cragoe suffered but his death certificate reveals that he died fourteen days after his illness began.⁷³ This timeline indicates it is highly likely that the boy lived through the earliest fevers, the eruptions of the pocks, the formation of the scabs into large sheets which then peeled away from his face, and the end-stages of the disease when constant secretions from his infected salivary glands and leaking pustules along the inside of his mouth, nose and throat caused his already swollen and narrowed throat to become completely blocked, suffocating him to death after two weeks of constant suffering. It is clear that William's death involved a great deal of suffering that, perhaps, could have been avoided if he had been vaccinated.

Rumours as to the extent of the outbreak on Albertus Cragoe's property dominated discussions amongst local authorities. On 19 December, ten days after William's death, the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* reported that the Truro Guardians remained concerned as to the welfare of the five remaining children on the property at Penhellick. Interestingly, the clerk to the Board responded to queries about their vaccination status by stating 'that the children had been vaccinated by Dr. King since the outbreak' and that it was only Albertus' brother, Thomas, who continued in his refusal to vaccinate his children.⁷⁴ Neither of the brothers ever directly addressed the clerk's claims that the five other children were vaccinated after William's death, but, unlike Thomas, Albertus was never again charged with an offence under the Vaccination Act, even following the birth of his seventh child, Rowena Winifred, in 1888. The accuracy of the clerk's assertion regarding the apparent vaccination of the children at Penhellick was called into question by another Guardian, Mr Williams,

⁷⁰ Fisher, *Description of the distinct, confluent, and inoculated small pox*, 25-26.

⁷¹ Fisher, *Description of the distinct, confluent, and inoculated small pox*, 26.

⁷² Gregory, 'Small-Pox', 739.

⁷³ General Register Office, 1884, Dec quarter; Registration district of Truro, Sub-district of St Clement; Vol. 05, Page 103.

⁷⁴ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 19 December 1884.

who claimed that he was made aware that two other children on the property, and a servant, had contracted smallpox; 'this, however, Mr. Cragoe had denied but he (Mr. Williams) believed he had told a falsehood', an accusation that was met by cries of 'oh, oh!' from the other Guardians.⁷⁵ The town clerk added that he had heard, second-hand, from a medical officer that Albertus himself had been seen 'walking about the streets of Truro, and that he himself was not free from smallpox'.⁷⁶ Thus, Albertus became a sort of smallpox-ridden bogeyman to the Truro authorities, and he was subsequently blamed for a secondary outbreak of smallpox amongst the residents living near St Mary's Workhouse in Pydar Street, a link fervently denied by Thomas as having been 'evidently framed for sinister motives'.⁷⁷ In the immediate aftermath of William's death, it fell to Thomas to defend the family's reputation in the face of these wild rumours. He wrote a letter of complaint to the *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, forcing them to justify their motives for reporting William's death in such a disrespectful manner. In an editorial, it was explained that 'in our report of the fatal case of small-pox at Mr. Albertus Cragoe's, we did not suggest that either the outbreak or the result was the effect of the child not being vaccinated'.⁷⁸

Thomas, however, remained on the attack, and less than a month after the death of his nephew, he became entangled in a debate with an anonymous correspondent to the *Royal Cornwall Gazette*. William's death, it seems, only served to make Thomas more steadfast and aggressive in his anti-vaccinationist ideals. The letters sent by Thomas to various newspapers after December 1884 are simultaneously both increasingly defensive of his family's stance and more aggressive towards their opponents, with Thomas often making derogatory personal attacks towards anyone who dared challenge him on the issue. This approach swiftly brought him to the attention of central medical authorities, who perceived him to be nothing more than a nuisance. In the *British Medical Journal* of 9 May 1885, the following report was made of Thomas' untimely demise:

We hear from Truro that small-pox has just cut short the career of one of the most energetic opponents of vaccination in the West of England. Death is a heavy price to pay for consistency in one's opinions, and we cannot help recalling the wisdom shown by the brother of the deceased gentleman a few months ago, when the death by small-pox of his unvaccinated son converted him to a belief in the efficacy of vaccination, and induced him to have the prophylactic operation immediately performed on the remaining members of his family. The logic of facts is always more forcible than that of abstract argument.⁷⁹

Published under the inflammatory headline 'Death of an Anti-Vaccinator from Small-Pox', the report does not mention the victim of this cruel twist of fate by name but, from the contextual information that was provided, it is clear that the article refers to Thomas Cragoe. There was certainly one glaring error in this report, however; Thomas was not dead. In fact, not only was Thomas very much alive but the report of his death being employed as a publicity stunt to promote vaccination

⁷⁵ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 19 December 1884.

⁷⁶ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 19 December 1884.

⁷⁷ *Cornubian*, 6 February 1885.

⁷⁸ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 19 December 1884.

⁷⁹ *British Medical Journal*, 9 May 1885, p. 952.

and to mock his sincerely-held beliefs only served to make Thomas a more aggressive anti-vaccination campaigner. His response to the false report of his death was published in London's *Pall Mall Gazette*. In his letter, Thomas repeated *verbatim* the article that had appeared in the *British Medical Journal*. He then simply responded to the report of his own death by stating 'that I have not even been indisposed of late and never had small-pox in my house'.⁸⁰ It was later revealed by Albertus that Thomas attempted to file a suit against the *British Medical Journal* for which he apparently 'received from the proprietors of that journal a substantial sum to stay an action at law'.⁸¹ However, it is his reference to the statement regarding the apparent vaccination of Albertus' children that is of the most interest. Thomas argues that the 'recent events in my brother's family ... ha[ve] only confirmed in him the unalterable belief that vaccination is no prophylactic whatever, but an unmixed evil'.⁸² Although Thomas never explicitly denies that his nieces and nephews at Penhellick had been vaccinated, the implications of his words are clear; his brother remained a staunch anti-vaccinationist.

As to the question of whether or not the suffering endured by William as he died from confluent small-pox changed Albertus' understanding of the relationship between vaccination and small-pox, it seems that the experience only made him more steadfast in his opposition to the practice, much like his older brother. However, unlike Thomas, who skirted delicately around the issue of William's inconvenient death from smallpox, Albertus all but denied that he had even lost a child to the disease. In a letter to the *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, defending himself and his brother against the rumours previously outlined, Albertus stated that 'my late experience proves the important fact that unvaccinated persons may have small-pox in its mildest form'.⁸³ This statement confirms that some of Albertus' other children must have contracted smallpox and that he had, at the very least, lied about this fact to the health authorities. However, it seems almost unbelievable to read these words from a man who, just eight months earlier, had watched his own four year old child suffer through confluent smallpox, seeing the sheets of scabs peel away from his face and body, causing him immense discomfort and leaving him smelling of rotting meat, before his throat constricted and was eventually blocked by viscous saliva and mucous, causing him to suffocate to death from his own bodily fluids. Yet, the Cragoe brothers simply moved on from this, ignoring, at least publicly, the tremendous pain and suffering that had led William to his early grave, and advising others that smallpox was nowhere near as dangerous as medical professionals had made it out to be. In fact, Albertus would come to argue that vaccinated individuals suffered more from smallpox than their unvaccinated counterparts, writing to the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* in 1893, 'that the unvaccinated may have small-pox in its mildest form – we do not ask if this is so – we know it is so; we have

⁸⁰ *Pall Mall Gazette*, 19 May 1885.

⁸¹ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 31 July 1885.

⁸² *Pall Mall Gazette*, 19 May 1885.

⁸³ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 31 July 1885.

seen it with our own eyes in our own family'.⁸⁴ Porter and Porter argue that, for many, anti-vaccinationism was a shallow faith, and point to the example of the anti-vaccinationists of Gloucester who flocked to have the procedure performed upon themselves and upon their children when faced with the horrors of a full-blown smallpox epidemic in 1896.⁸⁵ This was certainly not the case for either of the Cragoe brothers; their faith in the anti-vaccinationist cause was strong enough to overcome even direct exposure to the some of the worst impacts that smallpox could have upon the human body. Following his tacit denial of the suffering endured by his own late son, Albertus went on to deny that doctors could tell him anything regarding the apparent value of vaccination, claiming, like Charles Truscott had before him, that 'we prefer the more direct evidence of English fathers and mothers who have had the "black drop" wrung from the heart – at sight of their despoiled and dead little ones'.⁸⁶ Indeed, no mention would ever be publicly made of Albertus' own 'despoiled and dead little one'.

In the months immediately following his nephew's tragic death, Thomas Cragoe's resumed public anti-vaccination efforts saw him, once again, on the receiving end of prosecution instituted by the Truro Board of Guardians. In February 1885, Thomas appeared before the West Powder Petty Sessions, this time charged with the non-vaccination of three children, as he and his wife Anna Margaret had added a second daughter, Lucy Fortescue, to their family in 1884. Raising his head above the parapet to attack critics of his family after the death of his nephew had placed Thomas firmly in the sights of the Guardians and, given his previous efforts at obtaining notoriety and obvious desire to court vaccine martyrdom, this was more than likely the intended effect of his continued agitation. Faced with three counts of refusing to vaccinate, Thomas presented some insight into the origins of his opposition to the procedure:

Defendant [Cragoe]: I would ask the bench to dismiss the case.

The Chairman [E.S. Carus-Wilson]: On what ground [?]

Defendant: ... I have known serious mishaps arrive from vaccination and there are on record no less [sic] than 500 cases of *vaccine syphilis* which were never contemplated when the Acts were passed.

The Chairman: The Acts are still in operation I believe ...

Defendant: But the Government are not inclined to carry out the Acts to this extreme length. I have a gentleman sitting by my side who has lost a child by vaccination, and I have known many serious mishaps occur. I am, therefore, positively afraid to have my children vaccinated.⁸⁷

Although the 'gentleman sitting by [his] side' was not named, the loss of a child to vaccination-related complications is clearly demonstrated to be at the forefront of Thomas' mind, driving his

⁸⁴ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 18 May 1893.

⁸⁵ Porter and Porter, 'The Politics of Prevention', 252.

⁸⁶ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 18 May 1893.

⁸⁷ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 6 February 1885.

determined opposition to the Vaccination Act. Once again, however, the death of William from confluent smallpox, just two months earlier, is whitewashed from the story; Thomas is clearly afraid to lose a child to vaccination, but is not afraid to lose one to smallpox. Regardless of this, Thomas was issued with three further vaccination orders.

Just one month later, Thomas was back before the magistrates at West Powder as, rather unsurprisingly, he had not complied with the three vaccination orders that were issued in February. Thomas presented the same defence that he and his brother had first employed in their earliest prosecutions in 1880. When Marrack, still driving the prosecutions under the Vaccination Acts in Truro, asked the Bench to inflict the full penalty of 20s per case, Thomas countered, asking the Bench to 'inflict a nominal fine, stating that it was entirely a matter of conscience'.⁸⁸ The Chairman in this case was T.R. Polwhele, the magistrate whose comments about the example he was setting for the rest of the community had so rankled Thomas back in 1881. Polwhele was, once again, not willing to show leniency in the case, claiming that the only way Thomas could get a minimal fine was if he was clearly not in a situation to come up with the funds to pay the fine without resulting in financial ruin. As was seen in prosecutions across Cornwall throughout the 1850s, 1860s, and even into the 1870s, mitigated fines or token punishments were generally the norm in Cornish courts. However, the actions of the Cragoe brothers had so polarised the Truro Guardians that those who were already predisposed towards prosecution felt as though they had to push for the harshest penalties possible. Thomas was not swayed by his former foe, Polwhele, and argued once more that if non-vaccinating parents in places like Bedford and Leicester were not being fined, why should he be, simply because he was facing a Cornish court? Herein lay one of the biggest problems with the administration of the various amendments of the Vaccination Act; they relied upon the discretion of each individual board of Poor Law Guardians to enact them in the spirit of the law. As will be seen, however, this kind of unanimity would not only never be achieved throughout England, it would not even be achieved in Cornwall.

Facing the magistrates at West Powder in March 1885, Thomas Cragoe once again revealed his egotistical nature, boldly declaring before the Bench that:

The eyes of the world were regarding the vote of the Board of Guardians ordering him to be summoned as one of persecution, and that whatever decision the court might arrive at it would be remedied in that court and in that county long after the Vaccination Acts have passed away.⁸⁹

His firm conviction that history would vindicate his actions was not enough to sway the magistrates, who fined him 10s in each case for a total of £1 10s plus court costs. This was the last time a Cragoe would appear before a court to answer charges of non-compliance with the Vaccination Act. This certainly did not stop their agitation against the procedure and against the compulsory

⁸⁸ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 6 March 1885.

⁸⁹ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 6 March 1885.

aspects of the Act. Instead, it only strengthened them. In the same month as he had been issued with his last fine, Thomas attended the massive anti-vaccination protests at Leicester, not as a delegate from a regional anti-vaccination society like many others, but as a private citizen and anti-vaccinationist. According to Durbach,

the Leicester Demonstration in March 1885 was a tour de force of anti-vaccination organization ... here a giant parade converged on the marketplace with banners and babies, "a well-appointed hearse, with a child's coffin, inscribed 'Another victim of vaccination,'" and trolleys with furniture "seized for blood money." ... Of particular delight was a dummy of the inventor of vaccination, Edward Jenner, who was hanged in effigy, then tossed around, only to be decapitated and removed to the police station. The 80,000-100,000 participants were well entertained and treated this demonstration as little different from a local fair.⁹⁰

Even the death of Thomas' middle child, Isabel, from diphtheria in November 1885, could not slow down his tirade against what Polwhele had described in March of the same year as Thomas' 'fad' of choice.⁹¹ Less than one month after losing his daughter, Thomas appeared in the Cornish correspondence columns once again, challenging Leonard Courtney, Liberal MP for Bodmin and Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons, once known for his opposition to the Vaccination Act, to seek their complete repeal through Parliament. When Courtney replied that he now favoured the arguments of the pro-vaccination camp, Thomas attacked him publicly, vilifying him in the columns of the *Royal Cornwall Gazette*. Just three days after Isabel's death, Thomas addressed the following words to Courtney: 'the acumen of mind for which you have been so distinguished is not conspicuous in this instance'.⁹²

Thomas' egotistical nature clearly drew him to the role of attempted vaccine martyr but, underlying this, there appears to have been a genuine fear of the effects that vaccination could have on his children. As he stated himself before the magistrates, Thomas was afraid of losing a child to one of the many complications that could accompany vaccination, even if the procedure was carried out to the best of the vaccinator's ability. The risk of the child dying, or being seriously injured, by gangrene stemming from an infected wound site was worrying enough, but Thomas also seemed especially concerned by the risk of syphilis being communicated into his children's bloodstreams by the procedure. Carrying a severe moral stigma throughout English society, syphilis was considered by many anti-vaccinationists to be a much worse fate than smallpox.⁹³ How, though, following the excruciating death of his own nephew, could Thomas continue to maintain his belief that smallpox was nothing to be feared? An answer to this can be found in a letter that was published in the *Cornubian* on 7 December 1888. Although he does not explicitly state as such (neither of the Cragoe brothers ever publicly acknowledged nor addressed William's death), Thomas blamed

⁹⁰ Durbach, *Bodily Matters*, 50-51.

⁹¹ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 6 March 1885.

⁹² *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 11 December 1885.

⁹³ Examples of this line of argument: William Tebb, *Gloucester Citizen*, 12 August 1884; Thomas Cragoe, *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 1 May 1885; Alfred Milnes, *Western Daily Press*, 25 August 1885 (describes syphilis as 'the most dreaded of human diseases'); William Hitchman, *Gloucester Citizen*, 14 December 1886; James R Williamson, *Bristol Mercury*, 13 March 1894; J West, *Wiltshire Times*, 28 December 1907.

vaccination for indirectly killing his nephew. In his letter to the *Cornubian*, entitled 'The Pasteurian Heresy', Thomas attacked the work of Louis Pasteur and his ongoing experiments regarding the nature of germ theory, particularly critiquing the extent of his animal experimentation in order to develop a potential vaccine for rabies. Critically, though, he also quoted Enoch Robinson, an anti-vaccinationist doctor from Dukinfield in Cheshire, who had stated in a speech on the topic of vaccination:

Why was small-pox still with us? Because during the last century we had spread the disease up and down the country by means of small-pox inoculation, and what was a limited disease, confined in seaports, whither it had been brought from foreign lands, became, in consequence of this distribution, a home plague, and the country was flooded with it.⁹⁴

Despite evidence to the contrary, it was a favourite argument amongst anti-vaccinationists, particularly in the last decade of the nineteenth century, to claim that smallpox was not the terrible disease that pro-vaccinationist doctors made it out to be. This argument relied heavily upon a more conspiratorial reading of the Vaccination Acts, one which Albertus Cragoe would buy into heavily at the end of the century. Essentially, though, the argument was that smallpox was either barely extant in the British Isles before inoculation was introduced (as per Robinson) or that it did exist throughout British history but rarely in a way that was any more dangerous than any other childhood illness.⁹⁵ There is some factual basis here; smallpox had been spread by inoculation, as the precursor to vaccination, but on the fundamental notion that, as it was endemic to British society, children were bound to get the disease at some point so they may as well have it administered to them through some sort of regulated or controlled system. However, the argument also extended to vaccination, with many anti-vaccinationists, including the Cragoe brothers, claiming that vaccination actually made smallpox more virulent than it was when it was naturally occurring or even inoculated. In addition, the emphasis on vaccination was argued to have turned the attention of medical professionals away from what were perceived to be the true preventives of smallpox; isolation and sanitation. Thus, according to this line of thinking, inoculation had made smallpox rampant throughout a society that would otherwise not have been affected and, over time, vaccination had resulted in a disease that killed the vaccinated and unvaccinated alike in far greater numbers than could ever have occurred through naturally-occurring smallpox. In the words of Albertus Cragoe, 'if there were no vaccination, there would be no small-pox'.⁹⁶

⁹⁴ *Cornubian*, 7 December 1888.

⁹⁵ A death rate of approximately 18 per cent would become standard amongst turn-of-the-century anti-vaccinationists when referring to pre-inoculation or pre-vaccination times in Britain. This was taken to be proof that vaccination had little to no impact on the death rate from smallpox, that doctors were exaggerating their statistics to prove that unvaccinated children died from smallpox in higher numbers than their vaccinated counterparts, and that smallpox had never really been a dangerous disease before inoculation and vaccination became common practice in Britain.

⁹⁶ *West Briton*, 13 February 1902.

As Durbach contends, many anti-vaccinationists (although certainly not all) belonged to non-conformist religious groups such as the Quakers, the Baptists and the Salvation Army.⁹⁷ As Methodists, the Cragoe brothers fit well within this category and certainly used their religious beliefs to justify their opposition to vaccination. According to Durbach, for non-conformist anti-vaccinationists such as the Cragoes, 'compulsory vaccination seemed little different from compulsory baptism... if they would not be force-fed religion, then they would also resist this "medical baptism".⁹⁸ For Thomas, the double-standard was clear; he could chose to dissent from the State-enforced religion, but he was not free to dissent from State medicine. This was far from simple rhetoric; Thomas, and so many other anti-vaccinationists, particularly in the Methodist stronghold of Cornwall, firmly believed that medicine and religion were one and the same and that freedom from the tyranny of one necessitated freedom from the other. On more than one occasion, Thomas attacked known religious dissenters who advocated vaccination. In a letter sent to William Bawden, a Guardian for the Truro Union, Thomas admonished him for being 'a non-conformist to the State Church' whilst supporting vaccination:

Do you know that a few hundred years ago you would have been burnt at the stake, and every peasant who brought a fagot [sic] would have though he was doing God's service? And you are utterly oblivious of the fact that the privileges which you now openly enjoy, including the heresy of your own opinion, were purchased in the first place by *fine* and *imprisonment* – by *true men* and patriots, who through good report and through evil report fought steadfastly for their convictions?⁹⁹

Thomas held a great deal of contempt for those who, like Bawden, professed to be non-conformists but would not support his right to oppose vaccination. The letter, which was subsequently reprinted in the *Cornubian*, includes a bold personal attack on Bawden's ideological position:

You are, I say, a non-conformist to state-religion. You claim the inherent right of individual thought in a matter which concerns you so nearly. I am a nonconformist to state-medicine; I claim the right of deep and honest conviction in a matter which concerns me so nearly, being the heart and centre of my domestic life. Between us the law happens, at present, to be a little unequal, because one tyranny has succeeded the other, but in *fact* and in *truth* the inherent rights of my claims are equal to yours. Is not your mind broad enough to take in the analogy?¹⁰⁰

William Bawden, perhaps wisely, chose not to engage with Thomas on this subject and did not respond to his letter.

On 6 March 1892, the anti-vaccination movement in Cornwall lost its most outspoken voice; Thomas Cragoe died, aged just 52, after a long illness. It was reported in the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* that 'although Mr. Cragoe has been unwell for some time he was able to get downstairs on Saturday; but, grave symptoms developing themselves during the day, he died on the following

⁹⁷ Durbach, *Bodily Matters*, 44.

⁹⁸ Durbach, *Bodily Matters*, 44.

⁹⁹ Letter from Thomas Cragoe to William Bawden. Reprinted in the *Cornubian*, 6 February 1885.

¹⁰⁰ *Cornubian*, 6 February 1885.

morning'.¹⁰¹ Although he and his brother had so often agitated the editors and reporters of the *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, he was remembered fondly in its pages. Following his death, the newspaper stated 'the deceased ... was a man of considerable ability and was a frequent contributor to the columns of the Press. Vaccination was his favourite theme, and by Mr. Cragoe's death the anti-vaccination movement has lost a very able and active supporter'.¹⁰² When the Royal Commission into vaccination published a report favourable to the anti-vaccinationist cause in May 1892, just over two months after Thomas' death, it was lamented in the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* that

poor Mr. Thomas Cragoe, had he lived, would have rejoiced over the recently published report ... Mr. Cragoe fairly had vaccination on the brain, and could hardly write us a letter on any subject whatever without in some way adverting to it. He has no successor in these parts, but the work if we may judge from this report, goes on.¹⁰³

On one of these statements, however, the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* was very wrong. Thomas Cragoe did have a successor, his brother and partner in agitation, Albertus. After declining to re-contest his position as Guardian in 1892 after 14 years of service, Albertus and his wife Emma retired, first to Berkhamsted in Hertfordshire, then to Southsea in Hampshire, and finally to Southfields in London. Although he was not physically present in Cornwall, Albertus' thoughts were never far from his home county and the vaccination debate going on within it. For twelve years following his brother's death, Albertus continued to correspond almost exclusively within the Cornish press on the topic of vaccination, and his ideas around the Vaccination Act and the imposition of compulsory vaccination upon the people of England and Wales grew ever more conspiratorial and sinister until his own death in 1904, aged 59.

Ultimately, Thomas and Albertus Cragoe would become two of Cornwall's most frequently prosecuted anti-vaccinationists; Thomas prosecuted a total of 5 times and Albertus 4 times. As can be seen in [Table 2](#), however, the number of anti-vaccinationists in the county who were subjected to more than two prosecutions was small. In addition to the figures outlined in [Table 2](#), there were a further 34 individuals in Cornwall who were prosecuted twice under the Vaccination Act.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰¹ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 10 March 1892.

¹⁰² *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 10 March 1892.

¹⁰³ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 19 May 1892.

¹⁰⁴ 13 individuals in Truro, 12 in Redruth, 6 in Penzance, 2 in St Austell, and 1 in Liskeard.

Table 2: Individuals prosecuted more than twice under the Vaccination Act in Cornwall.

Defendant	Poor Law Union	No. of Prosecutions
Thomas Adolphus Cragoe	Truro	5
Thomas Henry Cowling	Truro	4
Albertus Martin Cragoe	Truro	4
William George Curtis	Liskeard	3
William Lory Hosking	Truro	3
William Wallace Walker	St Austell	3

Whilst the six individuals listed in [Table 2](#) represent a total of 22 prosecutions between them, the number of repeat prosecutions in Cornwall pales in comparison to those reported in other English counties. James R Williamson, writing to several newspapers at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, presented evidence of the enormous number of prosecutions anti-vaccinationists were being subjected to across the country. The cases he outlines are documented in [Table 3](#) for comparison with the Cornish experience.

Table 3: Examples of repeat prosecutions across England as presented by James R Williamson.¹⁰⁵

Defendant	Poor Law Union	No. of Prosecutions
J Hayward	East Ashford (Kent)	50
F Pearse	Andover (Hampshire)	44
John Price	Ludlow (Herefordshire)	44
Edward Foster	Preston (Lancashire)	34
T Jackson	Liverpool (Lancashire)	16
John Castle	Braintree (Essex)	15
Philip Luck	Eastbourne (Sussex)	11

As Williamson reveals, the number of repeat prosecutions in Cornwall was extremely small in comparison to other areas of England. This is far from an exhaustive list, however, and Williamson admits that there were ‘hundreds of others’ across England who had suffered similar amounts of prosecution under the Act.¹⁰⁶ One such individual was William Tebb, who was prosecuted 13 times for refusing to have his youngest daughter, Beatrice Hewetson, vaccinated. Even in the neighbouring county of Devon, the rates of repeat prosecutions were seemingly higher than they were in Cornwall, with J Morland Limpus, from Chudleigh Knighton in the Newton Abbot Union of south Devon, revealing that, by the end of 1896, he had faced prosecution eleven times for refusing to vaccinate his children.¹⁰⁷ In addition, Williamson also outlines several cases in which individuals achieved levels of ‘vaccine martyrdom’ that the Cragoe brothers could only ever have dreamt of

¹⁰⁵ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 8 September 1892; *Banbury Guardian*, 29 September 1892; *East London Observer*, 23 August 1902; *Salisbury Times*, 10 April 1903.

¹⁰⁶ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 8 September 1892.

¹⁰⁷ *East & South Devon Advertiser*, 5 December 1896.

attaining. Williamson outlines two such cases where vaccine martyrs suffered imprisonment at the expense of their own health to protect their children from the procedure they opposed. James Lawton, of the Chesterfield Union in Derbyshire, was imprisoned twice under the Vaccination Act for refusing to pay his fines. Williamson records that Lawton's 'health was quite broken up' by the time spent in prison.¹⁰⁸ Peter Hitching, from the Wigan Union, was subjected to imprisonment under the Act and was forced to perform hard labour as part of his sentence, despite the fact that he had entered the gaol with an injured ankle. As a result of being put to work on the treadmill, Hitching suffered 'absolute torture' in his effort to protect his offspring from vaccination.¹⁰⁹

By far the most famed of the English vaccine martyrs was Charles Washington Nye. Nye resided in Chatham, Kent (part of the Medway Union) and was imprisoned nine times under the Vaccination Act during the 1860s and 1870s. A watchmaker and jeweller, Nye was the father of 11 children and claimed that two of these children were killed by vaccination.¹¹⁰ In a similar vein to William Wallace Walker, Nye had ultimately refused to register the births of his youngest children in order to prevent further prosecutions under the Vaccination Act. Known as the 'Prince of Vaccination Martyrs' in certain circles, Nye's commitment to the cause was legendary. As Stanley Williamson reports, Nye served 3 separate sentences in 1870 alone – 14 days in March, 31 in July, and a further 31 in December – during which time his family suffered immensely as his extended absences meant his wife and children had to enter the Medway Union workhouse due to Nye's inability to support them.¹¹¹ Sentenced repeatedly to terms in Canterbury gaol, Nye reported that he was treated unfairly by the warders:

I [pushed loaded wheelbarrows] until my hands got so bad that the handles of every barrow I wheeled were stained with my blood, and I refused to work at it any longer. I was then put on the task of oakum-picking, and after I had been supplied with my supper gruel a warder came and took it away, remarking that as I was too lazy to work I was not entitled to it.¹¹²

In 1871, Nye's plight gained national notoriety when, after individuals including Henry Pitman and William Hume-Rothery used their public positions to advocate for his cause, his case was brought before the Select Committee investigating the operation of the Vaccination Act. No immediate good was to come of this attention, however, as Nye found himself sentenced to another 31 days imprisonment (this time in Maidstone gaol) in 1872. His continued defiance of the Vaccination Act, despite the immense suffering it caused, made Charles Washington Nye a legendary figure in the anti-vaccination movement. Writing to the *Chatham News* in early 1870, however, Nye downplayed his contribution to the anti-vaccination cause, claiming that he did not '[wish] to make myself appear

¹⁰⁸ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 8 September 1892.

¹⁰⁹ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 8 September 1892.

¹¹⁰ Clearly a devoted anti-vaccinationist, Nye's youngest son was named 'Henry Pitman' in honour of the famed Manchester-based anti-vaccinationist and publisher of *The Anti-Vaccinator* journal. Pitman had been a prominent supporter of Nye during his imprisonments and often wrote to newspapers across the country to draw attention to Nye's crusade against the Vaccination Act.

¹¹¹ Williamson, *The Vaccination Controversy*, 206.

¹¹² Charles Washington Nye. Quoted in Williamson, *The Vaccination Controversy*, 206.

a martyr'.¹¹³ Despite this claim, Nye cemented his commitment to fight the Vaccination Act, claiming that:

There are only three ways of meeting a prosecution under the Vaccination Act – to pay the fine, go to gaol, or have the child vaccinated; and as I am not prepared to pay fines, and believe that vaccination means disease and death, the only course open to me is to go to gaol.¹¹⁴

If Charles Washington Nye was the model by which anti-vaccinationists would strive to become martyrs for their cause, then the Cragoe brothers fell woefully short. Having never served a gaol sentence for refusing to pay a fine, and having appeared in court just nine times between them, there was little to no opportunity for either Thomas or Albertus to rise to national importance in the anti-vaccination movement. However, this may say more about the state of vaccination in Cornwall than it does about the commitment of the Cragoe brothers. The Cragoes displayed a level of commitment to the cause that could have seen them emulate, if not the feats of Charles Washington Nye, then the martyrdom of other individuals, such as Amos Booth, the Leicester vaccine martyr the brothers had brought to speak at their failed meeting in Truro in early 1881. However, the environment was not right for them to achieve this level of fame amongst members of the national anti-vaccination movement. From the evidence presented, Cornwall simply did not see enough repeat prosecutions to support the Cragoes' claims of 'persecution' at a local level. Without this essential component, Cornwall could not be home to even a local branch of an anti-vaccination movement, let alone sustain a vaccine martyr of national standing; the persecution factor did not rate at a national level. Other anti-vaccinationists across England could point to those who suffered repeated imprisonments or scores of fines as evidence of sustained persecution against anti-vaccinationists but Cornish anti-vaccinationists could not. In order to understand why Cornish Boards of Guardians were not prosecuting anti-vaccinationists at the same rate as their counterparts in other Unions across the country, the situation in each of the Cornish Unions must be examined to reveal the limitations that the Boards faced in their administration of the Vaccination Act.

¹¹³ *Chatham News*, 26 February 1870.

¹¹⁴ *Chatham News*, 26 February 1870.

Chapter 5: Rurality and Scepticism: The Vaccination Act in East Cornwall

In 1876, seven members of the Keighley Board of Guardians, in West Yorkshire, were imprisoned in York Castle for their refusal to enforce the Vaccination Act. Durbach contends that such drastic action was taken to ensure that the Keighley Guardians served as an example of the punishments that awaited other Boards who took a similar stand.¹ As the administrators of the New Poor Laws introduced in 1834, Boards of Guardians were local authorities, elected by ratepayers and landowners to carry out the tasks required to ensure the Poor Laws were effectively administered. Although women began to be admitted to Boards towards the end of the nineteenth century, the vast majority of Poor Law Guardians throughout England and Wales were men.² The position of Guardian was an unpaid one and candidates for the role were subject to the same property restrictions as any other elected official, until the property ownership restriction was lifted in 1894. As a result of these limitations, only middle- and upper-class individuals could seek election to the Board of Guardians. This meant that there were few representatives of the poor or the working-classes on the Boards of Guardians throughout the nineteenth century, despite the fact that these classes were directly impacted by the Poor Laws. Durbach's discussion of the imprisonment of the seven Keighley Guardians reveals that the government was acutely aware of the impact that personal opinions held by individual Guardians could have on the administration of the Vaccination Act. In 1876, the Keighley Guardians who had refused to enforce the Vaccination Act were imprisoned as an example to others. However, they were far from the first Board to have fervent anti-vaccinationists elected to serve in their ranks. Anti-vaccinationist agitation only continued to grow throughout the 1880s, making the enforcement of the Act ever more difficult for local authorities.³

Throughout Cornwall, the Vaccination Act was administered through the auspices of thirteen independent Poor Law Unions (PLUs) and one Poor Law Parish (PLP). With each union designed to have a central workhouse within reach of each incorporated parish, the unions of Cornwall varied greatly in population size.⁴ The PLUs that comprised the Cornish mainland were: Bodmin, Camelford, Falmouth, Helston, Launceston, Liskeard, Penzance, Redruth, St Austell, St Columb, St Germans, Stratton, and Truro. The Scilly Isles, located off the south-west coast of Cornwall, were administered under the Scilly Isles PLP. In addition to these administrative units, two northern Cornish sub-districts were included in Devonian PLUs; the sub-district of North Tamerton was in

¹ Durbach, *Bodily Matters*, 1.

² For an example of the impact that introducing women to the position of Guardian could have, see the case of Mary Clifford (1841-1919) who served as a Poor Law Guardian for Bristol from 1882 to 1907 and was known as 'the Guardian Angel of the Poor' for her work with the aged poor and the impoverished children of Bristol. An examination of women involved in Poor Law Guardianship can be found in Moira Martin, 'Guardians of the Poor: A Philanthropic Female Elite in Bristol', *Regional Historian*, no. 9, 2002.

³ Hennock, 'Vaccination Policy Against Smallpox', 61.

⁴ Tremewan, 'The Relief of Poverty in Cornwall', 79.

the Holsworthy PLU, and the Calstock sub-district was in the Tavistock PLU. Whilst the Vaccination Act, in all of its varying forms between 1840 and 1907, was uniform in its requirements across all Poor Law Unions and Parishes in England and Wales, in reality, the practical implications of the Act were far from uniformly enforced. Attitudes towards the Act and towards the enforcement of compulsory vaccination upon the people varied from region to region; the Act was enforced differently in the overcrowded industrial cities in comparison to the more rural counties.⁵ However, even within these broad geographic regions, the Vaccination Act was enforced in different ways. Cornwall is a pertinent example of this as each of the thirteen mainland unions had very different relationships with the Vaccination Act. Thomas Cragoe, in his last appearance before the magistrates at West Powder in 1885, was acutely aware of the fact that he was being prosecuted by the Truro Guardians whilst his anti-vaccinationist counterparts in other places, such as Leicester, were not subject to prosecution at all. The problem ran much deeper than that, however, as, at the time of Cragoe's final prosecution, out of the thirteen Cornish PLUs, Truro was the only union prosecuting for offences under the Vaccination Act. The other Cornish PLUs would regularly oscillate between prosecuting and not prosecuting their vaccine defaulters, and the following in-depth analysis of the situation in each of the thirteen unions will provide some insight into the uneven way in which the Vaccination Act was administered throughout Cornwall.

Bernard Deacon, in his discussion of the impact of the 'spatial turn' in the field of Cornish Studies, highlights the importance of considering geographical implications when approaching the social history of Cornwall. In an examination of the micro-geography of nineteenth century mining in Cornwall, Deacon contends that there is not one singular, unified Cornwall to be examined by historians and social scientists; rather, he argues for the existence of multiple 'Cornwalls', a concept that must be taken into consideration when approaching the history of the county.⁶ Crucially, Deacon contends that Cornish Studies has a tendency to 'concentrate its analysis on a Cornwall-wide scale' at the expense of the 'lower spatial scale, at the levels of communities and districts within Cornwall'.⁷ There have been a handful of attempts to overcome this limitation within Cornish Studies and Deacon refers to the work of sociologist Malcolm Williams, specifically, as an example of an approach to Cornish Studies that takes the micro-geography of Cornwall into consideration. In 1999, Williams proposed a three-stage research model for Cornish Studies;

First, there are studies concerned with overall constructions of 'Cornwall'. Second, there are studies that disaggregate Cornwall and look for similar and contrasting patterns within it. Finally, his third stage ... includes a more explicitly comparative approach, defining and

⁵ Clark, 'Compliance with Infant Smallpox Vaccination Legislation in Nineteenth-Century Rural England'.

⁶ Bernard Deacon, 'Mining the Data: What Can a Quantitative Approach Tell Us About the Micro-Geography of Nineteenth-Century Cornish Mining?' in Philip Payton (ed.), *Cornish Studies Eighteen*, University of Exeter, Exeter, 2010, 15-32.

⁷ Bernard Deacon, *From a Cornish Study: Essays on Cornish Studies and Cornwall*, CoSERG, Redruth, 2017, 2.

explaining differences and similarities within Cornwall and comparing these with places elsewhere.⁸

Peter Tremewan's examination of the operation of the Poor Law in Cornwall adopted this 'disaggregation' approach that was outlined by Williams. By breaking Cornwall down into the thirteen individual Poor Law Unions, Tremewan revealed that the operation of the Poor Law in Cornwall was far from uniform. Tremewan particularly took issue with other studies of poverty and institutional relief which had a tendency to simply divide England into large geographic areas, rather than take into consideration the nuances of each region. One example, provided by Tremewan, was the work of Steve King, who investigated the relief of poverty in England between 1700 and 1850.⁹ King had divided the nation into large geographic areas, grouping Cornwall in a sub-region alongside parts of Devon, Somerset and Gloucester. According to Tremewan, 'this is a simplification' as 'Cornwall, although only a small part of the area, was itself hardly a uniform social or economic unit, but rather a collection of dissimilar communities'.¹⁰

Additionally, Tremewan argues that the operation of the Poor Law has been largely under-researched in the Cornish context, leading to the notion that the law was enforced much more uniformly across the county than it was in reality. Although Gill Burke has worked on the administration of the Poor Law in the Penzance Union in the turbulent 1870s, very little work has been done to either discuss how the law was administered in other Cornish unions, or to draw any comparisons between them.¹¹ This chapter (and its subsequent counterpart) will take a similar approach to that outlined by Tremewan, examining one specific aspect of the administration of the Poor Law in Cornwall (the Vaccination Act) by disaggregating the county and examining the operation of the Act in each individual Poor Law Union. Tremewan's work with micro-level examination such as this revealed unique characteristics within individual Unions that generated a much richer understanding of the operation of the Poor Laws in Cornwall. In addition, Tremewan identified a seemingly natural divide between the east and the west of the county, arguing that there is a distinct difference between the eastern and western unions of Cornwall, one based largely upon the higher per capita expense of administering the Poor Law in the east, in comparison to the west.¹² This discrepancy not only reveals that the Poor Law was far from uniformly administered throughout Cornwall; it also indicates that there was a distinct difference between unions with a higher proportion of agricultural labourers in comparison to their counterparts with higher proportions of mine workers. Given that agriculture and mining were the two major industries of occupation in Cornwall during the nineteenth century, Tremewan contends

⁸ Malcolm Williams, New Cornish Studies Seminar, Truro, July 2nd 1999. Quoted in Deacon, *From a Cornish Study*, 2-3.

⁹ Steve King, *Poverty and Welfare in England 1700-1850: A Regional Perspective*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 2000.

¹⁰ Tremewan, 'The Relief of Poverty in Cornwall', 78-79.

¹¹ Gill Burke, 'The Poor Law and the Relief of Distress: West Cornwall 1870-1880', *Journal of the Royal Institution of Cornwall*, vol. 8, no. 2, 1979, 148-159.

¹² Tremewan, 'The Relief of Poverty in Cornwall', 98-99.

that the difference between these industries was substantial enough to impact upon the way in which poverty relief was administered throughout the county.

Agriculture and mining for the most part occupied discrete geographic areas, agriculture dominant in the north and east of Cornwall, and mining confined to distinct districts in the middle and western areas. ... In seven unions in the east between 40 per cent to 60 per cent of the labour force were engaged on the land, whereas in the west only in Helston, which includes the Meneage and Lizard farming districts, were 30 per cent employed in agriculture. In contrast, mining was the major employer in all the unions from St Austell westward, apart from maritime Falmouth.¹³

Tremewan is not alone in proposing that a divide existed between the east of Cornwall and the west. According to Deacon, the dominant Cornish culture had undergone a radical change in the late eighteenth century, moving away from the agrarian-dominated society that had existed previously, to the 'rural-industrial' centre that developed around the 'urbanising communities of Redruth, Camborne and Hayle'.¹⁴ Thus, the west, represented by the Poor Law Unions of Penzance, Redruth, Truro, Helston, and Falmouth, came to be seen as the centre of Cornish culture in the nineteenth century. Deacon argues that the depopulation of the east, in conjunction with the massive population growth in the west, between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, has drawn scholarly attention away from the agricultural east in favour of the industrialised mining communities of the west. By disaggregating the county in such a way, Deacon drew conclusions that complement the work of Tremewan, providing support for both Tremewan's approach and his conclusions. Tremewan had identified a clear divide between the eastern unions and the western unions of Cornwall based upon the expense per capita of administering the Poor Laws. It was Tremewan's contention that the differing expenditure of each Poor Law Board was not linked to a greater amount of poverty in the east, or an unwillingness to support the poor in the west, but rather upon fundamental societal differences. Deacon supports these findings, arguing that Cornish mining communities were structured more around the mutual aid networks (such as those identified by Beier) than the agricultural communities of the eastern unions were. Thus, Deacon contends, the population of the western unions were more reluctant to seek parish support through the auspices of the Poor Law, instead choosing to rely upon the local support networks provided by family, friends, and neighbours when poverty or ill-health struck a family.¹⁵ Deacon argues that this

¹³ Tremewan, 'The Relief of Poverty in Cornwall', 80-81.

¹⁴ Deacon, *From a Cornish Study*, 8.

¹⁵ These mutual aid networks were exported from Cornwall through the diaspora of the nineteenth century. Cornish miners (and their families) came to rely upon the support of the 'Cousin Jack network' when establishing themselves in new locations overseas. The 'Cousin Jack network' of mutual aid and support was a powerful force in expatriate Cornish communities around the world and can be seen in operation in Australia, the Americas, and Africa in a wide variety of locations which attracted Cornish hard-rock miners. An examination of the 'Cousin Jack network' in action during a public health crisis can be found in Ella Victoria Stewart-Peters, *Managing Crisis at Moonta Mines: Governance and Opposition to Biopolitical Intervention in a Cornish-South Australian Context, 1874-1875*, 2014. Honours Thesis, Flinders University, Adelaide. Also in Jonathan Hyslop 'The Imperial Working Class Makes Itself "White": White Labourism in Britain, Australia, and South Africa Before the First World War', *Journal of Historical Sociology*, vol. 12, no. 4, 1999, 398-421.

reliance upon mutual aid networks for support limited the connections between the 'Cornwall of the west' and the 'Cornwall of the east', creating two separate 'Cornwalls' which, despite their geographic proximity, had vastly different relationships with governance and the administration of the Poor Laws. This chapter highlights the role that rurality played in the administration of the Vaccination Act in the east of Cornwall, disaggregating to region to examine how the Boards of Guardians in each of the eastern unions approached their responsibilities under the Act. In the following chapter, the same will be done for the western unions, incorporating the more widely-studied regions of the county. It is, however, important to note that as the agricultural east of Cornwall is largely under-researched, an examination of the way in which the Vaccination Act was administered in this region can be useful for future studies into the administration of the Poor Law as a whole – a process that was begun by Tremewan but is, by no means, complete.

Due to the sustained opposition to the Vaccination Acts that arose from the formation of the major anti-vaccination leagues in the 1870s and 1880s, the government was forced to establish a Royal Commission into Vaccination in 1889. As Durbach notes, the Royal Commission gave legitimacy to the actions of many Boards of Guardians across England and Wales who were beginning to toy with the idea of halting prosecutions.¹⁶ Poor Law Unions across Cornwall opted to defer any decision on whether or not they would enforce the prosecution of non-vaccinating parents until the Royal Commission had issued its findings. By 1891, there was only one union (Redruth) in Cornwall that retained the option for prosecution under the Vaccination Act, with all the other unions who had previously prosecuted cases refusing to even consider doing so again until the Royal Commission ended. However, Durbach's contention that the establishment of the Royal Commission led to a widespread halting of prosecutions for the duration of the investigation does not completely fit with the Cornish model as the Penzance, Launceston and St Austell PLUs all recorded prosecutions under the Act between their decision to halt proceedings against non-vaccinating parents and the issuing of the final reports of the Royal Commission. Thus, in Cornwall at least, the decision to halt prosecutions until the end of the investigation could clearly be retracted at any given point.

Another of Durbach's contentions regarding the enforcement of the Vaccination Act is challenged by the example of Cornwall. For Durbach, whilst the earliest phases of compulsion under the 1853 amendment were poorly enforced by Boards of Guardians across the country, this problem was largely straightened out by the late 1860s, when 'the administrative machinery for policing it was set into place'.¹⁷ Durbach is not the only scholar to assert that the problems inherent to the enforcement of the Vaccination Act were largely improved with time. R.M. McLeod also asserts that, by the mid-1870s, the mechanics of the Vaccination Act were largely in order and that public health officials were turning their attention away from the issue of vaccination and towards other

¹⁶ Durbach, *Bodily Matters*, 10.

¹⁷ Durbach, *Bodily Matters*, 37.

areas of public health policy that remained problematic.¹⁸ Other scholars, such as Fitchett and Heymann, discuss the penalties attached to the Vaccination Act only theoretically, paying little attention to the actual realities of enforcing the Act on the ground.¹⁹ Examining the inner-workings of the Vaccination Act in Cornwall, however, reveals that this 'administrative machinery' was far from perfect and, in fact, often failed due to its inherently piecemeal nature. With every Poor Law Union responsible for enforcing the Vaccination Act within their own designated areas, prosecution rates in Cornwall varied widely. Some Poor Law Unions (such as St Columb and St Germans) never prosecuted a single case under the Act and some prosecuted so infrequently (such as Bodmin and Camelford) that they may as well have not prosecuted at all. At the other end of the scale, mid-sized unions such as Liskeard and St Austell often outperformed their larger counterparts. Essentially, there was no consistency in the enforcement of the Vaccination Act in Cornwall and, whilst this does not indicate that Durbach's assertions about the 'administrative machinery' of the Act are incorrect for other areas of England, it certainly reveals that there can be no 'one size fits all' assumptions about the way in which the Vaccination Act was enforced on the ground in England. The work of Hennock supports the notion that the enforcement of the Vaccination Act remained problematic beyond the 1860s as 'the division of responsibility between the central Poor Law Board and the Medical Officer of the Privy Council worked badly'.²⁰ This is saying nothing of the chaos that existed at ground level as each individual Poor Law Union was responsible for enforcing the law itself. Sheaff supports the notion that the Vaccination Act was very poorly enforced in Cornwall, due to a combination of a poorly-regulated system of enforcement, lax public vaccinators, and the outright opposition to the procedure amongst the general public, as he tactfully notes 'Cornish people then were rather sceptical about the benefits of vaccination'.²¹

¹⁸ R.M. McLeod, 'The Frustration of State Medicine 1880-1899', *Medical History*, vol. 11, no. 1, 1967, 17.

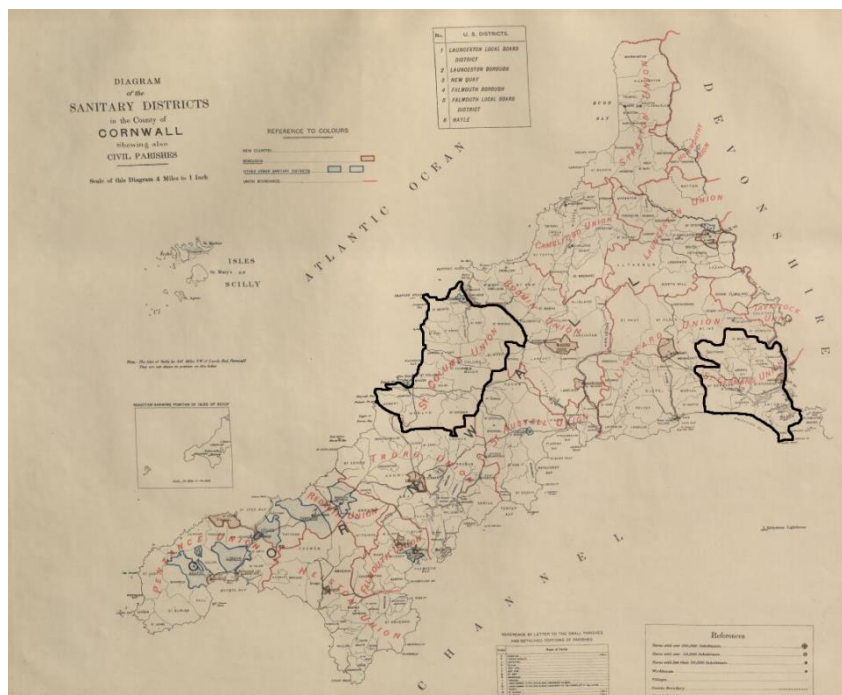
¹⁹ Fitchett and Heymann, 'Smallpox Vaccination and Opposition by Anti-Vaccination Societies'.

²⁰ Hennock, 'Vaccination Policy Against Smallpox', 55.

²¹ Sheaff, 'A Century of Centralization', 132.

St Columb and St Germans PLUs

Figure 8: Map indicating the locations of the St Columb and St Germans Poor Law Unions. Both districts outlined in black, with St Columb to the west and St Germans to the east, adjacent to the Devonshire border. After Ordnance Survey Sanitary Districts, 1888, *Vision of Britain*, http://visionofbritain.org.uk/maps/sheet/os_sanitary_districts_1888/Cornwall_1888.



Aside from the Scilly Isles, which fell under the different organisational structure of a PLP, there were two Cornish PLUs which did not record any prosecutions under the Vaccination Act throughout the entirety of the period under investigation; St Columb and St Germans. The St Columb PLU incorporated an average population of approximately 16,300 individuals between 1841 and 1911 and was reasonably rural, covering an area of 74,000 acres, with its largest towns being St Columb Major and St Columb Minor, as well as Padstow.²² St Germans, on the other hand, had a slightly higher average population (approximately 17,700) in a much smaller geographical area (41,200 acres). The town of St Germans itself was the largest in the PLU, followed by Antony, and the district was home to a large military barracks throughout the nineteenth century. This may go some way to explaining why, in St Germans at least, there were never any civilian prosecutions under the Vaccination Act as vaccination and revaccination were compulsory aspects of military life and, as a result, were administered independently of the laws governing the vaccination of civilians. However, the lack of prosecutions in the St Columb PLU remains mysterious as applications for exemption certificates under the conscience clause that was introduced into the Vaccination Act in 1898 reveal that there was certainly an undercurrent of anti-vaccinationist attitudes in the Union, one which would drive several parents to appear before the St

²² Cyrus Redding, *An Illustrated Itinerary of the County of Cornwall*, How and Parsons, London, 1842, 250-251.

Columb Petty Sessions to obtain a legal exemption from the Act. Further evidence of this opposition to vaccination comes from a meeting of the St Columb Board of Guardians in October 1890 where it was reported that several mothers in the district were refusing to allow lymph to be taken from the arms of their children following vaccination. According to one public vaccinator, Dr Mole, he had 'been subjected to a considerable amount of abuse from ... mothers in the district'.²³

When it came to dealing with the problem of these resisting mothers in the St Columb Union, the Guardians found themselves at loggerheads over the issue. The clerk informed the board that one specific mother, identified as a Mrs Floyd, would certainly be open to prosecution for refusing to allow the lymph to be taken and, as a result, she could face a penalty of up to 20 shillings. Other Guardians, however, thought a more lenient approach should be taken, the Chairman of the Board proposed that the matter be deferred for twelve months before any decision was made, claiming that prosecuting Mrs Floyd 'would be taking very harsh measures against the woman, and considered that it would be a better plan to write to her'.²⁴ One Guardian, by the name of Shovell, even praised Mrs Floyd, saying that he 'was very glad to hear of a mother in that district who was brave enough to defy the law'.²⁵ Ultimately, the Chairman's approach won out and a letter was sent to Mrs Floyd informing her that she was breaking the law. No further action would be taken against Floyd or any of the other mothers reported to be abusing public vaccinators in the St Columb PLU.

²³ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 23 October 1890.

²⁴ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 23 October 1890.

²⁵ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 23 October 1890.

Camelford PLU

Figure 9: Map indicating the location of the Camelford Poor Law Union, outlined in black. After Ordnance Survey Sanitary Districts, 1888, *Vision of Britain*, http://visionofbritain.org.uk/maps/sheet/os_sanitary_districts_1888/Cornwall_1888.

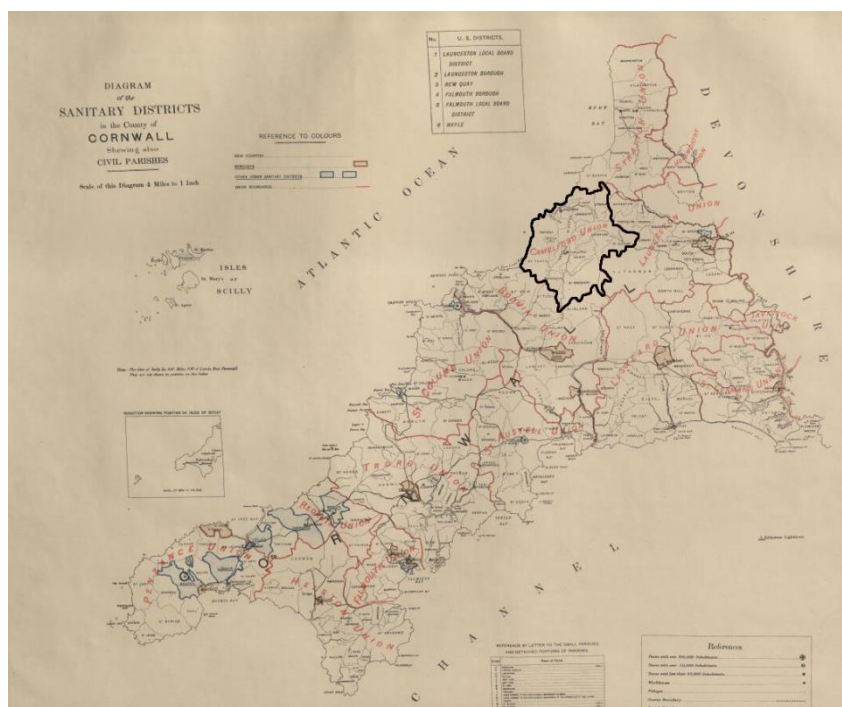


Table 4: Prosecutions in the Camelford Poor Law Union by decade.

Decade	Prosecutions	Total for Cornwall
1850-1859	0	55
1860-1869	0	37
1870-1879	1	51
1880-1889	0	63
1890-1899	0	94
1900-1909	0	62
TOTAL	1	362

As the least populated Union in Cornwall, with an average population of approximately 7,700, it is perhaps to be expected that prosecutions were rare in the Camelford area. In addition to its small population, Camelford was very rural, with the 7,700 residents occupying an area of almost 51,000 acres. The chief occupation in the region was agriculture, with some granite and china clay quarrying around St Breward and slate quarrying at St Teath. No prosecutions were recorded in Camelford between 1853 and 1867, the first phase of compulsory vaccination under the Act, and the only case prosecuted in the post-1867 period occurred in 1871. The unlucky defendant in this

case was a draper, Richard Parsons, a resident of St Teath, one of the largest towns in the Camelford Union. Parsons was charged with not vaccinating his son Alfred, and was issued with a fine of 10s. This fine, although heavy in comparison to many of the other fines being issued by magistrates across the county at the time, was still only half of the maximum amount allowed under the Act. Interestingly, following the introduction of the Conscience Clause in 1898, magistrates in the Camelford district would be inundated with the highest ratio of exemption applicants per head of population (40 in an average population of 7,700) that was recorded in Cornwall. Thus, the district which prosecuted the least (with the exception of those that did not prosecute at all), presented the highest proportion of anti-vaccinationists seeking exemptions from the Act after 1898.

This presents some interesting paradoxes to consider. Firstly, the rush for exemptions between 1898 and 1907 reveals that there was a very strong undercurrent of anti-vaccinationist ideals within the Camelford PLU; yet only Richard Parsons in 1871 would be prosecuted and the anti-vaccinationist leanings of the Camelford population were clearly not considered concerning enough for any of the major Cornish newspapers to report on it, even during periods when, as will be seen, the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* and the *West Briton* were reporting on the inaction of several other Boards of Guardians throughout the county. Camelford's small population, in combination with its location in the north of Cornwall, far from the most populous centres, meant that it was of little concern to health authorities. In addition, the relative rurality of the Union meant that there was little risk of large outbreaks of smallpox occurring as the area was not as densely populated as in the western districts. The second paradox that Camelford presents relates to the explicit purpose of the Conscience Clause itself. Designed to protect conscientious objectors from repeated prosecutions under the Vaccination Act, the exemption certificates should have been taken up *en masse* in areas where the threat of prosecution was high. Yet, it is in Camelford, a district that only prosecuted once, that the highest proportion of exemption applications were heard in the courts. In reality, the anti-vaccinationists of the Camelford PLU should have had little fear of being prosecuted, given the track record of their Guardians.

Stratton PLU

Figure 10: Map indicating the location of the Stratton Poor Law Union, outlined in black. After Ordnance Survey Sanitary Districts, 1888, *Vision of Britain*, http://visionofbritain.org.uk/maps/sheet/os_sanitary_districts_1888/Cornwall_1888.

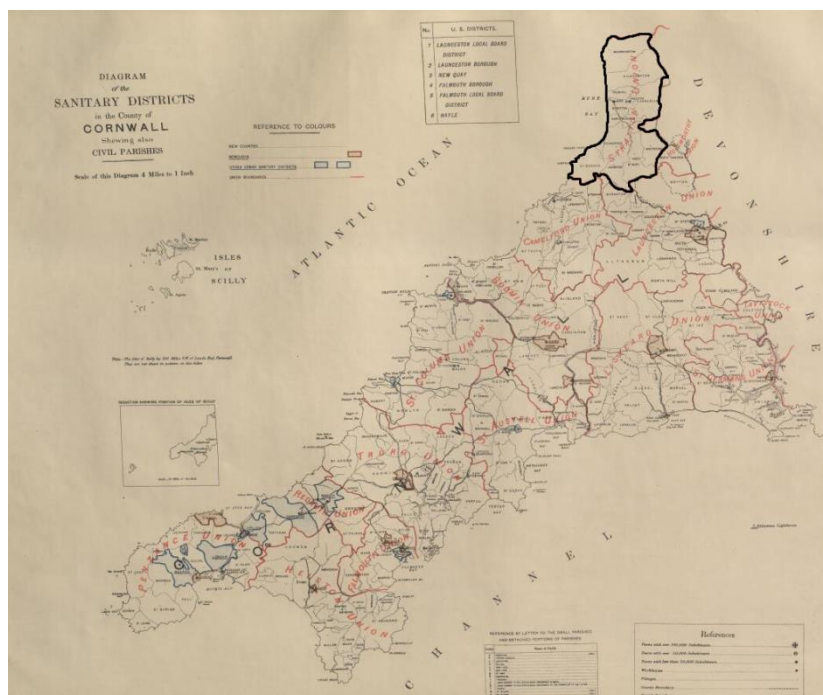


Table 5: Prosecutions in the Stratton Poor Law Union by decade.

Decade	Prosecutions	Total for Cornwall
1850-1859	0	55
1860-1869	0	37
1870-1879	0	51
1880-1889	0	63
1890-1899	0	94
1900-1909	2	62
TOTAL	2	362

Further north from the Camelford Union, lay the similarly small Stratton PLU, with an average population of just 7,900 inhabiting an area of just over 54,000 acres. The union bordered Devon and was the most northerly district in Cornwall. As with neighbouring Camelford, Stratton's main industry was agriculture and the area was also the heartland of the Bible Christians in Cornwall. Whilst demographically similar to Camelford, the residents of the Stratton Union had a differing experience of the Vaccination Act. Just two prosecutions were recorded in the area, both in 1907, some 54 years after vaccination was made compulsory. The fact that no individuals were prosecuted by the Stratton Guardians for refusing to vaccinate their children prior to 1907 does not

accurately reflect the situation within the union itself. Dr James Montague Braund, Medical Officer of Health for the Stratton Union was an extremely passionate proponent of vaccination, even going so far as to detail his experiences with the procedure in an article addressing the 'Protective Power of Vaccination' that was published in *The Lancet* in 1889. In this article, Braund pleads with his fellow medical men:

In these days, when there is a great tendency to do away with, or at any rate, to undervalue, the marvellous protective power of vaccination over that dread disease small-pox, I deem it the duty of any person who has proved by facts the efficacy of the vaccine virus not to let the light thrown upon him be hidden under a bushel, but to come forward and state facts which have happened in his experience as to the thorough protective power of vaccination.²⁶

This explicit comparison between vaccination and the word of Christ (through his reference to the parable of the light under the bushel) reveals the high level of respect that Braund had for the procedure; a potential saviour for mankind. It may also have been intended to strike a chord with the deeply religious residents of the union he represented. Braund went on to describe how he had personally witnessed vaccination saving the lives of 'eight or ten children' who resided in a house affected by a smallpox outbreak.²⁷ Braund's fervent promotion of the importance of vaccination was criticised heavily by Thomas Cragoe, revealing that, despite the distance between the Stratton Union and the major centres of population in the county, the writings of one medical professional were considered, at least by the Cragoes and their ilk, to have been of importance to the entire county.²⁸ It is clear that, in Dr Braund, the Stratton Union had a passionate supporter of vaccination assuming the mantle of local health authority. Yet Braund's passion for vaccination was not reflected in the actions of the Guardians as, despite the attention he attracted in distant Truro, Braund's influence was not strong enough in his own union to ensure that anti-vaccinationists would be prosecuted. By the time any prosecutions were heard under the Vaccination Act in Stratton, compulsory vaccination in England and Wales had almost come to an end. The prosecutions that occurred in 1907 also reveal the lack of punitive measures that were inflicted upon anti-vaccinationists. An example of this is the case of Thomas Walkley Rowland, a farmer from Poundstock, who appeared before the magistrates at the Stratton Petty Sessions in October 1907. Charged with not vaccinating his daughter, Helena, Rowland was not issued with a fine. Instead, the magistrates issued a vaccination order, giving Rowland time to have Helena vaccinated before facing any potential fines for non-compliance. Rowland's case is indicative of the attitudes towards enforcing the Vaccination Act in the Stratton Union as no fines were ever issued for the non-vaccination of children in the area during the 54 years that compulsory vaccination was supposed to be enforced.

²⁶ *The Lancet*, 4 May 1889.

²⁷ *The Lancet*, 4 May 1889.

²⁸ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 23 May 1889.

Bodmin PLU

Figure 11: Map indicating the location of the Bodmin Poor Law Union, outlined in black. After Ordnance Survey Sanitary Districts, 1888, *Vision of Britain*, http://visionofbritain.org.uk/maps/sheet/os_sanitary_districts_1888/Cornwall_1888.

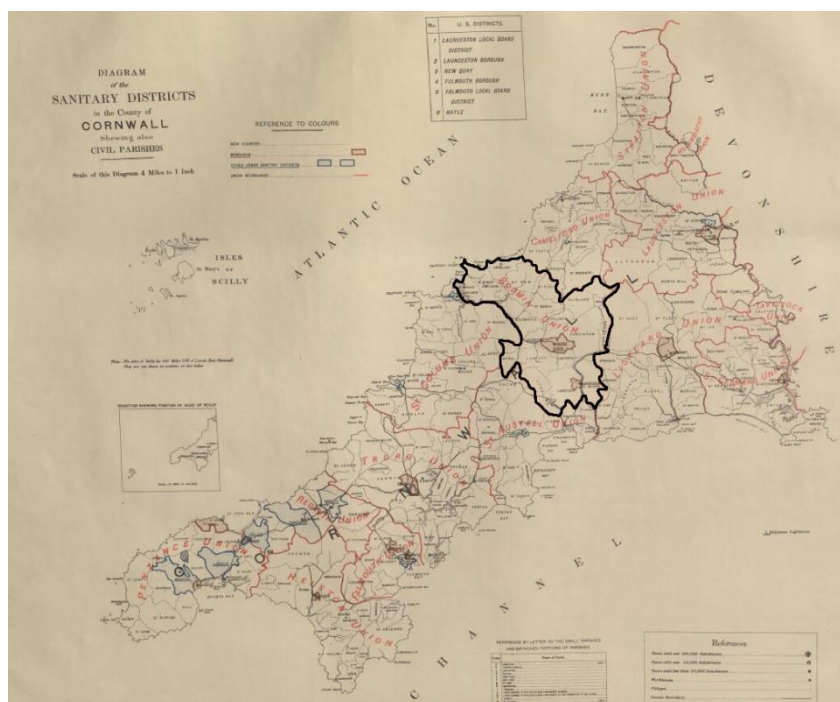


Table 6: Prosecutions in the Bodmin Poor Law Union by decade.

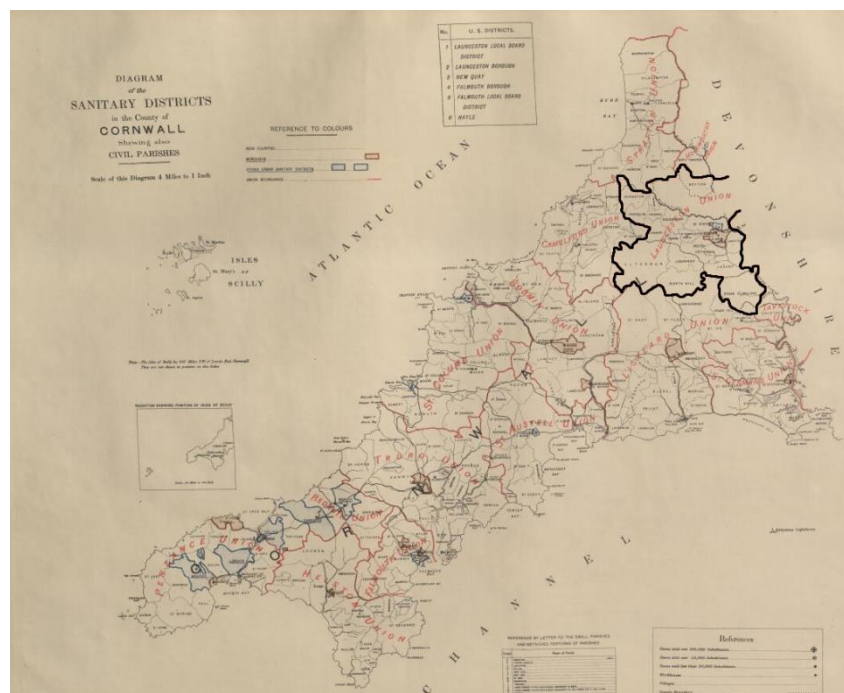
Decade	Prosecutions	Total for Cornwall
1850-1859	0	55
1860-1869	0	37
1870-1879	0	51
1880-1889	3	63
1890-1899	0	94
1900-1909	0	62
TOTAL	3	362

Whilst none of the aforementioned unions attracted the attention of the press or the authorities for not prosecuting vaccination defaulters in accordance with the law, it is perhaps, most surprising that the same lack of interest can be seen in the Bodmin Union. Even though it was the centre of institutional justice in Cornwall throughout the nineteenth century, home to the Bodmin Assizes, the county gaol, and the county lunatic asylum, the Poor Law Union was very lax in its attitude towards the Vaccination Act. There were only three prosecutions in the Bodmin PLU, encompassing an average population of 19,600 individuals, during the more than five decades of compulsory vaccination law in England. In March 1881, the magistrates at Bodmin heard the last of the three

cases brought before them. In a similar vein to Mrs Floyd in the St Columb PLU, Emily Pedlar, a bugler's wife, had refused to allow the public vaccinator to take the lymph from her daughter, Emily's, arm following the vaccination procedure. However, unlike the case of Mrs Floyd, there is no evidence that the elder Emily Pedlar had become violent or abusive towards the public vaccinator; she simply refused to allow the lymph to be removed. This does reveal a deep disparity in the actions of the Boards, despite the fact that they were supposed to be administering the same law. If Emily Pedlar had resided in the neighbouring union of St Columb, the track record of the Guardians there indicates that she would not have been prosecuted, as was the case for Mrs Floyd. However, the Bodmin Guardians were more inclined towards prosecution in 1881 and Pedlar, a resident of the town of Bodmin itself, was brought before the Petty Sessions to answer for her actions. Appearing before the magistrates, Pedlar pleaded that she had been informed that, whilst vaccination was definitely compulsory, she could refuse to have the lymph subsequently taken from her child's arm. Taking pity on the poor, ignorant mother, the Bodmin Guardians explained to her the error of her ways and inflicted only a nominal fine of 1s. When it came to costs, even the prosecution took pity on Pedlar, with both the public vaccinator and the prosecutor for the Guardians waiving their fees, leaving Pedlar to pay only an additional 3s 6d to cover the costs of her case.²⁹

Launceston PLU

Figure 12: Map indicating the location of the Launceston Poor Law Union, outlined in black. After Ordnance Survey Sanitary Districts, 1888, *Vision of Britain*, http://visionofbritain.org.uk/maps/sheet/os_sanitary_districts_1888/Cornwall_1888.



²⁹ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 18 March 1881.

Table 7: Prosecutions in the Launceston Poor Law Union by decade.

Decade	Prosecutions	Total for Cornwall
1850-1859	2	55
1860-1869	0	37
1870-1879	2	51
1880-1889	1	63
1890-1899	1	94
1900-1909	5	62
TOTAL	11	362

Adjacent to both the Camelford and Stratton Unions, the Launceston PLU was a large and very rural district which incorporated six sub-districts from across the Devonian border. On the Cornish side, the population averaged just over 16,000 residents throughout the nineteenth century and these occupied an area of almost 85,500 acres. Outside of the larger towns, such as Stoke Climsland, Altarnun, and indeed Launceston itself, the union consisted largely of agricultural land, meaning that many families were often dependent upon the low wages that were available for agricultural labourers at the time. As in many other Cornish PLUs, prosecutions under the Vaccination Act in Launceston were intermittent at best. The first prosecutions had been heard in 1859 but nothing would follow for another two decades. With the Launceston Union situated in the north of the county, far from the major centres of population in Truro, Redruth, and Penzance, public attention was rarely, if ever, drawn to the issue of non-prosecution in the area. As a result, not one of the major Cornish newspapers, nor any of the region's health authorities, saw fit to scrutinize the inaction of the Launceston Board, even when attention was brought to bear on other Boards, particularly those at Liskeard and, later, at Falmouth. In December 1887, after another break in prosecutions of over a decade, John Martyn Jennings, a railway works manager from St Thomas the Apostle, was charged with not vaccinating two of his children, William (born in March 1886) and Minnie (born in April 1887). Jennings' wife, Jane, appeared at the Borough Petty Sessions in his place. Jane stated that 'she had read in the papers that they need not have their children vaccinated'.³⁰ It is unclear as to exactly when Jane had come across such a statement as there was not mention as to whether or not the couple's six older children had been vaccinated or not. The vaccination officer presented evidence that he had visited the Jennings' home on two separate occasions to vaccinate the children but no one had been home at either time. Jane then argued that both William and Minnie had been vaccinated subsequent to those visits. She was let off without a punishment for William's case, but ordered to pay a fine of 6d for Minnie, plus a total of

³⁰ *Cornish and Devon Post*, 10 December 1887.

11s in court costs. A magistrate then warned Jane not to rely on newspapers for understanding the law. To this, she responded 'they should not put lies in the papers'.³¹

Despite having only prosecuted one case since 1887, the Launceston Guardians came under the intense scrutiny of anti-vaccination agitators in early 1896. In January, the Board had met to discuss whether or not they should allow prosecutions to continue in their Union. This meeting angered Albertus Cragoe, who wrote from his home in Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire, to complain that the Launceston Guardians who had voted to continue prosecutions were ignorant of the true dangers of the vaccination procedure. According to Cragoe, 'what a grave responsibility rests with Guardians who assist with their votes the enforcement of this widely-discredited and repulsive medical operation on the bodies of previously healthy children'.³² He went on to claim that the Guardians were perpetuating a conspiracy to allow vaccination to continue, despite its sometimes fatal flaws. Cragoe claimed that the true number of children killed by vaccination was being disguised by medical professionals, quoting a perennial favourite of the anti-vaccination movement, Henry May, Medical Health Officer of the Ashton Union, who had apparently inadvertently revealed the true extent of this cover-up during an inquest. May's oft-repeated quote indicated that 'in [his] desire to preserve vaccination from reproach', he had deliberately neglected to include vaccination on the death certificate of a child who he believed had died from erysipelas following vaccination.³³

That the Guardians at Launceston would even consider prosecuting under the Act was enough to attract the ire of other anti-vaccinationists who wrote to the *Cornish and Devon Post*, the newspaper that covered much of the district. In April of the same year, however, rumours were beginning to spread throughout the region that a case of smallpox had been reported in the town of Launceston itself. The *Cornish and Devon Post* attempted to negate this rumour but revealed that many in the area were uneasy about the high rate of unvaccinated children, especially considering that smallpox was raging fiercely in Exeter, less than 50 miles from Launceston.³⁴ The Board met again in June to debate the vaccination issue once more. One Guardian, a staunch anti-vaccinationist by the name of Rattenbury, became irate when, after delivering a long and rambling speech about the apparent dangers of vaccination, he was interrupted by another Guardian who believed he had spoken for too long. One of Rattenbury's supporters protested, claiming that the speaker was being 'gagged' and, in order to placate the anti-vaccinationists on the Board, Rattenbury was granted an extra five minutes to carry on.³⁵ Once Rattenbury had finished, the Guardian who had defended him argued that the Board should not enforce the compulsory aspects of the Vaccination Act claiming that:

³¹ *Cornish and Devon Post*, 10 December 1887.

³² *Cornish and Devon Post*, 25 January 1896.

³³ *Cornish and Devon Post*, 25 January 1896.

³⁴ *Cornish and Devon Post*, 25 April 1896.

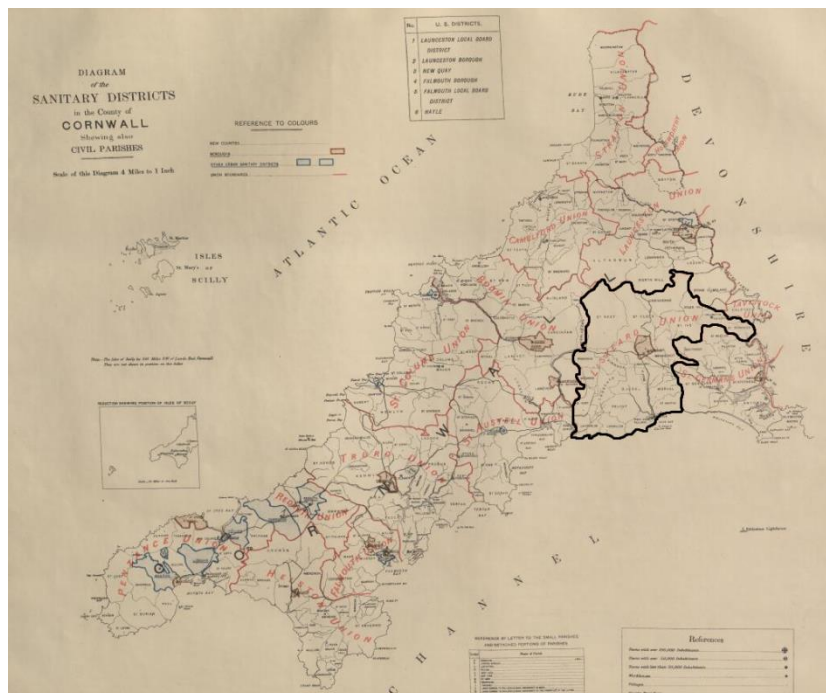
³⁵ *Cornish and Devon Post*, 6 June 1896.

People who thought it right to have themselves or their children impregnated with a foul disease were welcome to do so, and he should make no attempt to use force to prevent them. But where parents from the very highest and noblest motives – the preservation of the health and lives of their children – refused to have them so contaminated he shrank from the responsibility of being a party to their punishing them.³⁶

This meeting of the Guardians was radically different from many of the others that were reported throughout this time, as Boards across Cornwall debated the extent to which they should be following the letter of the law. In the majority of debates of this nature, there was a clear divide between the ardent anti-vaccinationists and those who wholeheartedly believed in the procedure. At Launceston in 1896, however, the lines were less well defined. Some who had previously been entirely in favour of prosecution, lamented that ‘they all agreed that there were evils in connection with vaccination’, but that it was the best line of defence that they had, especially when they considered the terrible toll that smallpox was taking on the city of Gloucester, 150 miles away near the Welsh border.³⁷ Ultimately, the vote was close and the decision was made to continue to allow prosecutions under the Act by the slim majority of 22 votes to 20.

Liskeard PLU

Figure 13: Map indicating the location of the Liskeard Poor Law Union, outlined in black. After Ordnance Survey Sanitary Districts, 1888, *Vision of Britain*, http://visionofbritain.org.uk/maps/sheet/os_sanitary_districts_1888/Cornwall_1888.



³⁶ *Cornish and Devon Post*, 6 June 1896.

³⁷ *Cornish and Devon Post*, 6 June 1896.

Table 8: Prosecutions in the Liskeard Poor Law Union by decade.

Decade	Prosecutions	Total for Cornwall
1850-1859	9	55
1860-1869	15	37
1870-1879	0	51
1880-1889	4	63
1890-1899	0	94
1900-1909	5	62
TOTAL	33	362

At just over 108,000 acres, the Liskeard Union was geographically the largest PLU in Cornwall, more than four times the size of Falmouth. However, throughout the nineteenth century, the union population averaged fewer than 30,000 residents. Despite the small population occupying such a large land area, Liskeard is one of the most critically important unions in the history of the Vaccination Act in Cornwall. An initial enthusiasm for prosecutions under the law saw nine cases heard in the 1850s and fifteen in the 1860s but this came to an abrupt end in 1865 following the second case heard against Joseph Abrams in which he was gaoled for refusing to pay an earlier fine issued for the non-vaccination of his daughter Jane. With no further prosecutions being authorised by the Guardians, by June 1870, one medical officer for the district had lost all patience with the Board. Angus Mackintosh, responsible for the Callington district, had complained to the central Poor Law Board that vaccination ‘was completely forgotten, owing chiefly to the lax way the Guardians discharged their duties’.³⁸ Mackintosh also informed the authorities that the Liskeard Board had passed a resolution to no longer prosecute non-vaccinating parents in their district.

Upon further investigation into this issue, the *West Briton* reported that the Liskeard Board had been infiltrated by Guardians holding anti-vaccinationist views.³⁹ This was, perhaps, to have been expected once the anti-vaccination message had spread beyond the working and pauper classes and into the middle classes of society, those who would be elected to Boards of Guardians for their districts. Henry Pitman, reporter and newspaper editor from Manchester, wrote to the *Cornubian* in March 1870 to impress upon all Cornish Guardians the importance of ceasing prosecutions under the Act and it appears that his message was heeded by the Guardians at Liskeard.⁴⁰ The columnist for the *West Briton* who detailed the influence of anti-vaccinationist ideals on the Guardians at Liskeard appeared to be at a loss to comprehend how or why such prominent men within their communities would hold such apparently backwards beliefs. Reporting on the situation, the columnist states: ‘it seems rather late in the day for anybody, save the advocates of the right of

³⁸ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 18 June 1870.

³⁹ *West Briton*, 21 July 1870.

⁴⁰ *Cornubian*, 18 March 1870.

unlimited contagion, to protest against compulsory vaccination, yet the Board of Guardians at Liskeard last week was found to contain at least one member who thought the question an open one'.⁴¹

When the Liskeard Board of Guardians met in late July 1870, the question of vaccination prosecutions was settled. With reference to Angus Mackintosh's letter to the Poor Law Board, claiming that the Guardians were neglecting their duties under the Vaccination Act, it was revealed that there were multiple anti-vaccinationists within the group, just as the *West Briton* had speculated. According to the report of the July meeting 'several of the guardians said they disapproved of compulsory vaccination, while others contended that the strict letter of the law should be carried out'.⁴² When the debate amongst them had ended, the anti-vaccinationist Guardians clearly made up the majority of the Board, with the clerk 'instructed to inform the Poor-law Board that every facility had been afforded for people to get their children vaccinated, but the guardians declined undertaking to prosecute parties who had neglected to do so'.⁴³ The anti-vaccinationist Guardians at Liskeard were making a stand. In late August, the Privy Council became involved, writing to the Guardians about their refusal to comply with the Vaccination Act. The letter from the Privy Council, however, was not addressed at Liskeard until two months later, when the Board met to discuss the matter once again. The Privy Council urged the Guardians to prosecute, stating 'that the Act was imperative on the guardians appointing a public prosecutor to proceed against persons refusing or neglecting to have their children vaccinated'.⁴⁴ This is reminiscent of the debate that would later occur in Falmouth. However, the situation was not as rapidly resolved as it had been in the smaller union. One of the district vaccinators, a surgeon by the name of Hingston, also appeared at the meeting of the Liskeard Board in October, urging the Guardians to comply with the Act for the sake of the broader public. Hingston informed the assembled Guardians that smallpox had already begun to spread throughout the Liskeard district, killing approximately 20 per cent of those it infected; all of the fatalities, Hingston claimed, were recorded in unvaccinated cases.

Even the evidence provided by Hingston as to the dire consequences of their actions could not sway the opinion of the Board. The letter from the Privy Council was finally replied to, the clerk being instructed to 'inform them that they (the guardians) refuse to appoint a public prosecutor, and that they have not taken any steps in prosecuting those persons who are defaulters in vaccination'.⁴⁵ Just a month after this decision had been made, the smallpox outbreak at Liskeard had reached crisis levels. The *West Briton* claimed that the town, usually considered a healthy one

⁴¹ *West Briton*, 21 July 1870.

⁴² *West Briton*, 28 July 1870.

⁴³ *West Briton*, 28 July 1870.

⁴⁴ *West Briton*, 20 October 1870.

⁴⁵ *West Briton*, 20 October 1870.

in comparison to many others throughout Cornwall, was suffering heavily from the disease.⁴⁶ The *Royal Cornwall Gazette* traced the outbreak to the arrival of an infected 'child of a tramp' who had been staying in a 'low lodging-house' in the town.⁴⁷ Despite the inaction of their Guardians in the matter, many people at Liskeard had taken it upon themselves to be re-vaccinated; some even had the procedure repeated on their young children to ensure their protection.⁴⁸ This outbreak may have done little to persuade the Guardians to take action but the higher authorities were not giving up either. The Privy Council wrote to the Board again in December, this time adopting what the *West Briton* describes as a 'peremptory', or dictatorial, tone. The Guardians were now explicitly threatened with prosecution, the Privy Council informing them that they had recently undertaken legal proceedings against a Board of Guardians from another part of the country who were taking a similar stand. The Liskeard Board was warned that 'should they neglect to take proceedings in cases in which the Act was disregarded the Council would cause legal proceedings to be taken against that Board to compel the due execution of the Act.'⁴⁹ As it had been in June, the issue was deferred until the next meeting, apparently due to poor attendance at the December meeting, with the intention of giving the Guardians more notice to attend and to discuss the issue more comprehensively. However, deferring the discussion of the topic also meant that the smallpox outbreak in Liskeard would continue to rage, unchecked, until at least the next meeting of the Board.

The actions (or, rather, the inaction) of the Liskeard Guardians further reveals the deep complexities of the Vaccination Act. Whilst the *West Briton* had apparently been correct in its assumption that anti-vaccinationists were beginning to assume roles of authority within Boards of Guardians, there were other reasons as to why a Board might refuse to prosecute parents who did not comply with the Act. According to Bauke, it was stated in the provisions of the 1867 amendment that it was

recommended that the appointment of an officer to promote vaccination, and to prosecute persons offending against the Act, should, instead of being permissive, be obligatory on the guardians. The Committee were also strongly of the opinion that the registration on vaccination should be simplified, that the vaccination officer should keep the vaccination register, and, therefore, that the certificates under the Act should be sent to him; and also that the registrar of the district should forward to him a monthly return of births, and of the infants that have died.⁵⁰

This was a costly provision, given that Boards would now have to employ more officials and it quickly became obvious that it was not just anti-vaccination sentiment that was responsible for the stand being taken at Liskeard. Rather, the problem could be traced to a combination of this sentiment and serious financial concerns. The *West Briton* reported at the end of December 1870 that these financial concerns were certainly in play at Liskeard. In an article on the subject, it was

⁴⁶ *West Briton*, 24 November 1870.

⁴⁷ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 26 November 1870.

⁴⁸ *West Briton*, 24 November 1870.

⁴⁹ *West Briton*, 15 December 1870.

⁵⁰ Bauke, *The Vaccination Act*, x.

suggested that the Board was both 'careless of their duties' and 'afraid of a little expense,' to the detriment of the health of their district.⁵¹ It was further stated that 'the Liskeard Board are now endeavouring to get their relieving officers to act as prosecutors without salaries; and if not, a committee of the Board will undertake the duty'.⁵² Clearly, the Liskeard Guardians were attempting to circumvent the necessity of appointing a vaccination officer and it seems they had little success in convincing any of their existing officials to take on such a substantial role on a voluntary basis.

By early 1871, the decision was finally made to employ vaccination and inspection officers for the district of Liskeard, but the Guardians were still not fully in compliance with the Vaccination Act. In March, a newly appointed vaccination officer, Dr Blaxall, pleaded with the Guardians to carry out the full extent of their responsibilities under the law. Appearing before the monthly meeting of the Guardians, Blaxall admonished the Board for its inaction on vaccination prosecutions and claimed that, given his current powers, he could do little to effectively comply with the law as he had not been granted the power to actually prosecute anyone. He called upon the Guardians to appoint a dedicated public prosecutor to deal with the extensive problem of non-compliance within the Union but this was another expense that the Guardians were simply unwilling to incur. Intriguingly, the response of one Guardian present at the meeting reveals that the anti-vaccination sentiments of certain Guardians and the concern about expenses were perhaps more tightly bound than anyone had previously assumed. In addressing Dr Blaxall's request, a guardian named J.W. Dingle 'urged that it was an injustice that the expenses incident to complying with the Act should be paid out of the poor-rates. In his opinion a fund should be set aside for the purpose'.⁵³ This is a sign that, at least Dingle, and perhaps other Guardians as well, felt that the money they received out of Poor Law rates should not be spent on prosecuting non-vaccinating parents, a belief indicating that such prosecution should be considered outside of the bounds of their responsibility. However, neither Dingle nor any other Guardian present at the time provided any explanation as to where the funds to prosecute such non-compliant parents should come from if not from the Poor Law rates. While the children of anti-vaccinationist parents in the Liskeard district remained unprotected from the ravages of smallpox, children living in the district workhouse, at least, were reported to have been well-vaccinated. An initial inspection by Dr Blaxall was reported in the *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, with some 30 boys and nine infants examined and revealed to have been 'satisfactorily vaccinated'.⁵⁴ The Liskeard Guardians, however, would never truly embrace their role as prosecutors under the Vaccination Act. Blaxall's complaint regarding the limitations of his power went unheeded by the Guardians and no prosecutions would occur in the Union for more than a decade.

⁵¹ *West Briton*, 29 December 1870.

⁵² *West Briton*, 29 December 1870.

⁵³ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 11 March 1871.

⁵⁴ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 4 March 1871.

St Austell PLU

Figure 14: Map indicating the location of the St Austell Poor Law Union, outlined in black. After Ordnance Survey Sanitary Districts, 1888, *Vision of Britain*, http://visionofbritain.org.uk/maps/sheet/os_sanitary_districts_1888/Cornwall_1888.

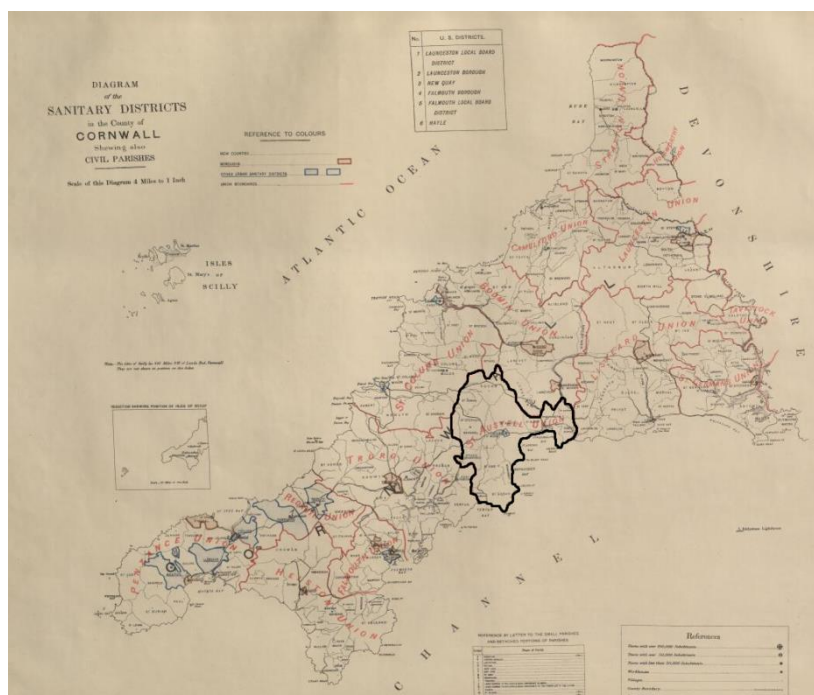


Table 9: Prosecutions in the St Austell Poor Law Union by decade.

Decade	Prosecutions	Total for Cornwall
1850-1859	27	55
1860-1869	3	37
1870-1879	5	51
1880-1889	0	63
1890-1899	35	94
1900-1909	10	62
TOTAL	80	362

As the only district in Cornwall to prosecute inoculation cases, the St Austell PLU had a reputation for being proactive in its enforcement of the Vaccination Act. After all, St Austell had been the first union in Cornwall to prosecute under the compulsory laws following the 1853 amendment to the Act, a move that was followed 18 months later by a substantial rush of prosecutions that saw 18 unidentified individuals face non-vaccination charges at the same time. As was a familiar pattern in many Cornish PLUs, prosecutions in St Austell were intermittent. Following two cases which were prosecuted in 1874, the Guardians did not prosecute again until 1890. In May 1890, a grocer's

assistant, James Perry, was charged with not vaccinating his son, Archibald James. Alongside Perry, were two other men, Arthur Edward Gaved, a general merchant, and Timothy Dunn, a net manufacturer from the fishing community of Mevagissey. Both of these men had unvaccinated daughters, Irene Helen and Ida Leonora, respectively. Each of these cases resulted in an order for the children to be vaccinated and, although no fines were issued, the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* considered these cases to be noteworthy, given that they were ‘the first prosecution[s] in the district for many years’.⁵⁵ To pro-vaccinationists, it may have seemed encouraging that St Austell was prosecuting once again as in September of the same year, a hotel proprietor from Fowey, J.M. Williams, was also charged with not vaccinating his young daughter Frances. Williams’ was an unusual case; given that he openly admitted he had no qualms with vaccination, revealing that all seven of his other children had been vaccinated. Frances, however, was too unwell to be vaccinated, despite having already reached the age of four years and Williams had simply failed to relay this information to the vaccination officer. For his lack of action, Williams was admonished by the court but, as he had presented them with a medical certificate proving that Frances was in no fit state to be vaccinated, there was little the magistrates could do but dismiss his case.⁵⁶

In 1899, after another nine years of inaction, the St Austell Guardians made a sudden and rather impressive return to prosecutions. November of that year saw 30 unnamed individuals summoned to appear at once before the St Austell Petty Sessions. This number was entirely unprecedented in Cornwall. Each of these 30 individuals was issued with an official vaccination order and no fines were inflicted. Ten more prosecutions would follow in 1900 before all legal action against anti-vaccinationists stopped in St Austell, once the most pro-active union in the county with regards to the Vaccination Act. Having been charged with the non-vaccination of his daughter Ida Leonora in 1890, Timothy Dunn appeared to have benefited from the inaction of the Guardians for the better part of a decade. In 1900, Dunn, this time employed as a fisherman, was charged with not vaccinating his son Ronald – an offence for which he received the harshest penalty possible, a fine of £1. Dunn’s hometown, Mevagissey, had long been considered problematic for the health authorities in the St Austell Union; not least of all because it had been the base of the ‘French Doctor’ whose unorthodox medical practices had cost a life in a nearby village. Situated just five miles to the east of the town of St Austell itself, Mevagissey was home to a substantial fishing industry throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In 1849, cholera broke out in Mevagissey, and, with the village considered ‘irremediably filthy’, drastic sanitary reforms were undertaken.⁵⁷ As Peter Baldwin reveals, conditions during the cholera outbreak in the village were so appalling that medical authorities in the region were convinced to enact ‘reverse sequestrations’; instead of removing the sick and dying from their homes and placing them in isolation, the

⁵⁵ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 8 May 1890.

⁵⁶ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 4 September 1890.

⁵⁷ Peter Baldwin, *Contagion and the State in Europe, 1830-1930*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1999, 136.

authorities decided it would be more effective to simply remove the healthy individuals from the vicinity of the contagion.⁵⁸ This unusual form of sanitary practice had only been trialled in a handful of extreme cases but it proved to be extremely effective at Mevagissey. Barton notes that the evacuation of the village meant that 'by early August at least half the people had left their houses'.⁵⁹ Some residents left for good, establishing new lives in other parts of Cornwall, never to return to the coastal village they had once called home. Many others, however, became refugees, fleeing the horror of the worst outbreak of cholera to occur in Cornwall during the 1848-49 epidemic that had swept through most of Europe. In order to accommodate these refugees, a tent village was established at nearby Portmellon. Ordnance tents were shipped in from Plymouth and the camp at Portmellon accommodated some 500 people. However, this was not enough to cope with the influx of refugees from Mevagissey and those who could not find shelter in the tents were forced to stay in fish cellars, where canvas was used to divide the cellars into compartments.⁶⁰

The outbreak of cholera at Mevagissey brought an unprecedented level of government control upon the lives of the residents. Those who fled the village did so under the direction of the medical authorities, brought in from across the south west of England and from Wales to oversee both the evacuation and the management of the outbreak itself. According to the *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette* of 16 August 1849, the healthy residents of Mevagissey were 'advised to fly as if they were fleeing a fire'.⁶¹ Any household item that had the potential to harbour the contagion was burned and entire houses were disinfected. The ordnance tents that housed the refugees at Portmellon arrived on the *Rochester*, a barque en route to Pembroke. Under the direction of medical authorities, the waters surrounding the village were considered an exclusion zone and the crew of the *Rochester* was not allowed to get too close to the shore for fear of the epidemic spreading. As a result, the tents were sent ashore in unmanned vessels.⁶² When residents of Portmellon initially refused to allow refugees to occupy their fish cellars for fear of contagion, authorities took them by force. Control of the local fishing industry was also handed over to the medical authorities who enforced tough regulations for the duration of the epidemic. Fishery workers who were forced to stay in Mevagissey to keep the industry running were not permitted to work for more than eight hours a day and were kept well-fed and rested in order to prevent exhaustion from setting in as it was believed that an exhausted body was more likely to contract cholera. Similarly, there were pervading rumours that cholera was caused by exposure to the entrails of fish and workers were forbidden from gutting any of the fish that were brought ashore.⁶³ When the outbreak began to wind down at the end of August, the authorities temporarily closed the fisheries, the main industry in the village, and forced all remaining fishery employees to help with the various sanitation projects,

⁵⁸ Baldwin, *Contagion and the State in Europe*, 1999, 136.

⁵⁹ Barton, *Life in Cornwall: In the Mid-Nineteenth Century*, 1971, 177.

⁶⁰ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 17 August 1849.

⁶¹ *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette*, 16 August 1849.

⁶² *Hampshire Advertiser & Salisbury Guardian*, 18 August 1849.

⁶³ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 17 August 1849.

including widespread disinfecting and the construction of sluices to keep waste from the fisheries from contaminating the community's drinking water.

Ultimately, it was water that made the evacuation of Mevagissey such a success. Whilst medical authorities had sent a large proportion of the uninfected population to Portmellon for fresh air to avoid the miasmas they believed were causing the outbreak, they had inadvertently stumbled upon the solution to the crisis; fresh, uncontaminated water. The water supply at Portmellon was entirely separate to that used at Mevagissey, despite the fact that the settlements were only a mile apart. By sending healthy individuals away from the contaminated water supply, the medical authorities had ensured that the Portmellon encampment remained a picture of health and no cases of illness were reported amongst the refugees there.⁶⁴ In the first week of September, residents began to return to the village and life in Mevagissey slowly returned to normal. It would be another two decades before John Snow's cholera contagion theory would begin to be accepted by the medical orthodoxy but Mevagissey in 1849 stands as proof that outbreaks of cholera could be controlled by ensuring a clean water supply was maintained. During the cholera epidemic, the residents of Mevagissey were saved by the actions of medical authorities who entered the village and assumed control of every aspect of life until the outbreak was under control. This willingness to allow for government bodies to take control during outbreaks of cholera was not replicated when it came to smallpox. In 1885, Mevagissey was subject to an outbreak of smallpox. Occurring within living memory of the cholera epidemic, the reaction of the village's inhabitants was very different when medical authorities arrived to assume control of the outbreak.

At their May meeting, the St Austell Guardians were informed that their medical officer (Dr Mason) and their inspector (Mr Sambles) 'had very great difficulty in carrying out their duties in the town because of the opposition of the inhabitants to any remedial measures or sanitary improvements'.⁶⁵ The population of Mevagissey which had, less than four decades earlier, welcomed an influx of medical authorities from across the broader south west and Wales, was now reacting violently to the imposition of their own local authorities who attempted to put into place similar practices to those that had been seen in 1849. Far from ordering the evacuation of the town, shutting down industry, and burning personal belongings, Mason and Sambles faced fierce opposition, not only to their offer of vaccination, but also to the use of disinfectants, which they believed could be used to prevent any further spread of smallpox. The officials reported that they were 'mobbed by the people' when they attempted to begin the disinfecting process.⁶⁶ A possible explanation for the radically different reception that Mason and Sambles received in 1885 lies in the very nature of the diseases themselves. As was argued previously, smallpox was endemic to Britain and, as a result, the general population feared it much less than they did 'foreign' or 'imported' diseases such as

⁶⁴ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 24 August 1849.

⁶⁵ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 29 May 1885.

⁶⁶ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 29 May 1885.

Asiatic cholera. The example of Mevagissey shows that, even when Guardians attempted to promote vaccination amongst a community that had previously been seen as largely receptive towards medical intervention, opposition to the procedure amongst the general population was strong enough to bring the campaign to a sudden, and violent, halt. This was even the case when smallpox was already ravaging the community in question.

Through a disaggregation of East Cornwall in this manner, it is clearly shown that the Vaccination Act was far from uniformly administered across the region. From no prosecutions in the St Columb and St Germans PLUs to the large numbers of prosecutions recorded in the St Austell PLU, how anti-vaccinationists in the east of Cornwall experienced the Vaccination Act varied depending upon the union they resided in. There were, however, some similarities to be found between the unions. In both the St Columb and Bodmin PLUs, there was a reluctance to prosecute mothers under the Act. In St Columb, Mrs Floyd was only sent a letter of warning regarding her abusive behaviour towards the public vaccinator, whilst in Bodmin, Emily Pedlar was charged with an offence under the Act but the court costs and fines were remitted in her case as the prosecution took pity on the poor, misinformed woman. It is in Bodmin, the centre of institutional justice for the county of Cornwall, that this lax attitude towards the prosecution of offences under the Vaccination Act is particularly perplexing. However, the least populated Union in Cornwall, Camelford, presents the greatest challenge to the existing narrative of vaccine opposition in England. In the Camelford Union, with its very rural, largely agrarian population averaging just 7,700, anti-vaccinationists should have had little to fear with regards to prosecution from their Guardians. Indeed, the Guardians prosecuted just one case, in 1871, against an anti-vaccinationist in the union. Despite this, the Camelford Union presented the highest proportion of exemption applications in the post-1898 amendment period that was recorded in any Cornish PLU. With a total of 40 exemption applications made in a period of just seven years, Camelford challenges the accepted narrative that those who benefited most from the 1898 amendment were those most likely to be prosecuted under the Act. Indeed, the rush for exemptions at the beginning of the twentieth century in Camelford reveals the strong undercurrent of anti-vaccinationism that existed in the Union, despite the obvious lack of prosecutions recorded.

Opposition to vaccination was similarly strong in the St Austell PLU and this union presents a very striking picture of the challenges facing medical authorities in their attempts to enforce compulsory vaccination amongst a population that was so vehemently opposed to the practice. When smallpox broke out in Mevagissey in the mid-1880s, health authorities attempted to protect the population of the small fishing village through vaccination. However, when they arrived, the medical officer and the vaccination inspector were met with extreme hostility towards the procedure. This is in stark contrast to the way in which government health authorities were received in the same village less than 40 years earlier when the population there was threatened by an outbreak of the dreaded cholera. Not only does this difference in reception reflect the shifting attitudes of the population at

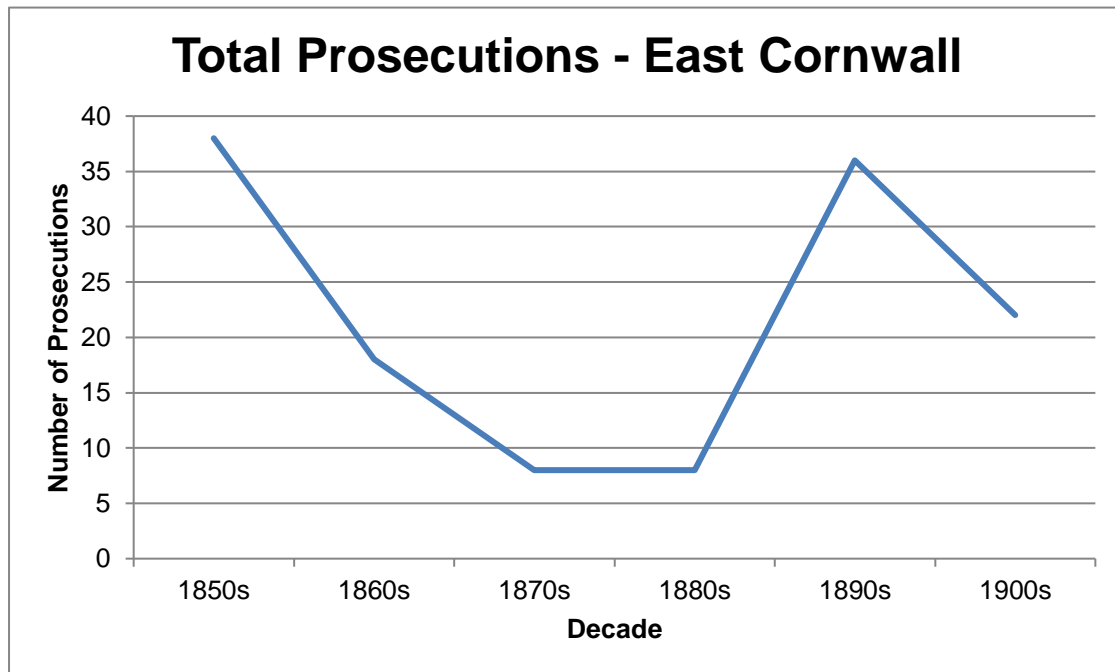
Mevagissey towards government intervention into health crises, it also reveals both the deep distrust of biomedicine and the divergent attitudes towards certain diseases that existed amongst the population. Mevagissey's experience shows that cholera was a feared disease – it was new, 'foreign', and terrifying – but smallpox was not perceived in the same way. Smallpox was an endemic disease and, as such, was more familiar to the residents of Mevagissey. Thus, they were openly hostile towards even a local authority's attempt to stamp out the disease through vaccination.

Perhaps the most striking example of opposition towards the Vaccination Act comes not from the general population, but from those appointed to carry out the law. The Guardians at Liskeard were amongst the first in the region to openly refuse to appoint a vaccination officer. Although this refusal initially appeared to be based upon financial concerns, as is evidenced by the failed attempt of the Board to establish the position as a voluntary one, there was certainly a deep undercurrent of anti-vaccinationist sentiment that was affecting the Guardians at Liskeard. The example of East Cornwall also reveals that, even in situations where an ardent proponent of vaccination was pushing for the procedure to be supported by Guardians, there was often little will to do so. In the rural, agricultural-based environment of the Stratton Union, staunch vaccination proponent, Dr James Montague Braund, could do little to enforce the Act within his own union. Despite his calls for medical professionals across the nation to actively promote vaccination, legal attempts to enforce the procedure in his own union were non-existent throughout the entirety of the nineteenth century. Rurality played a significant role in defining the administration of the Vaccination Act in the east of Cornwall. With such small populations occupying large areas of agricultural land, there was very little threat of severe outbreaks of smallpox and this was largely the concern of the more urbanised west.

With the exception of the St Austell Union, the number of prosecutions recorded under the Vaccination Act in the east of Cornwall was relatively low. Although the region contained a higher number of distinct unions (eight in the east compared with just five in the west), East Cornwall prosecuted just 35% of the cases recorded across the county. This is a particularly small proportion when it is considered that the St Austell Union alone accounts for almost 25% of the county total on its own. The St Austell Union was the major driving force behind the prosecution of anti-vaccinationists in the east of Cornwall and those who opposed the procedure had a much higher chance of being prosecuted under the Vaccination Act if they lived within the bounds of the St Austell Union than in any other union east of Truro. However, the prosecution pattern of the St Austell Guardians displays more similarities with the western unions than it does with any of its eastern counterparts. In particular, the St Austell Guardians oscillated between stances – prosecuting and not prosecuting at varying points throughout the period. As [Graph 1](#) indicates, when the St Austell Guardians adopted a non-prosecuting stance (particularly in the 1870s and

1880s), there was a substantial decrease in the number of cases prosecuted throughout the entire East Cornwall region.

Graph 1: Total number of prosecutions recorded across East Cornwall by decade.



However, the St Austell Union was not the only union east of Truro to display an intermittent prosecution pattern. Launceston, although presenting a smaller proportion of prosecutions, also experienced intermittency, with decades often passing between cases. The Launceston Union presents the best evidence of the link between anti-vaccinationists in the east and their counterparts in the west. Although prosecutions were less likely in the eastern unions, prominent anti-vaccinationists, such as the Cragoes, maintained a keen interest in the proceedings of these Unions, praising them when they stopped prosecuting and expressing outrage when prosecutions resumed. This indicates that, at least to certain individuals, vaccination was an issue that transgressed regional differences. Despite the fact that prosecution patterns in the east often differed greatly from those in the west, anti-vaccinationists such as the Cragoe brothers saw opposition to the Vaccination Act as an issue that united the populations of the east and the west.

Chapter 6: 'Some of us are Anti-Vaccinators': West Cornwall Guardians and the Vaccination Act

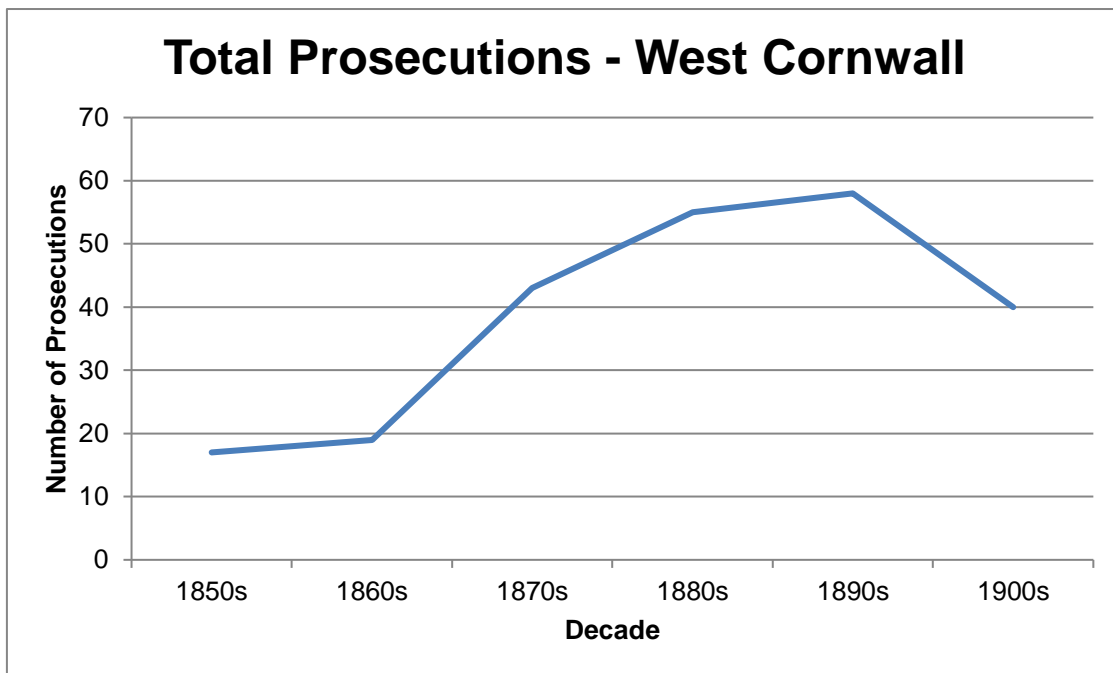
Although individuals such as Thomas and Albertus Cragoe saw anti-vaccinationism as an issue to unite the whole population of Cornwall, there were clear and undeniable regional differences that affected the way in which the Vaccination Act was administered between eastern and western Cornwall. Western Cornwall, as Deacon notes, came to dominate the Cornish identity of the nineteenth century.¹ With its economy largely driven by mining, Western Cornwall is often understood to be quintessentially Cornish, at the expense of the experience of the agricultural east. However, it is evident that the west of Cornwall is a critical region for understanding the administration of the Vaccination Act on the rural English periphery. The urbanised west, divided into five separate PLUs and containing the county's most populous centres (Penzance, Redruth, Camborne and Truro), had risen to prominence in the region through the influence of the mining industry and the growth of Methodism amongst the population. Deacon argues that, where once Cornish identity had been built upon a history of revolution and ethnic uprisings, by the end of the eighteenth century, mining and Methodism formed the core of 'Cornishness'.² Western Cornwall contained approximately 60% of the Cornish population in an area less than 290,000 acres.³ However, West Cornwall also represented 65% of the prosecutions recorded under the Vaccination Act despite the fact that each individual union underwent periods of intermittent non-prosecution phases, often at differing times. For example, Penzance Union went through a non-prosecution period in the 1880s, with just one case brought before county magistrates for the entire decade. The similarly-sized Redruth Union, on the other hand, actually reached the peak of its prosecutions at the same time, recording 35 cases. There was little to no consistency between the stances of these Unions but, due to the relatively even spread of cases between the major unions (Penzance, Redruth, and Truro) the prosecution pattern for the west of Cornwall is very different to that of the east. This is demonstrated in [Graph 2](#).

¹ Deacon, *From a Cornish Study*, 8.

² Deacon, *From a Cornish Study*, 8.

³ Figures taken from Redding, *An Illustrated Itinerary of the County of Cornwall*, 248-252.

Graph 2: Total number of prosecutions recorded across West Cornwall by decade.



Helston PLU

Figure 15: Map indicating the location of the Helston Poor Law Union, outlined in black. After Ordnance Survey Sanitary Districts, 1888, *Vision of Britain*, http://visionofbritain.org.uk/maps/sheet/os_sanitary_districts_1888/Cornwall_1888.

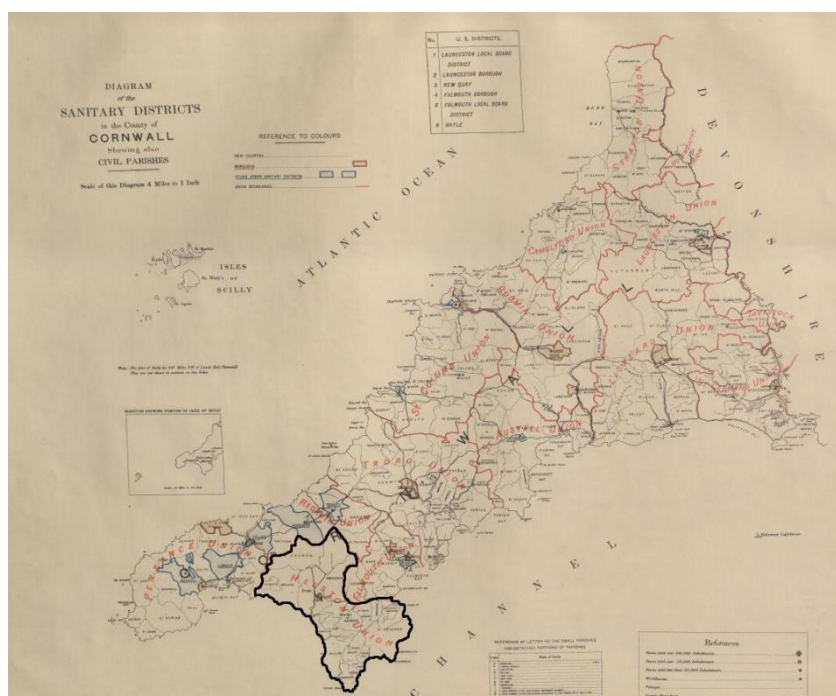


Table 10: Prosecutions in the Helston Poor Law Union by decade.

Decade	Prosecutions	Total for Cornwall
1850-1859	0	55
1860-1869	4	37
1870-1879	0	51
1880-1889	3	63
1890-1899	0	94
1900-1909	3	62
TOTAL	10	362

Situated on the Lizard Peninsula, the Helston Poor Law Union shared a border with the Penzance Union that occupied the neighbouring Penwith Peninsula. The two unions incorporated similar types of industry, with mining, fishing and agriculture most prominent in the regions. Naturally, the demographics were similar, with both unions containing populations of largely impoverished agricultural labourers, as well as miners and fisherman who regularly faced the prospect of extreme poverty if the season was poor or the land they were mining failed to live up to expectations. Helston was less industrialised than neighbouring Penzance and, as a result, the union was generally a healthier one. Penzance reached its peak infant mortality rate in 1891, when 212.87 per 1000 children born alive in the Union would die prematurely.⁴ This was the highest rate ever recorded in Cornwall in the nineteenth century. Helston's infant mortality rate, on the other hand, peaked much earlier, in 1871, at 160.67 per 1000 live births.⁵ Whilst still high for the region, it paled in comparison to the rate recorded on the neighbouring peninsula. The Helston Union was relatively large, geographically, covering an area of approximately 72,000 acres, but the average population was roughly half that of the Penzance Union, approximately 26,500 residents. Given the relative rurality of the Helston Union, it is perhaps unsurprising that the district recorded just ten prosecutions under the Vaccination Act. After a string of prosecutions in the early-to-mid 1860s, the Guardians at Helston ceased prosecutions under the Act for almost two decades. In 1872, the union suffered a terrible outbreak of smallpox and, with 11 recorded deaths in a two month period, had the dubious honour of recording the second-highest death toll in Cornwall during the outbreak, surpassed only by neighbouring Penzance.⁶ The *Royal Cornwall Gazette* made mention of the fact that the Helston Guardians were neglecting their duties at this time, but much of the vitriol was aimed at Penzance which, with its larger population in a smaller geographic area, was admittedly at

⁴ University of Portsmouth, *A Vision of Britain Through Time*, Penzance PLU/RegD through time, http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/unit/10174752/rate/INF_MORT

⁵ University of Portsmouth, *A Vision of Britain Through Time*, Helston PLU/RegD through time, http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/unit/10154893/rate/INF_MORT

⁶ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 16 November 1872

a much higher risk during the outbreak.⁷ In Penzance, the 1870s were a time of mass prosecutions, partly in response to the severity with which smallpox had struck in 1872. However, in Helston, no prosecutions were heard at all during the decade. Newspapers at the time reveal no apparent concerns regarding the infiltration of anti-vaccinationists onto the Helston Board of Guardians, as was seen in the case of the Liskeard Guardians who stopped prosecuting at a similar time. Rather, Helston simply seems to have fallen by the wayside, overshadowed by its more populous neighbour.

It is unclear as to the exact reason for this distinct lack of interest in enforcing the Vaccination Act in the Helston Union. That the general population opposed the procedure and its enforcement by law is not in question; as the earlier discussion of folklore in the county revealed, the people of Helston Union were deeply superstitious, with reports of the popularity of white witches, spell-breakers, and others claiming to have supernatural capabilities recorded in newspapers well into the final decades of the nineteenth century. Rather, it is more likely that there was a distinct lack of will amongst both the Guardians and the vaccination officials to implement prosecutions. The unwillingness of the latter is best evidenced by a meeting of the Board in 1881 when the vaccination officer for Breage, Samuel Moyle, provided the Guardians with a list of parents who had defaulted on the vaccination of their children. In his district alone, Moyle had identified at least nineteen children, born over a six month period, who had not yet been vaccinated.⁸ Moyle was instructed by the Guardians to institute proceedings against all nineteen families, yet no records exist to prove that any such prosecutions actually took place.

In a pattern reminiscent of many Cornish PLUs at the time, the Helston Union experienced long periods of intermittence between prosecutions under the Vaccination Act. Following three cases in 1884 there were no further prosecutions in the union until the dawn of the twentieth century. That is not to say that anti-vaccination was not a problem in the union for the intervening 16 years. Rather, Guardians and officers alike continued to threaten prosecution in cases of non-vaccinating parents but they simply did not carry through with those threats. However, this was enough to draw the outrage of anti-vaccinationists from across Britain. Perhaps unsurprisingly, one of the most vocal opponents of these threats was Albertus Cragoe. This reveals further evidence that Cornish anti-vaccinationists were keenly aware of the prosecution stances in each union across the county. Cragoe contended that the threats being made by vaccination officers at Helston, however empty they may have been, were tantamount to tyranny. In a letter to the *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, he defended anti-vaccinationist parents in Helston:

It appears the officer has threatened to prosecute several parents, among them one who has children two or three years old, and who has absolutely refused to comply with the law "because he was convinced that two children of his had previously been killed by vaccination"

⁷ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 23 November 1872.

⁸ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 19 August 1881.

– seems a pretty strong reason too ... It is going much too far to enforce by law any medical operation on anyone, and in a case of this kind, doubly monstrous. What has England come to in regard to this inhuman law?⁹

Cragoe's letter goes on to reveal that, by 1893 at least, the Guardians at Helston were refusing to allow the vaccination officers to prosecute any cases against defaulters. He praises them, saying:

The Guardians have, in their discretionary power, this law in their hands; and they are, by refusing to prosecute defaulters, showing the initiative to higher endowed, less in touch, and, therefore, less responsible bodies. This is as it should be, and we are to be rid of a fad which has cost thousands of lives and millions of money. The time has come – we boldly demand emancipation.¹⁰

With the Helston Guardians continuing to block any attempt to prosecute non-vaccinating parents in their union throughout the 1890s, the number of unvaccinated children in the district only continued to grow. Although it never quite reached the same levels as the Falmouth Union's famed 82-83 percent unvaccinated rate, the Helston Union was still known amongst anti-vaccinationists to harbour a strong opposition to the procedure. Just over four years after he sent the above letter, Albertus Cragoe once again provided commentary on the situation in the correspondence columns of the *Royal Cornwall Gazette*. Addressing concerns expressed by the Truro Medical Officer for Health that the introduction of calf lymph in place of the less-popular humanised lymph had not resulted in an increased number of vaccinations in the union, Cragoe contended that this was the case because cows were known to be subject to a myriad of diseases, including 'consumption, foot-and-mouth disease, cancer, ringworm, felon, anthrax, and cattle-plague'.¹¹ Cragoe then pointed to the Helston Union as an example of a rural population that was well aware of the apparent dangers of vaccination using calf lymph. He claimed that 'there [are] many defaulters in the Helston district. No doubt the Helstonian babies are healthy, and their parents wisely object to have them made ill.'¹² Despite the glowing terms with which Cragoe had described the Helston Guardians in 1893, by the time his next letter on the subject was published in March 1898, other anti-vaccinationists were beginning to question whether the Board was truly worthy of such praise.

An anonymous correspondent, identified only as 'Observer', wrote to the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* at the end of March, indicating that he believed there were sinister undertones to the stance of the Guardians at Helston. In reference to a claim made by a doctor for a payment of 20s from the Poor Law rates for attending a child who had apparently been made unwell by vaccination, 'Observer' noted a potential conspiracy being undertaken by vaccination officers at Helston, claiming that 'a medical man can legally claim the usual fee allowed for making a child ill (vaccination), and also claim a far greater amount if employed in trying to make it well again'.¹³ This apparent conspiracy to extort more money from the rates at the expense of children's lives was made all the more sinister

⁹ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 21 December 1893.

¹⁰ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 21 December 1893.

¹¹ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 10 March 1898.

¹² *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 10 March 1898.

¹³ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 7 April 1898.

by 'Observer's' assertion that some of the Guardians at Helston had covered-up the incident, claiming that 'the clerical members of the Board deftly threw a veil over the nature of the alleged injury'.¹⁴ By the turn of the twentieth century, these reportedly conspiratorial Guardians were once again in the majority on the Helston Board and prosecutions were resumed.

The last case to be heard in the Helston Union was brought against a Sithney domestic gardener, Alfred King in 1900. When asked how he plead, King stated 'he did not feel guilty in the matter because he presumed being guilty implied guilt'.¹⁵ This response drew laughter from the court and King went on to state that:

He had had four children vaccinated, and thought, like most people that vaccination was almost as necessary as food until the last child was vaccinated and had been ill ever since. He then inquired into the merits and demerits of vaccination and had been simply appalled to find the evidence against vaccination. It simply spread disease, and in many instances caused death, and in his own neighbourhood there were cases of children who had died as the result of vaccination.¹⁶

With regards to the unvaccinated child he was summoned for, his son Harry Milward, King stated that he had changed his mind again and had decided that vaccination was worth the risk, consenting to have the boy vaccinated, but only if the procedure was performed by the doctor of his choosing. When the doctor he had written to failed to reply, King had simply refused to have Harry Milward vaccinated by anyone else. For his actions, King was issued with a fine of 5s and £1 0s 10d in court costs.

¹⁴ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 7 April 1898.

¹⁵ *Cornish Telegraph*, 28 March 1900.

¹⁶ *Cornish Telegraph*, 28 March 1900.

Falmouth PLU

Figure 16: Map indicating the location of the Falmouth Poor Law Union, outlined in black. After Ordnance Survey Sanitary Districts, 1888, *Vision of Britain*, http://visionofbritain.org.uk/maps/sheet/os_sanitary_districts_1888/Cornwall_1888.

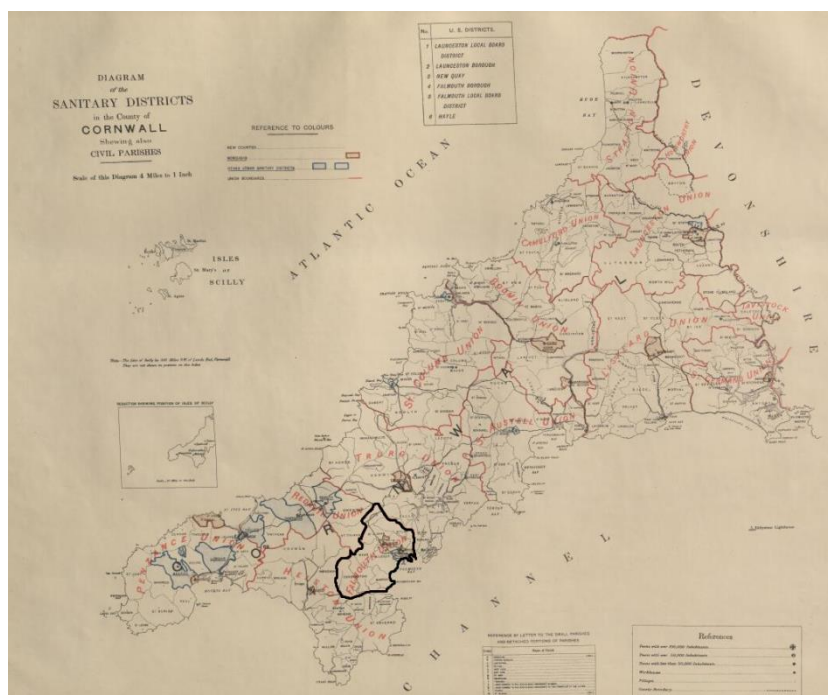


Table 11: Prosecutions in the Falmouth Poor Law Union by decade.

Decade	Prosecutions	Total for Cornwall
1850-1859	8	55
1860-1869	0	37
1870-1879	1	51
1880-1889	0	63
1890-1899	0	94
1900-1909	6	62
TOTAL	15	362

Falmouth, with an average population of 23,600 individuals, was one of the first unions to prosecute under the Vaccination Act, within a year of compulsion being introduced. However, following the prosecution of eight individuals for non-vaccination in 1854, there were no further prosecutions in Falmouth for two decades. This is particularly surprising, given that Falmouth, with the deepest natural harbour in Western Europe, was a hub of shipping activity, potentially exposing the residents of the district to an increased risk of contracting smallpox. The Falmouth Union was far from a healthy one at this time, with infant mortality peaking at 203.8 per 1000 live births in

1871.¹⁷ This mortality rate, reflecting the premature deaths of one in five children, put Falmouth well above the average infant mortality rate for the south west of England. In fact, Falmouth in 1871 was on a par with London's Whitechapel and St Georges PLUs, as well as unions in major industrial areas such as Leeds and Bradford.¹⁸ Following a single prosecution that occurred in 1873, another 28 years would pass before any further cases were heard in the Union.

One of three cases heard in 1901 was brought against William Rail, a farmer from Constantine. As with Albertus Cragoe in Truro, Rail had served as a Guardian for Falmouth, a fact that resonated with the magistrates at Penryn. In another parallel to the Cragoes, Rail was also defended by the same lawyer who the brothers had retained in their cases twenty years earlier, Robert Dobell, indicating that he was likely paying a subscription to the same anti-vaccination society to cover the costs of his defence. The defence in this case argued that the Vaccination Act had not been properly complied with, thus making the summons against Rail illegal. According to Rail, the public vaccinator had indeed made an attempt to vaccinate his son, also named William. However, instead of offering the procedure to the elder William Rail, or his wife Ellen, the vaccinator had instead spoken only to the boy's grandmother, who resided at the property next door. The magistrates agreed with Rail, dismissing the summons against him as the public vaccinator had not complied with the appropriate procedure laid out under the Act.¹⁹ Almost one year later, Rail found himself swept up in the next round of prosecutions brought by the Falmouth Guardians; this time for not vaccinating his younger son, John. This time, Rail attempted to defend himself by claiming he had a conscientious objection to the procedure, but it was not enough to prevent a fine of 15s being issued. At the same hearing in 1902, a parish councillor and electrician, Arthur Henry Huss, informed the magistrates that he had 'failed to obtain a certificate of exemption from vaccination through ignorance of the law'.²⁰ How, exactly, a parish councillor could be ignorant of such a prominent and unpopular law is not explained but his excuse was enough to escape a fine. Instead, Huss was ordered to have his daughter, Lilian May Catherine, vaccinated and to pay the costs of the court, totalling £1 18s. Following the case against Huss, the Chairman of the Bench, Mr E.B. Beauchamp, 'said now that there were so many small-pox cases people should be vaccinated in fairness to those around them. People who were not vaccinated would be sure to get the disease,

¹⁷ University of Portsmouth, *A Vision of Britain Through Time*, Falmouth PLU/RegD through time: Historical Statistics on Life and Death for the Poor Law Union/Reg. District, Rate: Infant Mortality Rate, http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/unit/10044110/rate/INF_MORT.

¹⁸ University of Portsmouth, *A Vision of Britain Through Time*, Bradford RegD through time, <http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/unit/10585545>; Leeds PLPar/PLPar/PLU/RegD through time, <http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/unit/10055751>; St Georges PLU/RegD through time, <http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/unit/10139648>; Whitechapel PLPar/PLU/RegD through time, <http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/unit/10174661>.

¹⁹ *Cornish Telegraph*, 3 April 1901.

²⁰ *Cornish Telegraph*, 5 March 1902.

and they would die of it'.²¹ This statement then led to what the *Cornish Telegraph* described as 'dissent in court', revealing the mood of the crowd attending the court that day.

The pattern of prosecutions in the Falmouth Union does not seem to accurately reflect the attitudes of the general population towards vaccination. The first rush of prosecutions in 1854 revealed that there was strong resentment towards the procedure in the district, strong enough that eight parents could be charged at once. Then, for almost two decades, there were no further prosecutions. Similarly, following a single case in 1873, there were no prosecutions for almost thirty years until William Rail and his fellow defendants were charged with offences under the Act. In late 1886, William Tebb, the prominent anti-vaccination campaigner and co-founder and chairman of the London Society for the Abolition of Compulsory Vaccination (later dissolved into the National Anti-Vaccination League), wrote to the *Burnley Express*, a newspaper published in East Lancashire. In this letter, Tebb claimed that almost 3000 cases of prosecution had been recorded across England and Wales throughout 1885, the most recent set of statistics on the subject that had been made available to the public. Tebb went on to state that, in his opinion, this figure did not accurately reflect the true number of anti-vaccinationists that existed in England and Wales. He argued that the Blue Book of Judicial Statistics for 1885 'takes no cognizance of the defaulters at *Falmouth*, Banbury, Dewsbury, Eastbourne, Keighley, Bingley, and Rushden, and many other places where they are numbered by thousands' [emphasis added].²² In this letter, Tebb listed some of the most easily recognisable areas of anti-vaccinationist agitation in England at the time, particularly Keighley, Eastbourne, and Banbury alongside Falmouth, indicating the importance of the district to the anti-vaccination movement.

The Falmouth Guardians had a tumultuous relationship with vaccination. Whilst they had been amongst the earliest adopters of prosecution in the 1850s, by the time William Tebb wrote his letter to the *Burnley Express*, the Falmouth Union had gained a nationwide reputation for its lax attitude towards prosecutions under the Act. This reputation stemmed back to 1871, when the Vaccination Act underwent another amendment. Building on the foundation of the 1867 amendment, making repeat prosecutions possible under the Act, the 1871 amendment took the law a step further, forcing PLUs to employ vaccination officers to institute the prosecutions that were to be undertaken. Essentially, this amendment made it much harder for PLUs to avoid or ignore their responsibilities under the law. Despite this move, the Falmouth Guardians continued to resist the pressure to appoint vaccination officers until it became almost impossible for them to justify their refusal to the broader public. In July 1871, an inquest was convened to investigate the death of a child in the town of Falmouth. The child, a boy named Clarence Butson, had died of smallpox and the jury was presented with evidence that proved he had never been vaccinated. As 1871 had already seen smallpox again reach epidemic proportions across England, the actions of the

²¹ *Cornish Telegraph*, 5 March 1902.

²² *Burnley Express*, 1 January 1887.

Guardians were heavily scrutinized and it was seen as unconscionable that the individuals elected to administer all aspects of the Poor Laws had allowed young Clarence Butson, and countless others like him, to remain unvaccinated while smallpox was rampant throughout the country. A member of the jury at the inquest into the boy's death, Mr Warn, was reported in the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* as saying:

Vaccination was thoroughly neglected in [Falmouth]. The Poor Law Guardians do not appear to wake up to their duty at all. They had had the subject brought under their notice, and they had been memorialized by the Parish Local Board, but apparently without any real good.²³

The criticism that the Falmouth Guardians faced in the wake of Clarence Butson's death proved to be the 'wake up' call that was needed. Within a week of the inquest, the Guardians met and acknowledged their own failings with regards to vaccination in their district. According to the report that followed, it was noted that 'from the registrar-general's quarterly returns it will be noticed that vaccination at Falmouth has been fearfully neglected'.²⁴ They could no longer ignore their responsibilities under the Vaccination Act. It was decided, in a move likely designed to cut costs, that the Board would not employ extra officials to fill four newly-created vaccination officer positions. Instead, the registrars of births and deaths for each of the four sub-districts in the union were given the additional tasks of serving as vaccination officers, inspectors, and public prosecutors. The Falmouth Guardians appeared to believe that attaching the vaccination officer roles to the existing registrars' portfolios would both prove to be cost effective and ensure that they met their responsibilities under the Act. The *Royal Cornwall Gazette* reported that: 'it is believed that this step, if vigilantly and permanently carried into effect, will be the means in future of preventing such a spread of the disease throughout ... the Falmouth Union'.²⁵ It seems the Falmouth Guardians, however, were far too optimistic about the impact that their new solution would have.

Following a singular case in February 1873, the Falmouth Guardians and their registrar-vaccination officer hybrids remained silent on the issue of prosecutions for more than a decade. By late 1886, the number of unvaccinated children in Falmouth was rising once more and the Guardians were forced to address the issue again. Most of those present at the meeting actually supported vaccination as a medical necessity but lacked the will to actively prosecute parents for not complying with the law.²⁶ That is, the majority of Guardians on the Falmouth Board were not anti-vaccinationists. Rather, they simply believed that prosecution was not the right course of action to be taken. A resolution was proposed that would see the Falmouth Guardians support prosecution under the Vaccination Act in order to fully comply with their responsibilities under the law. This

²³ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 22 July 1871.

²⁴ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 29 July 1871.

²⁵ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 29 July 1871.

²⁶ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 15 October 1886.

resolution was defeated, thirteen votes to seven. The decision was publicly lauded by the likes of Thomas Cragoe, who praised the Falmouth Guardians for 'not ... impos[ing] by force a right [sic] so beastly', and by William Tebb, who, as has been shown, saw fit to list Falmouth alongside places such as Banbury, Eastbourne, and Keighley as a guiding example for all other Boards of Guardians across the country to follow.²⁷ The following year saw continued praise for the Falmouth Guardians in the correspondence columns of the *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, with William Tebb enthusiastically praising the anti-vaccinationists of Cornwall for their dedication to the cause. Tebb described Falmouth (in exaggerated and grandiose terms) as having 'by determined but peaceable and constitutional agitation ... emancipated its citizens from the vaccination incubus'.²⁸

In early 1892, just over five years after the Falmouth Guardians ceased prosecutions, the Chairman of the Board proudly remarked that 'no prosecution had been instituted by that Board for a great number of years and more than one-half of the children in the union had not been vaccinated'.²⁹ The subsequent report of the Registrar-General into the state of vaccination in the Union revealed the Chairman's alarming statement to be true. Of the 332 total children born in the district in 1890, 167 (50%) were unvaccinated. The number of unvaccinated children continued to grow in the district that had long-since ceased prosecuting. In the first half of 1891, a total of 220 children were born in the district, with 147 of them remaining unvaccinated, a proportion of approximately 67%.³⁰ These figures would have been extremely alarming to any pro-vaccinationist who came upon them but to Cornish anti-vaccinationists, they were a source of great pride. Albertus Cragoe, writing the following year, came to laud the Falmouth Board as 'one of the first in Britain to discountenance prosecutions under the Vaccination Acts' and urged the Board not to waver in their determination and 'lose a portion of that honour which they have so long and so justly earned'.³¹ Indeed, the Falmouth Board of Guardians would continue to resist the call for prosecutions and by 1896, the situation in the district looked increasingly dire. The chairman of the Cornish Sanitary Committee, the architect Sylvanus Trestrail, noted in a meeting of his organisation that 'he regretted the Local-boards did not enforce the law as they should' and he pointed to Falmouth as being one of the worst offenders.³² Anti-vaccinationists across the country continued to promote Falmouth as one of the movement's success stories, with Robert Alsop Milner, a tailor famed for his role as one of the staunchly anti-vaccinationist Guardians for the Keighley Union, describing the vaccination default rate in Falmouth as being 'between 82 and 83 per cent' by 1896.³³ When the prosecutions in the Falmouth Union started up again in 1901 and 1902, the district fell out of favour with anti-vaccinationist writers, who soon turned their attention to other areas where prosecutions were

²⁷ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 15 October 1886; *Burnley Express*, 1 January 1887.

²⁸ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 26 August 1887.

²⁹ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 28 January 1892.

³⁰ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 10 March 1892.

³¹ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 30 March 1893.

³² *Cornishman*, 7 May 1896.

³³ *Western Daily Press*, 6 February 1900.

grinding to a halt. For over a decade, however, Falmouth held on to its reputation as a prominent non-vaccinating district.

Penzance PLU

Figure 17: Map indicating the location of the Penzance Poor Law Union, outlined in black. After Ordnance Survey Sanitary Districts, 1888, *Vision of Britain*, http://visionofbritain.org.uk/maps/sheet/os_sanitary_districts_1888/Cornwall_1888.

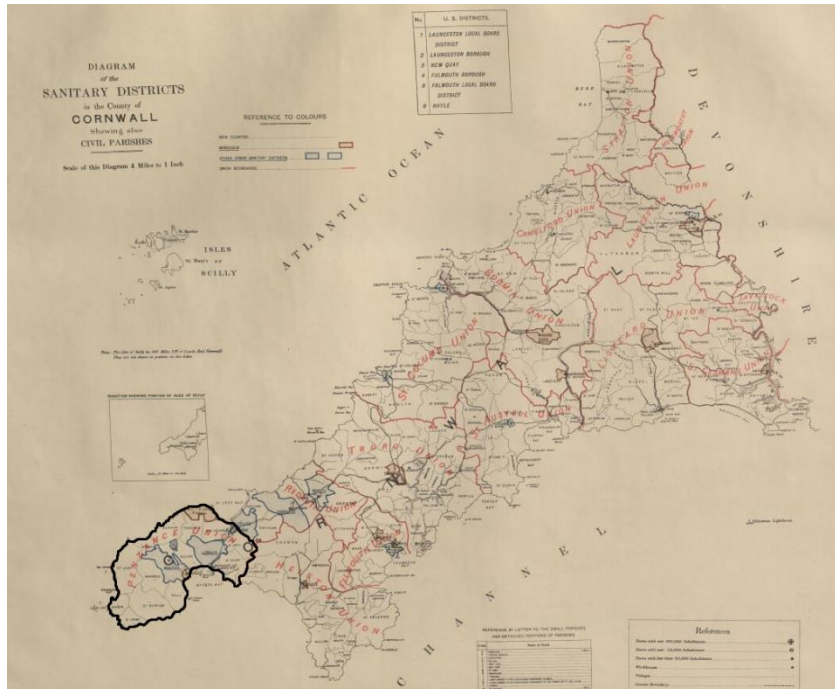


Table 12: Prosecutions in the Penzance Poor Law Union by decade.

Decade	Prosecutions	Total for Cornwall
1850-1859	1	55
1860-1869	4	37
1870-1879	21	51
1880-1889	1	63
1890-1899	24	94
1900-1909	8	62
TOTAL	59	362

The determined resistance to vaccination was a prominent contributing factor to the relative lack of vaccination prosecutions in Cornwall throughout the nineteenth century. Whilst some Boards were being infiltrated by anti-vaccinationist individuals who were determined to stop prosecutions within their own unions, other Boards were reluctant to prosecute due to the widespread anti-vaccinationist sentiment within the general population. This was likely the case in the Penzance

Union, where opposition to the procedure was so strong at times that even the most well-meaning Guardians could do little to enforce the Vaccination Act. Penzance, the western-most union in Cornwall, was also the largest in terms of population. Incorporating an average of approximately 51,400 residents in an area of almost 65,500 acres, the Penzance Guardians prosecuted a total of 59 cases throughout the duration of compulsory vaccination in England. However, the Penzance Guardians struggled to maintain a consistent approach towards non-vaccinating parents within their union, oscillating over time between prosecuting and not prosecuting. As a result of this, smallpox rates within the Union oscillated as well, as large numbers of unvaccinated families were allowed to go unprosecuted for substantial periods of time. After a series of cases in which nominal fines were issued, magistrates in the Penzance district soon came to realise that fines alone actually did very little to enforce the Vaccination Act as the defendant would simply pay the fine and the child would remain unvaccinated. In May 1871, Penzance magistrates decided to take a different approach, issuing vaccination orders for each of the five defendants who appeared before them. The prosecutions brought by the Penzance Guardians in 1871 had a positive impact on vaccination rates within the Union. At the beginning of the following year, the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* revealed that vaccination programmes were progressing well within the district, with 'the reports of the inspectors of vaccination ... shew[ing] that the number is very small in the Penzance Union who have not the Jennerian Shield against smallpox.'³⁴ However, this optimism was not to last.

Following two further prosecuted cases in March 1872, the Penzance Guardians appear to have lost control of vaccination in the Union, and the number of unvaccinated children began to climb once more.³⁵ This loss of control had a devastating impact when smallpox broke out across Cornwall in late 1872. In November, the report of the Registrar General for the preceding three months revealed that there were at least 33 fatalities from smallpox in the Penzance district alone, a fact which led the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* to describe Penzance as smallpox's 'head-quarters in Cornwall'.³⁶ Reporting further on the situation just one week later, the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* was scathing in its reproach of the Penzance Guardians for neglecting their duties under the Vaccination Act and allowing such terrible loss of life to occur in their district, stating that the 'neglect of duty goes on till the sure followers, disease and misery, arrive'.³⁷ It appears, however, that the Guardians at Penzance were facing the determined opposition of a deeply superstitious people and vaccination would only become harder to enforce as time went on. In March 1874, two recalcitrant anti-vaccinationists appeared before the magistrates at Penzance. One of these men, Benjamin Paul, a mariner, had been threatened with prosecution 'two or three times' previously. As a result, the apparently empty threats of the Guardians had done little to ensure the vaccination of Paul's son John. The Guardians had success when they finally managed to bring the case to court,

³⁴ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 6 January 1872.

³⁵ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 16 March 1872

³⁶ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 16 November 1872.

³⁷ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 23 November 1872.

with Paul presenting the magistrates with a certificate of John's successful vaccination. However, Paul was still ordered to pay 4s in court costs as punishment for the difficulties he had previously caused for vaccination officials.³⁸

The *Cornish Telegraph* journalist who reported on Paul's case stated that 'Penzance ... know[s] too well the expense, anxiety, and sufferings caused by this relentless foe to life and good looks [smallpox], for the present generation, at the least, to be indifferent to another invasion'.³⁹ By September of the following year, however, the people of the Penzance Union were becoming increasingly concerned by another apparent 'relentless foe to life'; vaccination itself. Rumours abounded that a small boy from the village of Towednack, 10kms from Penzance, had died from poisoned vaccine matter. Upon inquiry, it was revealed by the medical officer for the union that, although the child had indeed died following the vaccination procedure, his cause of death had been recorded as 'scrofula and exhaustion'. Satisfied with this ruling, the Penzance Guardians expressed their faith in the procedure and supported their officer in the wake of the unnerving rumours being spread amongst the residents of the district.⁴⁰ The Penzance Guardians also continued to prosecute, bringing two cases before the West Penwith Petty Sessions of 1876. In one of these cases, Charles Llewellyn, a labourer from the village of Paul, was summoned for not vaccinating his son, William Benjamin. In court, however, Llewellyn was represented by his wife, Selina. Selina revealed that her husband was away working in the Cape of Good Hope and that, in his absence, she had allowed William Benjamin to be vaccinated.⁴¹ The case against Llewellyn was then adjourned pending proof that the boy had indeed been vaccinated.

For a brief time at least, the Guardians revelled in an extraordinarily high rate of vaccination in their district. From March 1879 to August 1880, all reports indicated that Penzance was a very well vaccinated union.⁴² Although prosecutions had been intermittent, the Penzance Guardians had been largely committed to enforcing vaccination within their union. This attitude changed in 1886. At their June meeting, a Guardian, G. Carter of Madron, proposed that all prosecutions against anti-vaccinationists within their district should be postponed for three months. Carter, it seems, was not alone in holding views that opposed the vaccination law as his motion was carried, 19 votes to 9.⁴³ The decision to halt prosecutions lasted much longer than Carter's intended three month period, as it was not until January 1889 that the decision was overturned.⁴⁴ Following this decision, the Penzance Guardians appeared unable to settle on a stance towards the Vaccination Act, repeatedly oscillating between prosecuting and not prosecuting throughout the late 1880s and early

³⁸ *Cornish Telegraph*, 4 March 1874.

³⁹ *Cornish Telegraph*, 4 March 1874.

⁴⁰ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 11 September 1875.

⁴¹ *Cornish Telegraph*, 11 July 1876.

⁴² *Cornishman*, 13 March 1879; *Cornishman*, 21 August 1879; *Cornishman*, 19 February 1880; *Cornishman*, 9 August 1880.

⁴³ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 4 June 1886.

⁴⁴ *Cornishman*, 17 January 1889.

1890s. By January 1890, they had reverted to their non-prosecuting stance and September of the same year brought a registrar's report that indicated a growing number of unvaccinated children in the union, with some 15% of recorded births in the western section of the union reported to be unvaccinated.⁴⁵

In January 1892, the Penzance Guardians faced similar official scrutiny to that previously endured by Boards in Falmouth and Liskeard. Lauded by anti-vaccinationist agitators across the country, the Penzance Board was well and truly established as a non-prosecuting Board in the eyes of many.⁴⁶ In response to a letter from the secretary of the Royal Commission on Vaccination, the Guardians appeared deeply divided as to the question of prosecuting defaulters within their union:

The Chairman [T.F. Hosking] said there was not a single defaulter in the whole Union.

Mr. Tregonning (relieving officer) remarked that that was not so; he had three persons in his district whom he did not know what to do with, as they had set the law at defiance.

Mr. J.H. Bennetts: Quite right, too.

Mr. Hull: There is one man in Penzance who has persistently defied the law.

Mr. Trembath: The child in that case is dead.

The Chairman: Very likely if the child had been vaccinated it would have been alive now – (laughter).

Mr. Bazeley: Very likely many who are not vaccinated would have been dead now had they been – (renewed laughter).⁴⁷

It is clear from this excerpt that both the pro- and anti-vaccinationist Guardians on the Penzance Board were behaving quite callously in regards to their responsibilities under the Vaccination Act, with both sides apparently finding the issue of dead children amusing. The lax attitudes of several of the Penzance Guardians began to draw the attention of the press. Just six months after the above extract was published, the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* stated 'we have no desire to be alarmists, but in the face of the recent neglect of vaccination, even a few cases of small-pox are more serious than might otherwise be the case ... in Penzance ... the vaccination law has of late been very loosely administered. Some fifteen per cent. of children are, we are informed, unaccounted for'.⁴⁸ As the number of unvaccinated children in the Union continued to grow, the Penzance Guardians were forced to rethink their non-prosecuting stance. In August 1893, the Board met to discuss the possibility of reinstating prosecutions under the Vaccination Act. However, this proposal was met by determined backlash from those on the Board who were anti-vaccinationists themselves:

⁴⁵ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 4 September 1890.

⁴⁶ *Gloucester Citizen*, 28 January 1890; *Banbury Guardian*, 30 April 1891; *Banbury Guardian*, 24 March 1892.

⁴⁷ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 7 January 1892.

⁴⁸ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 9 June 1892.

Mr. CORNISH said the [Local Government Board] wrote that they have received the explanations of the vaccination officers on the complaint of Dr. Horne, and they hope the officers in future will discharge their duties

Rev. CONWAY CARTER said the board ought to strengthen the hands of the officers.

...

The Chairman: Some of us are anti-vaccinators, so the [Local Government Board] have been somewhat nonplussed.

Major Ross: Are the majority of the board anti-vaccinators?

Mr. H. TREMBATH: No we are in a majority.

The CHAIRMAN: But there was a majority against prosecution.

...

Major Ross had no doubt it would go out to the public that the majority of the board are anti-vaccinators.

Mr. SYMONS had no objection to that, as he is an anti-vaccinator.

Mr. BERRIMAN: I am one if you want another.

Major Ross: I don't want another. I am only sorry about it.⁴⁹

Debate amongst the Guardians regarding the extent of their responsibilities under the Vaccination Act continued. At end of the following month, the *Cornishman* proudly announced that a decision had been reached and that defaulters were to be prosecuted in the Penzance Union. The decision came at a crucial time as Henry Trembath, the Guardian who had pushed for prosecutions to be reinstated, argued that his investigations into the state of vaccination in the union revealed that the population was apparently on the brink of another terrifying epidemic, just like the one that had claimed so many lives in 1872. He showed that: 'some 60 or 70 cases in Penzance were unaccounted for, and that, of 80 children born in Madron, only 19 had been vaccinated and 52 were unaccounted for. Thus he thought the matter had come to a crisis'.⁵⁰ Following lengthy addresses from both Trembath and Major Ross in defence of the motion, the meeting rapidly devolved into an argument, with both pro- and anti-vaccinationists claiming that their opponents were exaggerating evidence and, in some cases, presenting outright lies as facts to support their own agendas. An anti-vaccinationist Guardian, Mr Taylor, summed up his impression of public attitudes towards vaccination and the role that the Board of Guardians had to play in enforcing the law:

Just fancy instituting proceedings against scores and hundreds of families in the neighbourhood, some of whom would not, under any circumstances have their children vaccinated! A person had told him that morning that he would pay ten fines rather than have

⁴⁹ *Cornishman*, 31 August 1893.

⁵⁰ *Cornishman*, 28 September 1893.

his child vaccinated and he would go to prison after that. A great many felt as strongly as that, but many were terrorised into paying fines and costs of prosecutions.⁵¹

Taylor then announced his intentions to oppose Trembath's call for the reinstatement of prosecutions, arguing that they should maintain the status quo. T.H. Cornish, the clerk to the Board, quickly shut Taylor's proposal down, claiming that 'it is an illegal amendment which we cannot record on our books, as it is in direct defiance of the act of parliament'.⁵² The discussion once again devolved into a petty argument, with Guardians expressing their own personal beliefs in an attempt to destroy the arguments presented by the opposing side.

Mr. SISLEY (St. Ives) thought it was an abominable shame and disgrace that any child of his should be cut up by a doctor.

Rev. CONWAY CARTER (St. Erth) spoke from personal experience ... he thought it the duty of every man of information and knowledge to prevent the outbreak of small-pox, which was a most horrible and odious disease, and, if ever any of those present had seen a child in small-pox they would bless the name of Jenner, who invented vaccination. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. SYMONS: I think if we were intended to be vaccinated the Lord would have put it into our bodies previous to our coming into the world. ('Oh' and laughter.)⁵³

After this argument had subsided, the Guardians finally put Trembath's proposal to a vote and, by a very narrow majority (18 votes to 16), the amendment was passed and the Penzance Guardians returned to prosecuting. By October, the backlash to the decision had reached the press. Albertus Cragoe weighed into the debate, declaring that the Penzance Guardians had made a monumental error in returning to prosecution as 'compulsion is untenable and from every point unjust', going on to attack those individuals that Taylor described as having been 'terrorised' into vaccinating, claiming that 'fathers who only vaccinate their children because of compulsory law, disgrace their manhood and their fellow citizens'.⁵⁴ Attacks such as these did little to change the minds of the Guardians at Penzance. Over the next eight years, their stance would not change and a total of 33 prosecutions would be brought to courts throughout the district.

The last case to be heard in the Penzance Union occurred in December 1902 in a hearing at St Ives. Clement Williams, a fisherman, was charged with not vaccinating his son, also named Clement. When the elder Clement Williams did not appear in court to answer his summons, his wife (who had been sent to represent him) was ordered to return home and bring him back to the court. The case was adjourned while she did so. This action reveals that the magistrates at St Ives were no longer willing to allow wives to appear for their husbands in vaccination cases. Women, then, were not seen as responsible under the compulsory law that had been introduced in 1853 for the purpose of protecting children from the 'ignorance' of their mothers. Vaccination had now become

⁵¹ *Cornishman*, 28 September 1893.

⁵² *Cornishman*, 28 September 1893.

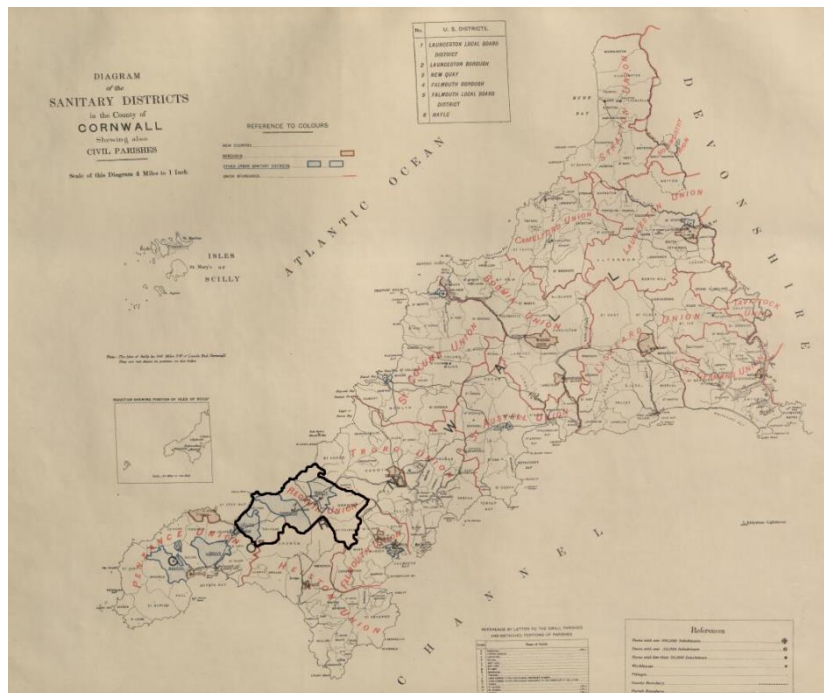
⁵³ *Cornishman*, 28 September 1893.

⁵⁴ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 19 October 1893.

the sole responsibility of the father. The child in the Williams' case had previously been certified as unwell and his vaccination had been postponed for two months. When the parents could not get the public vaccinator to certify that another postponement was necessary, they consulted with their own family doctor, Dr Nicholls, who reportedly informed the boy's mother that, if she had him vaccinated 'they would never rear him'.⁵⁵ In response to these claims, the magistrates took the unusual step of fining Clement Williams the full penalty of 20s, but informed him that if he had the boy vaccinated within the next 14 days, or if he could obtain another postponement certificate, the fine would be remitted.

Redruth PLU

Figure 18: Map indicating the location of the Redruth Poor Law Union, outlined in black. After Ordnance Survey Sanitary Districts, 1888, *Vision of Britain*, http://visionofbritain.org.uk/maps/sheet/os_sanitary_districts_1888/Cornwall_1888.



⁵⁵ *Cornish Telegraph*, 24 December 1902.

Figure 13: Prosecutions in the Redruth Poor Law Union by decade.

Decade	Prosecutions	Total for Cornwall
1850-1859	8	55
1860-1869	0	37
1870-1879	16	51
1880-1889	35	63
1890-1899	9	94
1900-1909	2	62
TOTAL	70	362

The Redruth Union, encompassing the western mining districts of Cornwall, was the most densely populated union in the county. With an average of almost 51,000 residents throughout the nineteenth century and occupying an area of less than 40,500 acres, it is little wonder that the Redruth Union had a reputation for being an unhealthy one. Infant mortality rates were high in the region, but they did not peak until 1911, when they reached 200 per 1000 live births, the third highest recorded in Cornwall.⁵⁶ However, it wasn't just the mortality amongst children that was a concern for authorities in the region; adults, too, could expect shorter lives in the Redruth Union. Due to the heavy reliance upon the perilous mining industry, an investigation into mortality rates across Cornwall in 1848 revealed that the average age at death in Redruth was 28 years 4 months, the lowest in the county.⁵⁷ The introduction of the compulsory vaccination law in 1853 gave local health authorities the impetus they needed to attack the smallpox mortality rate in the region. An initial rush of prosecutions saw eight men charged in 1854 but, as [Table 13](#) indicates, there would be no further prosecutions in the union for the entire 1855-1869 period. However, unlike many other Cornish unions, it seems that there was little need for further prosecutions during this period. In 1870, an audit of Vaccination Act compliance was carried out in the region, with the results indicating that 'vaccination has been very well attended to in this district ... there are only a few who appear determined to resist the law in this important matter'.⁵⁸ This revelation is all the more perplexing, given that there was a high level of communal fatalism in the district that was connected with hard-rock mining, as has been discussed previously.

The Redruth Guardians clearly worked hard to ensure the vaccination law was complied with in their district. In 1871, the Board was the first in Cornwall to announce their intention to appoint a public prosecutor and fully comply with the Vaccination Act amendment of the same year. This is in

⁵⁶ University of Portsmouth, *A Vision of Britain Through Time*, Redruth PLU/ RegD through time, http://visionofbritain.org.uk/unit/10101116/rate/INF_MORT.

⁵⁷ Barton, *Life in Cornwall*, 153.

⁵⁸ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 8 January 1870.

stark contrast to the actions of the Liskeard Guardians, as has been seen.⁵⁹ The 1860s and the first two years of the 1870s were a time of great optimism in the Redruth Union; vaccination rates were high and reports of smallpox amongst the population were largely non-existent. This all changed in 1872. Just one year after the Redruth Guardians had been so proactive in their appointment of public prosecutor, smallpox broke out in Camborne, one of the three major centres of population in the union. It would seem that the 1870 audit of vaccination had failed to take into account the high level of vaccine opposition in amongst the residents of Camborne and the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* reported that 'in Camborne vaccination had been neglected for years, indeed, whole families had been unvaccinated'.⁶⁰ Upon the issue of non-compliance with the Vaccination Act being raised amongst the Guardians of Redruth, those elected to represent Camborne took offence to 'their sins being made subject for comment' and referred the matter to the Local Board of Health instead.⁶¹ It was reported that the Local Board of Health had taken control of the situation and reported very favourably as to their intervention amongst the people of Redruth. However, this report also revealed the shortcomings of this intervention. It was revealed that even the Local Board of Health was powerless to overcome the staunch anti-vaccinationism that existed amongst the general populous. The *Royal Cornwall Gazette* reported that, in at least one of the houses known to be harbouring infected individuals, the authorities knew that a four year old child remained unvaccinated but 'the child was allowed to remain unvaccinated, on objection to the operation being advanced by the mother'.⁶² Apparently powerless to overcome the mother's objection, the authorities left the child to contract smallpox.

Forcing unwilling parents to vaccinate their children, however, may not have been at the top of the priority list for the Local Board of Health or, indeed, for the Redruth Guardians. During the 1872 outbreak, even highly trained medical professionals still had little-to-no understanding of how smallpox was spread. The modern science of virology was still more than two decades away from its establishment and many in the medical community at the time remained convinced that smallpox was spread by miasmas. Taking this into consideration, it is perhaps unsurprising that health authorities and Guardians were more concerned with imposing sanitary measures than they were with enforcing vaccination. Camborne was certainly in dire need of sanitary improvement, it was reported that 'cesspools many feet deep, and seething with miasmata arising from decomposing animal matter, were within a few yards of inhabited houses'.⁶³ With emphasis placed on improving these appalling sanitary conditions, vaccination seemed to be of secondary importance, even when there was direct evidence to contradict the idea that these cesspools were the source of the contagion. In nearby Gwinear, at least four people died and several more were infected from simply attending the funeral of a smallpox victim. Clearly, this event could not be

⁵⁹ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 25 February 1871.

⁶⁰ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 17 February 1872.

⁶¹ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 17 February 1872.

⁶² *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 17 February 1872.

⁶³ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 17 February 1872.

blamed on the cesspools of Camborne and any miasmas they may be responsible for, but both the authorities and the medical professionals in the region remained oblivious to this fact and emphasis continued to be placed on sanitation, rather than vaccination.

Whilst improved sanitation could assist with reducing the death-toll from secondary conditions, particularly diarrhoea and dysentery, that could increase the fatality of a smallpox outbreak, it could do nothing to slow the spread of the disease itself. There were clues, however, as to the importance of vaccination and these did not go entirely unnoticed. Whilst the outbreak at the Gwinear funeral should have served as a warning that sanitation could do little to protect the unvaccinated against smallpox, it was not until August 1872, when the outbreak had reached the town of Redruth itself, that the critical importance of the vaccination procedure was finally acknowledged. When smallpox spread to the tenements of Sandow Row, in Redruth, it claimed the life of a 20 year old man who had never been vaccinated. The *Royal Cornwall Gazette* reported with astonishment that all the vaccinated children in the house remained uninfected, despite the fact that some of them had even shared a bed with the young man while he was dying.⁶⁴ The protective power of vaccination was clearly demonstrated amongst the residents of Sandow Row in 1872. The following month, prosecutions under the Vaccination Act finally made their return to the courts of the Redruth Union. In Camborne, a town so ravaged by smallpox earlier in the year, the first cases in the union in almost two decades were heard.

Prosecutions were ramped up again in 1881, when the Redruth Guardians saw fit to attack a group of anti-vaccinationists from Redruth itself. Amongst the five defendants appearing before the magistrates in August 1881, was a fishmonger, Richard Maddern. Maddern was unusual amongst the group of defendants appearing that day as he faced two different charges for two of his children, daughter Mabel Maud and son Thomas Henry. One of these children was unvaccinated and the other was vaccinated but had not been returned for inspection following the procedure. It is not made clear which child was unvaccinated and which child was not inspected but, regardless of this, Maddern is rather an oddity in the history of vaccine objection, simultaneously vaccinating and not vaccinating his children with no apparent reason for doing so.⁶⁵ Maddern was fined in both cases but the amount he was forced to pay was not recorded so it remains unclear as to whether the magistrates in the Redruth Union were continuing their nominal fine approach or whether they had begun the process of enforcing harsher penalties in the 1880s. After these cases were heard, prosecutions in the Redruth Union began to wind down and most attempts at prosecution in the mid-1880s resulted in either a full dismissal of the case or an adjournment to allow parents the chance to vaccinate their children before any penalty was enforced.

⁶⁴ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 17 August 1872.

⁶⁵ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 26 August 1881.

With the Redruth Union containing such a large population, and sharing borders with the two other large unions in the county, Penzance and Truro, the slowing prosecution rate in Redruth drew the attention of the health authorities and the anti-vaccinationists alike. In 1887, continuing his role as prominent anti-vaccination commentator throughout the entire county, Thomas Cragoe saw the slowing prosecutions in the area as a positive sign, remarking that he hoped the Vaccination Act would 'soon be a dead letter in the Redruth Union', as it was in Falmouth at the same time.⁶⁶

Cragoe's enthusiasm was misplaced, however, and the Redruth Guardians went on to prosecute five more cases in 1888, evidence that the prosecuting spirit was well and truly alive amongst the Board. Thomas Cragoe became bitterly disappointed that the Redruth Guardians did not cease their prosecutions as he had predicted. In a long letter to the sympathetic editor of the *Cornubian*, Cragoe compared the vaccination issue to religious liberty, claiming that 'English people of all denominations equally profess an abhorrence for the memory of the Inquisition, yet, strange to say the tail-end of the Spanish Inquisition is wriggling in the heart of Cornwall to-day'.⁶⁷ This comparison between the Spanish Inquisition and the compulsory aspects of vaccination in nineteenth-century Cornwall may have been an exaggeration, but Cragoe was appealing to his Methodist brethren in the Redruth Union who would once have been denounced as heretics for their non-conformist religious beliefs. Cragoe furthers this comparison, decrying the Redruth Guardians and declaring that

this resolution of a public body in the interest of medical domination and tyranny has taken the land of Wesley's triumphs by surprise. Wesley fought for religious freedom ... now it appears that Wesley's people are playing into the hands of a medical priesthood and striving for a dominion more evil than any which their ancestors overcame.⁶⁸

To the anti-vaccinationists of Redruth, 'Wesley's people' in his eyes, Cragoe only had words of encouragement that are perhaps more indicative of his perception of himself than any perceived bond with the working-class miners and labourers of the Redruth Union; 'who are the recusants in your Union? They are unknown to me, but I will engage to say they are (in whatever rank) among the most thoughtful, well conducted, and intelligent of the community, and those who care for their children most'.⁶⁹ Whilst Cragoe remained convinced that the entire practice of vaccination was supported only 'by almost incredible fraud and delusion', the prosecutions in the Redruth Union only intensified and an unprecedented nineteen cases were heard in the Redruth Union between May and July 1889.⁷⁰

A very controversial case was heard at the Camborne Petty Sessions in June 1889 when Edwin Penrose, a jeweller from Redruth, was charged with not vaccinating his son Cecil Staunton. Initially, Penrose's case was adjourned to give him time to vaccinate the boy but, when court next sat in

⁶⁶ *Cornubian*, 7 October 1887.

⁶⁷ *Cornubian*, 12 April 1889.

⁶⁸ *Cornubian*, 12 April 1889.

⁶⁹ *Cornubian*, 12 April 1889.

⁷⁰ *Cornubian*, 12 April 1889.

July, Cecil Staunton remained unvaccinated. Penrose claimed that he had already lost three children to vaccination and was determined not to allow his youngest child to undergo the procedure. Despite this claim, a fine of 4s 6d was issued for non-compliance. This ruling caused outrage for anti-vaccinationists, particularly Thomas Cragoe, who was keeping a close eye on the proceedings in the Redruth Union. In another lengthy letter to the *Cornubian*, Cragoe described the Vaccination Act as ‘the wors[t] tyranny and the most greivous [sic] to be borne’ and pointed to the Penrose case as proof of this, declaring that ‘after losing the first three children from the engrafting of disease germs’ that Penrose was being coerced ‘to have another subjected to the same revolting process... really, here is a spectacle for Gods and men!’.⁷¹ Cragoe remained deeply interested in the actions of the Redruth Board of Guardians in the years before his death in 1892. In September 1891, he wrote in support of the anti-vaccinationists in the Union when it was revealed that, in the town of Redruth alone, there were 109 vaccine defaulters who were liable for prosecution.⁷² For Cragoe, this was a triumph but the high number only spurred the Redruth Guardians back into action, revealing that they were the only Board in the county still open to the idea of prosecuting cases under the Vaccination Act. This would not be the case for long. In October 1891, the Redruth Guardians voted to follow the lead of every other union in Cornwall and they stopped prosecuting defaulters, believed to have numbered at least 138 across the Union by this point.⁷³

Three more years would pass before the Redruth Guardians returned to prosecutions. In 1894, Samuel John Banbury, a grocer from Camborne, appeared at the East Penwith hearings, charged with not vaccinating his son Francis Alfred. Issued with a fine of 5s in this case, Banbury would go on to prove himself a recalcitrant anti-vaccinationist. By 1896, Francis Alfred remained unvaccinated, as were Banbury’s two younger children, Herbert Cecil and Leila Dunstan. Banbury is recorded as having ‘objected on principle’ to having his three children vaccinated and, as a result, was fined 2s 6d per child (totalling 7s 6d), plus 6s 6d in court costs. At the same hearing in 1896, Ernest Charles Curnow Richards appeared before the magistrates, charged with not vaccinating two of his children, Beatrice Mary and Martin Leonard. Richards, an assurance agent by trade, was a serving member of the Redruth Board of Guardians at the time of his summons. He plead guilty to the charge of not vaccinating Martin Leonard, but not guilty to the charge for Beatrice Mary as he had a medical certificate postponing her vaccination for two months. Given his position as an elected official with a responsibility to enforce the Vaccination Act, the magistrates took particular issue with Richards’ actions. The court notes reveal the following discussion between the Chairman of the Bench and Richards:

The Chairman remarked that ... personally he favoured vaccination, and both himself and his little boy were vaccinated recently on account of the outbreak of small pox at Camborne.

⁷¹ *Cornubian*, 2 August 1889.

⁷² *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 3 September 1891.

⁷³ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 29 October 1891.

Defendant [Richards] said he had conscientious objections against vaccination, and complained that Mr Letcher, the Vaccination Officer, had treated him in a most bullying manner.

The Chairman: That is a question for the Board of Guardians. I should like you to realise that it is better for the children to have them done.

Defendant replied that one of his children had been vaccinated and was covered with sores in consequence.⁷⁴

The two men continued to argue for a while before a fine of 2s 6d per child (totalling 5s), plus 7s 6d costs, was issued. The Chairman of the Bench would have the final word, though, 'remarking that he hoped [Richards] would see the wisdom of having the children done'.⁷⁵

The smallpox outbreak at Camborne that the Chairman referred to in his argument with Richards continued to rage throughout the year, becoming a full-scale epidemic at Redruth in November 1896. The epidemic at Redruth made national news and was reported in detail as far away as Dundee, with the *Dundee Evening Telegraph* revealing that the sixth deaths that had already occurred were all of unvaccinated children and that, in response to the epidemic, all Board schools were closed to protect children and some 1500 vaccinations had been performed in the town.⁷⁶ An earlier report, featured in the *Worcestershire Chronicle*, revealed, however, that these vaccinations were not being performed in the areas most heavily impacted by the epidemic, as the poor steadfastly refused both the gratuitous vaccination on offer and the efforts of local health authorities to isolate patients in the temporary hospital that was established to help deal with the epidemic. The report also notes that there were 'hundreds of unvaccinated adults and children in the town', implying that the outbreak was only going to get worse before it got better.⁷⁷

Anti-vaccinationists from across the country, however, seemed to ignore the fact that large numbers of people remained unvaccinated in the union and jumped on the opportunity to attack one of the few Cornish Unions that was still prosecuting cases. James R. Williamson, a spokesman for the National Anti-Vaccination League that had only recently been formed through the amalgamation of several smaller anti-vaccination societies, wrote to the *Cornubian*, claiming that the epidemic at Redruth served as proof that vaccination did not work.⁷⁸ Williamson further elaborated on this theory in a subsequent letter, published in the *West Briton* in March of the following year. In this letter, Williamson used statistics in a convoluted attempt to prove that it was not the lack of vaccination that saw so many unvaccinated children contract smallpox at Redruth during the epidemic, but rather it was the location of their homes. Williamson, a sanitarian, was staunchly of the belief that poor sanitation was the cause of smallpox and that, as a result, vaccination could do little, if anything, to prevent the spread of the disease:

⁷⁴ *Cornish Telegraph*, 14 May 1896.

⁷⁵ *Cornish Telegraph*, 14 May 1896.

⁷⁶ *Dundee Evening Telegraph*, 24 November 1896.

⁷⁷ *Worcestershire Chronicle*, 14 November 1896.

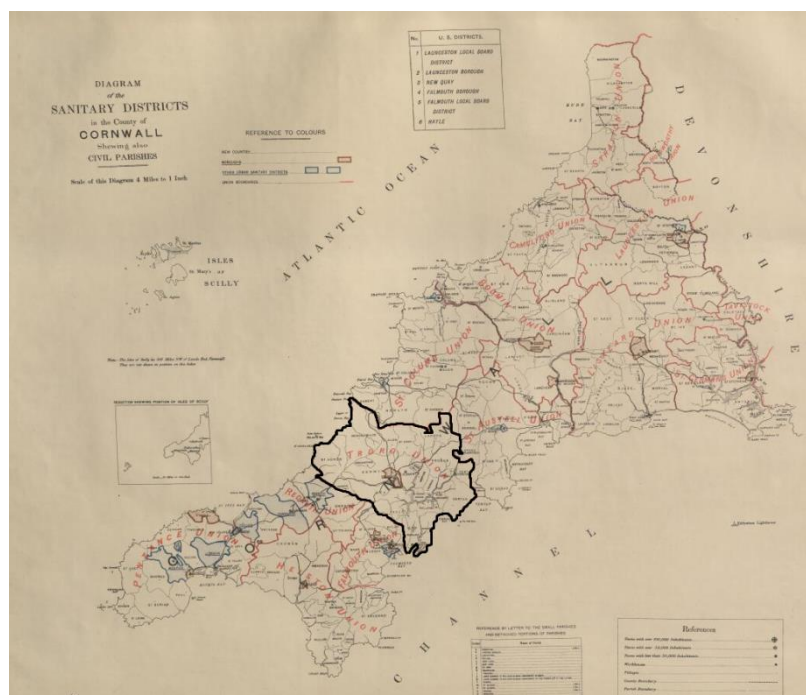
⁷⁸ *Cornubian*, 27 November 1896.

Small-pox, ever on the look-out to scourge sanitary neglect or sanitary wrong-doing, descends upon any abode of man which man has defiled with unclean living. Within that abode it singles out the uncleanest [sic] spot, and there exacts its toll of death, and pays in sorrow the wages of sin. In vain do the victims proclaim themselves of filth's allegiance, and point to the stamped receipt they bear on their arms for the blackmail they have paid to the powers of filth.⁷⁹

Williamson went on to outline the details of the seven fatal cases that occurred in Redruth during the epidemic, noting that, whilst “the description “unvaccinated” occurs twice ... “Trestrail’s-row” occurs four times; so that let the doctors talk until they are hoarse, they cannot deny that the presence of Trestrail’s-row had been twice as fatal as the absence of vaccination’.⁸⁰ Williamson’s analysis, however, also reveals that all seven cases occurred amongst females, yet he makes no mention of this potentially standing as proof that simply being female made one susceptible to smallpox. Instead, he picked up on the recurring mention of Trestrail’s Row, arguing that it must be the location of the houses, and thus their sanitary condition, that caused smallpox to break out there, not the vaccination status of the inhabitants. In the years that followed the smallpox epidemic at Redruth, the Board of Guardians continued to prosecute defaulters, with the final two cases in the Union being heard in 1901.

Truro PLU

Figure 19: Map indicating the location of the Truro Poor Law Union, outlined in black. After Ordnance Survey Sanitary Districts, 1888, *Vision of Britain*, http://visionofbritain.org.uk/maps/sheet/os_sanitary_districts_1888/Cornwall_1888.



⁷⁹ *West Briton*, 11 March 1897.

⁸⁰ *West Briton*, 11 March 1897.

Table 14: Prosecutions in the Truro Poor Law Union by decade.

Decade	Prosecutions	Total for Cornwall
1850-1859	0	55
1860-1869	11	37
1870-1879	5	51
1880-1889	16	63
1890-1899	25	94
1900-1909	21	62
TOTAL	78	362

Truro Union, occupying more than 85,000 acres in mid-Cornwall, stretched from the Channel coast in the east to the Atlantic coast in the west. Truro itself grew in importance throughout the nineteenth century, becoming Cornwall's first and only city in 1877. The city was surrounded by agricultural land and mining districts, with the shipping port of Devoran reaching its peak productivity during the nineteenth century as it connected the western mining district by rail to the English Channel. As the town of Truro developed into a city, it began to play a more prominent role in Cornish civic life. The Royal Institution of Cornwall was founded in Truro in 1818 and became the hub of intellectualism in the county. Critically for the history of vaccination in Cornwall, the Truro Union was home to both of the Cragoe brothers and Albertus served as a Guardian for the union between 1878 and 1892. Setting aside the influence of the Cragoe brothers, the story of vaccination in Cornwall is still an interesting one. As [Table 14](#) demonstrates, Truro was slow to adopt the compulsory measures introduced under the 1853 amendment to the Vaccination Act; it was not until the 1860s that vaccination prosecutions began in the Union. By mid-1871, however, there were already growing rumours that the Truro Board of Guardians had been infiltrated by anti-vaccinationists, something that had previously been witnessed at Liskeard. The *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, a newspaper based in Truro, confirmed the rumours, reporting that 'some of our Guardians ... have been bitten by the anti-vaccination manis [sic], and prefer to give the small-pox epidemic a fair chance rather than give facilities for vaccination'.⁸¹ When a medical man complained to the board that smallpox was beginning to spread in Truro, the chairman dismissed his plea for the Vaccination Act to be enforced, claiming that 'they could not compel persons to be vaccinated'. This statement was supported by another Guardian, arguing that 'the people would not be vaccinated'.⁸²

Truro in the early 1870s was not a particularly healthy place and, as the town rapidly grew into a city, issues of overcrowding and a lack of clean water became major concerns for health authorities. In addition to the sanitary nightmare that Truro was becoming, the Vaccination Act was

⁸¹ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 10 June 1871.

⁸² *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 10 June 1871.

very poorly enforced, even by those who were employed specifically to vaccinate the population. In February 1872, the Truro Guardians were informed that one of their public vaccinators, Charles Bennetts, had been absent from his post at the Merther Lane vaccination station for some time, leaving many children unvaccinated.⁸³ These claims were repeated six years later, when Bennetts was forced to defend his actions publicly. Under the *Royal Cornwall Gazette*'s inflammatory headline 'A Neglectful Medical Officer', Bennetts was once again accused of abandoning his post at the Merther Lane station, leaving several children unvaccinated.⁸⁴ Bennetts claimed that he had actually taken to vaccinating the children in his district at their homes, sparing their mothers from 'long journies [sic] – very often in inclement weather and to the neglect of their families'.⁸⁵

The vendetta against the Truro Guardians carried out by Thomas and Albertus Cragoe in the early- to mid-1880s seems rather out of place when the broader history of the Vaccination Act in the Truro Union is examined. The Vaccination Act was, in reality, very poorly enforced in the district throughout most of the compulsory vaccination period. Prosecutions peaked between 1899 and 1903, when 44 of the 78 total cases for the Union were heard. Prior to 1899, there had been 32 cases heard in the Union, ten of which were brought against the Cragoe brothers alone. The level of persecution that the Cragoes claimed they were fighting against simply did not exist until they made it their personal business to harass and intimidate the Guardians. Before the Cragoes began their anti-vaccination campaign in the district, the Vaccination Act was very poorly enforced in the Truro Union. In 1872, the vaccination inspector revealed that of the 2,605 recorded births in the Union between December 1869 and December 1871, 740 of the children remained unvaccinated, a rate of almost 30 percent.⁸⁶ When the smallpox epidemic of November 1872 reached Truro, the Guardians still refused to enforce the Vaccination Act despite their medical officers laying all the necessary groundwork for prosecutions to occur.⁸⁷ Elizabeth Jane Tucker, a mother from Trewartha, had not returned her child for inspection following vaccination, acting in a similar vein to the way Emily Pedlar (Bodmin) and Mrs Floyd (St Columb) would act in subsequent years. Tucker's case was brought to the attention of the Guardians by the relieving officer who 'pointed out there was a resolution on the books that the inspector should take proceedings against a certain number of persons in each district, who had not properly complied with the rules of the Vaccination Act. That has, however, not been carried out, the inspectors not caring about doing so'.⁸⁸ The *Royal Cornwall Gazette* subsequently reported that the Guardians refused to take any action in the Tucker case. However, the newspaper was forced to retract that statement in its next edition, claiming 'we are requested to state that the Board of Guardians did not neglect their duty as implied

⁸³ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 17 February 1872.

⁸⁴ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 14 June 1878.

⁸⁵ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 21 June 1878.

⁸⁶ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 6 July 1872.

⁸⁷ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 16 November 1872; *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 23 November 1872.

⁸⁸ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 23 November 1872.

in our report of last week in respect to the woman who neglected to take her child to the public vaccinator for examination; they directed the relieving officer to “warn” her’.⁸⁹

With these empty threats attracting the attention of the press, the Guardians at Truro faced increasing scrutiny. The situation only got worse for them when smallpox assumed epidemic form in Truro, claiming at least six lives in the town by the end of December.⁹⁰ The medical officers of the union pleaded with the Board to take action against the vaccine defaulters in the district and, with their previous refusal to prosecute drawing such negative attention from the press, the Guardians were left with no other option but to allow prosecutions to resume. The damage was already done, however, and smallpox only worsened in the union. The Hawken family, of Truro, was one of the families that were severely impacted by the epidemic. The Hawken children were unvaccinated and, when smallpox broke out in their home in early 1873, Richard and Amelia Hawken made the decision to send their children, Mary Ann (aged seven) and Frederick (aged six) to stay with family outside the town until the danger had passed. Richard, a grocer, had been born in St Minver in the neighbouring Bodmin Union and his family still resided there at the time of the epidemic. Mary Ann was sent to stay with an aunt at Tredissick, outside the town of St Minver but, not long after her arrival, she began to show signs of having contracted the illness. The girl’s grandmother, also named Mary Ann, visited the home frequently to care for the ailing child, ‘but those visits were much disapproved of by the good people of the churchtown, and they tried to dissuade her from visiting the child, but in vain’.⁹¹ The elder Mary Ann’s dedication to the care of her grandchild ultimately cost her life, with the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* reporting, rather untactfully, that ‘in less than a week [the grandmother] was a corpse’.⁹² The girl’s aunt, who was also caring for her, contracted smallpox as well but thankfully made a recovery. Seven year old Mary Ann would also survive.

The Hawken family tragedy was just one example of the toll that unvaccinated children could take within an individual family unit and within the broader community. Richard Hawken’s actions cost his mother’s life and almost claimed the lives of his young daughter and his sister-in-law. Mary Ann Hawken’s death was also symptomatic of what medical officers saw as a much broader problem throughout Cornwall. Quite simply, people did not abide by the rules of isolation, exposing themselves, their families and neighbours to the illness. Mr Sharp, a relieving officer in the Truro Union, informed the Board of Guardians that there was a substantial problem with what he described as ‘the almost criminal curiosity of neighbours’.⁹³ According to Sharp, these people, ‘having no fear of the disease themselves, thought nothing of the danger to which they exposed

⁸⁹ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 30 November 1872.

⁹⁰ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 21 December 1872.

⁹¹ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 29 March 1873.

⁹² *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 29 March 1873.

⁹³ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 21 June 1873.

others with whom they were immediately afterwards brought into contact'.⁹⁴ Like the elder Mary Ann Hawken had been, these people often were vaccinated as children but did not undergo the re-vaccination procedure as adults, likely becoming one of the vectors by which the disease was spread from neighbourhood to neighbourhood, and from town to town, across the county. The 'criminal curiosity' that Sharp accuses the residents of Truro of possessing may not have been as such. If these people truly did not fear smallpox, then it seems unlikely that an individual with the disease would have been considered such a spectacle for neighbours. Rather, it is more likely that what Sharp was describing was the mutual aid network that Lucinda McRay Beier spoke of, the neighbourhood-wide system of support and medical care that individuals, often women, provided to support those around them in times of great need.⁹⁵ As Beier contends, working-class families often depended upon the assistance of neighbours and friends when sickness or death occurred, with women tending to the sick, providing herbal remedies, and laying out the dead. Mary Ann Hawken was clearly practising this when she devoted herself to the care of her grandchild, sent thirty miles away from her home, only to fall victim to the disease she had been fleeing. Although many in the community warned her to stay away from her son's home, she continued to provide the care that was needed. Sharp's assertion that these neighbours, although likely falsely accused of simple curiosity, were spreading smallpox around the county was probably true. However, in communities built upon these mutual aid networks, it would have been almost impossible to enforce true isolation when smallpox broke out.

During the height of the smallpox epidemic in Truro, from January to April 1873, there were 217 children registered as having been born in the union. The Registrar-General reported, however, that at least 51 of these children remained unvaccinated by mid-1874.⁹⁶ Prosecutions under the Vaccination Act began in earnest in 1874, with three cases heard by magistrates in August. Following these cases, however, prosecutions under the Act began to slow once more as health authorities in the region faced other major issues, particularly regarding overcrowding in the poorer areas of the newly-declared city. The district of St Agnes was of particular concern for the Truro Rural Sanitary Authority, with one of the medical officers for health revealing the plight of the Tonkin family, living in an overcrowded house in Skinners Bottom, St Agnes, describing their home as:

neither a shelter from rain nor storm. The windows are shattered and stuffed with rags ... There is no privy accommodation. The family consists of father and mother and nine children ... who all sleep in one room, in which there are three bedsteads, but literally no bedding – not a bed to lie on, nor sheet, blanket, or counterpane; added to this, they are almost starving and not half clad. Their health generally is as bad as it can be; and, unless something is done to relieve them from their deplorable condition, the probability is some will succumb before long.

⁹⁴ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 21 June 1873.

⁹⁵ Beier, *For Their Own Good*.

⁹⁶ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 23 May 1874.

The mother has lately been confined, and is in a very weak state. They have parochial relief, but that is not all that is required.⁹⁷

Despite the appalling conditions in which they were living, the Tonkin family continued to resist all attempts to move them into the Union workhouse and the authorities were left to try and manage their situation, as well as the countless other families living in similar conditions, to the best of their abilities. According to Sheaff, extreme poverty played a significant role in the high rates of infant mortality experienced across the county: 'at the worst times (e.g. the 1840s) the poorest families would eat little or nothing for several days at a time. Poor housing appears to have contributed to accidental injuries (through scaldings, building collapse etc)'.⁹⁸

At the same time as they were dealing with the intense poverty being experienced in their city, the Truro health authorities were also dealing with the rising number of vaccine defaulters amongst the middle-class residents of the district. In mid-1886, having clearly grown tired of the anti-vaccination arguments put forward by the Cragoes during their cases, magistrates in the Truro district began to lose their patience with defendants who tried to make long-winded statements in defence of their actions. One case, brought against an accountant, William Eastlake, whose son Gordon Opie was not vaccinated, resulted in the following exchange between the magistrates and the defendant:

The bench said they had decided to make the order. There was the Act of Parliament and they were there to carry it out, and they must make an order for the child to be vaccinated within a month.

Mr. Eastlake pointed out that it was descretionary [sic] with them as to whether they did or not.

The Mayor said they had decided to do so.

Mr. Eastlake then proceeded to say that he had strong conscientious objections for not complying with the law. He proceeded to say that he had been severely spoken of as a law-breaker and he would like to say in justification-

Major Parkyn: We have made an order, and are not here to be lectured.⁹⁹

The influence of the Cragoe brothers remained strong even after Guardians stopped prosecuting their cases. When the Truro Guardians discussed the actions they should take against parents in 22 cases of vaccine default, Thomas Cragoe, writing 'as a citizen and a taxpayer', defended the parents, claiming they 'are not careless and negligent but the very reverse; they are conscientious and thoughtful; they are medical nonconformists following the same beaten track that religious non conformity travelled centuries ago'.¹⁰⁰ It seems that Thomas and Albertus Cragoe were far from alone in their views. The vaccination officer who wished to bring charges in the 22 cases informed the Guardians that 'there was a strong anti-vaccination feeling in the town. Many had joined the

⁹⁷ *West Briton*, 12 March 1877.

⁹⁸ Sheaff, 'A Century of Centralization', 131.

⁹⁹ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 2 July 1886.

¹⁰⁰ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 19 August 1887.

London League and were paying 5s. subscription to it, and the league paid all fines and costs'.¹⁰¹ No doubt, this report generated a great sense of pride for at least one sitting Guardian at the time; Albertus Cragoe. The number of unvaccinated children would only continue to grow, unabated, as prosecutions stalled once again in the Truro Union. By 1892, the large number of unvaccinated children in the union was causing concern for the pro-vaccinationist members of the Board. When the vaccination returns were discussed at the August 1892 meeting, Rev. Frazer Frizell declared 'that the returns would have been a standing disgrace to them if they were published in a medical paper'.¹⁰² The Guardians, however, had other concerns that were taking precedence at the time. The overcrowding situation that had plagued them in the late 1870s had only continued to worsen.¹⁰³ With the overcrowding issue only increasing, the health authorities and Guardians for the Truro Union let the enforcement of the Vaccination Act fall by the wayside. To Albertus Cragoe, this was excellent news, and he wrote to the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* in September 1894 that the 'Guardians of Truro Union deserve praise; not censure' for continuing to disregard the call to prosecute anti-vaccinationists in the district.¹⁰⁴

The Vaccination Act was still very poorly enforced in the Truro Union in 1896. When the Sanitary Committee met to discuss the issue in May, a letter was read from a doctor in St Germans, who revealed that he had a patient who had recently transferred to his area from Truro who

came to me yesterday to vaccinate his three children aged 2, 4, and 6 years. He tells me he has always been willing to have it done, but has never received any notice ... he further tells me that very few have their children vaccinated at Truro, and that he knows many families in Truro in which there are four, five, and six children, none of whom have ever been vaccinated.¹⁰⁵

The Sanitary Committee, however, could not act on this report as they were not the authority responsible for the enforcement of the Vaccination Act. The pressure that the Sanitary Committee and other health authorities and institutions placed upon the Truro Guardians following this investigation led to the drastic increase in prosecutions that occurred between 1899 and 1903. As was previously noted, 44 of the 78 total cases in the Truro PLU were prosecuted in this four-year period. One of the defendants who would repeatedly appear before the magistrates was Thomas Henry Cowling, a farmer from Penwartha in the district of St Agnes. Cowling was summoned four times in 1899 for not vaccinating his daughter Emma May. In March, he was issued with a vaccination order, which he failed to comply with. This meant that he was fined for non-compliance in May and a new vaccination order was issued in June. However, Emma May remained unvaccinated and Cowling was brought before the magistrates at the end of June, where they were informed that he had 'treated the order with absolute contempt', with the prosecution noting that

¹⁰¹ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 12 August 1887.

¹⁰² *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 18 August 1892.

¹⁰³ *West Briton*, 12 May 1892.

¹⁰⁴ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 13 September 1894.

¹⁰⁵ *Cornishman*, 7 May 1896.

this was the second vaccination order Cowling had ignored in three months. Cowling viewed himself to be the victim of persecution, asking the court for leniency; 'seeing the trouble I've already been put to, I hope the magistrates will consider it sufficient to put the fine at sixpence'.¹⁰⁶ This suggestion was met with laughter. When a fine of 10s plus costs was issued, Cowling declared 'these are unauthorised and unwarranted persecutions' and his temper only worsened when he was ordered to pay half the advocate's fee on top of that, bringing his total to £1 10s; Cowling described this as 'the most monstrous case brought forward'.¹⁰⁷

The magistrates at Truro took a harsher stance in January 1902, when a similar case was brought against Albert Berryman, a gardener from Kenwyn whose son, William Clarence, had not been vaccinated. Berryman, who had been issued with a vaccination order in December 1901, had refused to have William Clarence vaccinated within fourteen days. In addition, he had also refused to pay the costs of the court for the case, 10s. Following standard procedure, the police were notified and a distress warrant was issued, allowing for some of Berryman's property to be confiscated and sold at auction to cover the money he owed the court. However, 'upon the police attempting to enforce a warrant of distress, defendant locked the door and bade them defiance'.¹⁰⁸ Berryman defended his actions stating that he refused to vaccinate the boy and that 'anyone would think by the way his home had been bombarded he had been guilty of some great crime. An Englishman's home was his castle, and he had defended his castle. He refused to let anyone take his furniture'.¹⁰⁹ Berryman's extreme actions earned him the harshest penalty possible, a fine of 20s plus 10s costs and 10s 6d advocate's fee. The only alternative he was offered was a month in gaol. When given this choice, Berryman stated 'I'll take the month' and so became the first vaccine martyr in the Truro Union, an accolade that had been denied to both of the Cragoe brothers despite their persistent agitation two decades earlier.¹¹⁰

The administration of the Vaccination Act in the west of Cornwall was impacted by a range of issues that would not have been entirely unfamiliar to Guardians in other unions across the country. Deacon reveals that, by the mid-eighteenth century, regions in the west of Cornwall had seen dramatic population increases of up to 90% as the mining industry grew in its dominance of the Cornish economy.¹¹¹ This meant that many of the five western PLUs of the nineteenth century were still grappling with the consequences of rapid urbanisation whilst being required to simultaneously administer the Vaccination Act upon a reluctant population. In the Penzance, Redruth, and Truro PLUs, Guardians faced staggering sanitary issues that were only worsening as the populations continued to increase. A lack of drainage and poor water supplies meant that towns and

¹⁰⁶ *Cornish Telegraph*, 29 June 1899.

¹⁰⁷ *Cornish Telegraph*, 29 June 1899.

¹⁰⁸ *Cornish Telegraph*, 22 January 1902.

¹⁰⁹ *Cornish Telegraph*, 22 January 1902.

¹¹⁰ *Cornish Telegraph*, 22 January 1902.

¹¹¹ Deacon, *From a Cornish Study*, 8.

settlements throughout the unions often resembled cesspools and the populations suffered tremendously for it. The peak infant mortality rates in the Penzance and Redruth Unions were the highest recorded for the south-west of England and were on a par with many of the larger, more industrialised unions of the north. Even the less-urbanised Falmouth Union suffered from a similar issue, with its maritime-based economy leaving the population of the region open to a wide variety of illnesses brought through the harbour by visiting sailors. Despite the unusually high rate of infant mortality for a union of its calibre, Falmouth Guardians were reluctant to prosecute cases under the Vaccination Act and long periods of intermittence, often spanning decades, characterised the prosecution pattern in the union. A similar situation was recorded in the Helston PLU, also less affected by urbanisation than many of its counterparts and maintaining a larger agricultural population than any other union in the west of the county.

The three largest unions in Cornwall (Penzance, Redruth, and Truro) were all located in the west of the county. These unions exhibited less of an intermittent prosecution pattern and more of an oscillating one. In a similar vein to St Austell in the east, both Penzance and Redruth Guardians regularly changed their stance with regards to prosecuting vaccine defaulters in their unions. However, as was noted previously, these stances were often in direct opposition to one another. The Penzance PLU recorded two peaks of prosecutions – one in the 1870s (21 prosecutions) and the other in the 1890s (24 prosecutions). Between these two peaks, however, there was just one case heard in the 1880s. This is in stark contrast to the situation at Redruth, however, as prosecutions there peaked in the 1880s (35 prosecutions) before falling away again in the 1890s (just nine cases heard). These two unions, whilst similar in size, presented very different prosecution patterns and provide a pertinent example of how the Vaccination Acts were far from uniformly enforced across a single region within a county. Further, they indicate that historians cannot simply take a law at face value; a detailed, region-by-region investigation is needed to highlight the intricacies of a law in operation on the ground. There was nothing uniform about the way in which the Vaccination Act was administered throughout Cornwall.

Chapter 7: 'The Vaccine Cult': The Influence of National Anti-Vaccinationism

As the nineteenth century drew to a close, and many of the Cornish Poor Law Unions oscillated between prosecuting and not prosecuting the defaulters in their region, anti-vaccinationists from across Britain continued to publish their views in the columns of a wide range of regional newspapers. Cornish publications, particularly the openly anti-vaccinationist *Cornubian*, remained popular options amongst these correspondents. Anti-vaccinationist arguments, however became increasingly conspiratorial, with the likes of Albertus Cragoe seizing upon the idea that there must be a very sinister reason to explain why vaccination was still enforced despite the intense and relentless opposition of so many within society. These conspiracy theories did not necessarily begin as anything too far out of the ordinary, rather, anti-vaccinationists sought to make sense of the continued enforcement of the Vaccination Act by drawing upon their own, flawed, understandings of medical science. From there, the conspiracy only seemed to deepen and the correspondence columns of the Cornish newspapers from the late 1890s and early 1900s, reveal the extent to which anti-vaccinationists were willing to go to explain why their protests and agitation could not bring these hated laws down. The earliest phases of these conspiracy theories were inherently connected to the nature of medicine as a science in the late nineteenth century. As discoveries regarding the nature of disease, methods of transmission, general human anatomy, and the microscopic world forged ahead at an unprecedented speed, the gulf of knowledge that existed between medical professionals and the general public only continued to widen. While doctors and scientists spoke of germ theory, virology, immunology and biomedicine, those without any formal medical education clung to the theories of old, which they found to be much easier to understand. Sanitation was a very important component of the anti-vaccinationist worldview at this time and, in many ways, the science of sanitation was not really all that old. However, in the fast-paced world of medical advancement that was the late nineteenth century; older ideas were rapidly being replaced by new, biomedical understandings of disease and the human body.

Whilst the role of the state in enforcing vaccination was a critical concern for many anti-vaccinationists, there were additional underlying issues regarding the clear shift away from sanitary theory. As Durbach indicates, medicine was moving away from the comprehensible ideas of sanitation and towards the previously uncharted waters of preventive medicine.¹ Vaccination, according to Bashford, ran contrary to sanitary theory, as sanitation, through quarantine and isolation practices, 'is about separation of the pure from the infected, vaccination with cowpox was the deliberate infection of the poor'.² This was a critical sticking point for many anti-vaccinationists; after all, the theory that reducing overcrowding and removing human, animal, and industrial waste

¹ Durbach, *Bodily Matters*, 17.

² Alison Bashford, *Imperial Hygiene: A Critical History of Colonialism, Nationalism and Public Health*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, 2004, 12.

from streets and water supplies had already proved to be an effective approach to reducing the impact of many diseases and illnesses that had plagued the population. Sanitary theory had many similarities with the older miasma theories of disease transmission and the 'bad smells' of the miasma theory could often simply be replaced by filth in the sanitation model. By the end of the nineteenth century, scientists and medical professionals alike were beginning to realise that, whilst improved sanitation had indeed been effective in dealing with outbreaks of 'filth diseases' such as cholera, diarrhoea and typhoid fever, there were some conditions that could not be controlled by sanitation.³ This was clearly an issue for many anti-vaccinationists, lay and medically-trained alike. The science of virology was only just beginning to emerge in the 1890s, and confirmation that viral transmission of disease was even possible would not come until the earliest years of the twentieth century, through the work of Walter Reed on the transmission of yellow fever in Cuba. Such concepts were entirely alien to many within the British public in the late nineteenth century, especially as generations of individuals had been raised with the notion that sanitation was a preventative of all diseases. Porter and Porter examine the extent to which anti-contagionist theory and a general wider distrust of scientific medicine impacted upon the development of the anti-vaccination movement in the nineteenth century.⁴ As Margaret Pelling argues, by the beginning of the twentieth century, there was a 'striking contrast between the germ theorists (scientific, laboratory-based, objective) and the sanitarians (bureaucratic, unscientific, politically motivated, bring about improvement as it were by accident), who were miasmatisms and believed that smells caused disease'.⁵ This is, perhaps, a rather simplistic overview of a much more complex situation but Pelling identifies the ever-growing divide that existed between scientific medicine and those who adhered to miasmatic or sanitary understandings of disease transmission and prevention. Many of those who found it difficult to comprehend that some diseases were not generated by a proximity to 'filth' ultimately struggled to adjust to the notion that certain diseases (such as smallpox) required specialised preventative measures (such as vaccination). The older theory that all diseases arose from filth also fit well with late-Victorian understandings of morality. As Bashford argues, 'disorder meant disease, disorder was disease'.⁶ Cleanliness was, after all, next to godliness and those who disobeyed the laws of sanitation could expect to be struck down by any number of illnesses as punishment for their immorality.

³ The concept of 'filth diseases' arose from Charles Murchison's *Treatise on the Continued Fevers of Great Britain* (1862). These were diseases that were readily associated with the poor living conditions that were so common in urban and industrialised areas during the nineteenth century. The classification of filth diseases was broad and encompassed a range of differing conditions. In addition to those mentioned other illnesses such as dysentery, bronchitis, pneumonia, tuberculosis and bubonic plague were classed as filth diseases, as were skin diseases such as scabies.

⁴ Porter and Porter, 'The Politics of Prevention', 236.

⁵ Margaret Pelling, 'The Meaning of Contagion: Reproduction, Medicine and Metaphor', in Alison Bashford and Claire Hooker (eds), *Contagion: Epidemics, History and Culture from Smallpox to Anthrax*, Pluto Press & Hazard Press, Annandale and Christchurch, 2001, 16.

⁶ Bashford, *Purity and Pollution*, 19.

Conspiracy against sanitation

At the most fundamental level, vaccination was incompatible with sanitary theory. As Hennock argues; 'the sanitary movement concentrated on the improvement of the environment; vaccination interfered directly with the human body'.⁷ For those who maintained a belief that disease was the direct result of a filthy environment, vaccination seemed entirely illogical. Given that sanitary reform formed the fundamental basis of English public health, Bashford argues that vaccination was entirely at odds with commonly understood notions about healthcare and the prevention of disease:

vaccination ... did not break the circulation of contagious matter in the classic mode of the *cordon sanitaire*. Far from separating out clean and dirty, vaccination rather involved the deliberate introduction of a diseased foreign body – cowpox lymph or dried crusts – into the individual and sometimes into hitherto uninfected 'virgin' populations.⁸

As a result, many anti-vaccinationists (both inside the medical profession and outside of it) retained the notion that the only true preventative of disease, all disease, was sanitation and, as vaccination was a complete rejection of sanitary theory, it should have no place in modern medicine. 'Smallpox declined with improved habits of living, and the patrons of this relic of barbarism [vaccination] at once assumed the credit which *least of all* they had a claim to'.⁹ These words, written by Thomas Cragoe and published in the *Cornishman* in April 1890, provide, perhaps, the best explanation of how sanitarian anti-vaccinationists viewed the relationship between smallpox, sanitation, and vaccination. The incidence of smallpox was indeed decreasing, anti-vaccinationists could not deny that, but the sanitarians were doing all the work and the vaccinationists were taking all the credit. The reason why vaccinationists would be inclined to take credit for the decrease of smallpox led to another, more complicated, conspiracy theory but, for the moment, in this analysis I will restrict myself to exploring the concept that vaccination was a conspiracy against sanitation. Throughout the nineteenth century, other letters appearing in the correspondence columns of the major Cornish newspapers would echo the words of Thomas Cragoe. James R Williamson, spokesperson for the National Anti-Vaccination League, who had previously used letters to the editor to deny that unvaccinated children caught smallpox at Redruth in 1896 simply because they were unvaccinated, wrote to the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* in April 1898 that:

The epidemic form of various diseases which flourished amidst the unwholesome conditions prevailing when small-pox was so rife is [sic] now practically extinct, having been got rid of by the ameliorations incident to a higher development of civilisation, viz., drainage, improved dwellings, better food, pure water, and less overcrowding ... it is a curious fact that small-pox, for which a special and alleged infallible antidote is provided and enforced at an enormous cost, should be the only one that now affrights us.¹⁰

⁷ Hennock, 'Vaccination Policy Against Smallpox', 51.

⁸ Bashford, *Imperial Hygiene*, 16.

⁹ *Cornishman*, 3 April 1890.

¹⁰ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 28 April 1899.

The diseases upon which Williamson bases this argument – ‘plague, gaol fever, black death, scurvy, sweating-sickness, leprosy’ – were all, to a certain extent, impacted by the broader changes introduced under the sanitary approach to medicine in the nineteenth century.¹¹ However, Williamson reveals here his inability to comprehend why smallpox, often classified alongside many of these conditions as a ‘zymotic’ disease, should be any different. The classification of certain diseases (including smallpox) as ‘zymotic’ began in the mid-nineteenth century and it referred to diseases that were passed from person to person. The classification of a disease as ‘zymotic’ was based upon the notion of a ‘zyme’, ‘catalysts that in the right environmental conditions could spark disease processes’.¹² The implication of Williamson’s argument is clear; vaccination must actually be causing smallpox to survive as, if vaccination was not practised, smallpox would surely succumb to sanitary reform. This understanding of disease transmission is based upon two notions; firstly, that all diseases that afflict a given population must have the same cause and, secondly, that the practice of vaccination is part of a much larger conspiracy, the purpose for which will be discussed in further detail later. This is further supported by Williamson’s own words in a letter to the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* just one year later: ‘real immunity, real protection ... is obtained by attending to sanitation and isolation, coupled with the almost total neglect of vaccination’.¹³

Williamson’s understanding of the nature of disease was not unique and many other anti-vaccinationists shared his belief that sanitation was the ultimate cure for every disease that afflicted humanity. Indeed, an adherence to the simple (and understandable) laws of sanitation can perhaps be understood in its proper historical context when one considers that, nineteenth-century preventative medicine was, at best, according to Porter and Porter, ‘a composite of medical, biological, and socio-economic theories bound up in a revised environmental philosophy of prophylaxis’.¹⁴ Many medical professionals themselves struggled to keep up with the ever-changing theories of scientific medicine so it is perhaps understandable that the average citizen, lacking in any formal medical knowledge, may have been perplexed by the idea of preventative medicine. Job West, a man from Bradford-on-Avon, in Wiltshire, who claimed he had been left crippled by the vaccination procedure he had undergone as a child, was a frequent contributor to the correspondence columns of countless newspapers across Britain. His letters were almost exclusively focused on what he perceived to be the tyranny of vaccination and, along with Albertus Cragoe, West’s views would only grow more sinister as the years passed and the government continued in its refusal to end compulsory vaccination in England and Wales. West echoed the thoughts of Williamson in his own letter to the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* asking:

¹¹ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 28 April 1899.

¹² Durbach, *Bodily Matters*, 153.

¹³ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 13 April 1899.

¹⁴ Porter and Porter, ‘The Politics of Prevention’, 251.

Is it not somewhat strange for it to be seriously maintained that these improved conditions of life ... have had the effect of curtailing these filth diseases to such a remarkable extent, whilst one member of the same family – small-pox, has been affected by vaccination only? That the implantation of filth into the system, as in vaccination, is of more importance than the removal of filth in the surroundings is a proposition so logically unsound that one can only marvel at the existence of professional men who seriously maintain it.¹⁵

West's understanding of the purpose of vaccination is clearly very heavily influenced by the erroneous assumption that smallpox was a filth disease that could only be prevented by the removal of filth. Removing oneself from the knowledge that this is, in fact, an entirely incorrect premise, it is possible to understand why Williamson, West, and countless others like them, thought this way. Without the knowledge that smallpox was indeed transmitted by a virus and could not be contracted by exposure to filth, the notion that one disease was an exception to a well-established rule does defy logic. This issue was only made worse by the fact that the vast majority of medical professionals at the time who did understand that smallpox was transmitted differently to other diseases remained at a loss to explain exactly how this happened or why this was even the case. There simply was no way for pro-vaccinationists to explain why vaccination should work, and anti-vaccinationists exploited the limitations of scientific medical knowledge to their advantage. After all, why was the general public being forced to submit their children to a procedure that even doctors themselves could not explain?

For Job West, sanitation was not just about improving public health; it was also about improving morality amongst the lower classes. West supported the theory of Social Darwinism that was espoused by the likes of Herbert Spencer, and wholeheartedly believed that the working and pauper classes of Britain would be exponentially improved by sanitary reform, 'man is the creature of his environments ... it can hardly be expected that under such conditions [filth] the best of either his physical, mental, or moral being will find its fullest expansion'.¹⁶ As Bashford reveals, this was a notion that was characteristic of the sanitarian movement in nineteenth-century England:

sanitary reform was never an apolitical process, simply seeking humanely to create the conditions for greater health. It was, for example, fundamentally bound up with the emergence of the problem of pauperism ... and with class issues surrounding the administration of the New Poor Law. Additionally, undertaking sanitary improvement and the new discourse which quantified, recorded and categorised disease were as much about protecting the health of the middle and upper class, as about undertaking benevolent work.¹⁷

Cornish anti-vaccinationists also bought into the theory that the enforcement of vaccination served as a conspiracy to bring down sanitation. Albertus Cragoe wrote to the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* to express his concerns about the issue on several occasions. To Cragoe, doctors were keeping vaccination afloat in order to prevent the public 'see[ing] that isolation is the one never-failing factor in stamping out small-pox as of every other infectious disease ... vaccination has usurped the

¹⁵ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 20 April 1899.

¹⁶ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 12 July 1900.

¹⁷ Bashford, *Purity and Pollution*, 3.

credit, entirely due to sanitation, the Notification of Diseases Act, and isolation'.¹⁸ From Albertus Cragoe's perspective, the solution to the small-pox question was clear, 'the enormous sums of money now being lavished on vaccination, if laid out in improved dwellings and in obtaining pure water supplies for the children to drink, would largely help to make Old England the happiest and healthiest country under the sun'.¹⁹ R S Hosken, president of the short-lived Penryn and District Anti-Vaccination Society, took this belief one step further. Echoing the words of Charles Truscott, who wrote in defence of the Cragoe brothers in the early 1880s, Hosken's understanding of medical science reflects the intricate patchwork of ideas, old and new, that continued to exist in the minds of many members of the general public. For Hosken, disease was still, fundamentally, a moral issue and could only truly be solved through sanitation, as West had indicated. According to Hosken:

Disease, in any form, whether small-pox, diphtheria, cancer, or consumption, originates from within, and not from without; until it is accepted that disease is a kindly act of nature, pointing to her broken fixed laws of hygiene, whether in eating and drinking, whether living in vitiated atmosphere or otherwise neglecting ordinary precautions of keeping that large organ, the skin, clean.²⁰

Conspiracy to increase profits

To the conspiracy-minded anti-vaccinationist, there was only one reason why medical professionals would want to suppress sanitary theory and promote vaccination in its place; money. Whilst municipal sanitation was important, many sanitarian anti-vaccinationists believed that the only way to truly prevent disease was through the implementation of physical and moral sanitary practices on a personal level. Thus, the medical professional could do little to stop the spread of disease and it was up to the individual to make the necessary changes to ensure that they and their families lived healthy (and moral) lives. To anti-vaccinationists, this approach to health and wellbeing could only be seen as an anathema to the medical profession who could not make any money from implementing sanitary reform in this manner. As a result, vaccination was seen as the reaction of the medical profession to this state of affairs. Many anti-vaccinationists in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries wholeheartedly believed that doctors were well aware, not only of the apparent dangers of vaccination, but also of the primacy of sanitary reform in combatting disease. According to Albertus Cragoe, the medical profession was deliberately hoodwinking the uneducated general public, forcing them to believe that vaccination was the only way to protect themselves against the ravages of smallpox as doctors were paid, either by private citizens or through the gratuitous vaccination scheme funded by the government, on a case-by-

¹⁸ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 18 May 1899.

¹⁹ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 1 June 1899.

²⁰ *West Briton*, 10 April 1902.

case basis. The more children vaccinated by a doctor, the more money they received. Cragoe claimed:

The medical profession ... has debased our minds, poisoned our bodies, and picked our pockets, and although hundreds of thousands of English people see the error of vaccination to-day, yet on the strength of the ignorance of other thousands of society noodles, who will tell you they believe "in vaccination," in "re-vaccination," in "compulsory vaccination," and in "vaccination whenever small-pox is about," the profession is still striving with its paralyzed hands ... to continue the practice by force!²¹

The income that doctors and other medical professionals received from the enforcement of the Vaccination Act was seen as incentive enough to entice the majority to support the compulsory vaccination scheme, against their better judgement. Instead of working to benefit their patients, doctors were apparently being persuaded by ill-gotten money to continue a practice that they knew was harmful, whilst ignoring the actual solution to the smallpox problem; sanitation. Decades of subsequent biomedical research (and the eradication of smallpox by global vaccination programmes) have proven this line of argument to be entirely incorrect, but to the anti-vaccinationist at the turn of the twentieth century, sanitation still seemed to be the logical preventative of all forms of disease. However, as has been noted, doctors stood to obtain little financial benefit from personal sanitation and anti-vaccinationists from across Britain contended that this was the only reason that so many doctors continued to enforce vaccination and reject sanitation as a preventative of smallpox. According to Job West:

Probably nothing so arouses the resentment of a large section of the medical men of this country as anything which threatens the overthrow of that superstitious, mischievous, but fee-producing idol, "vaccination." which they have set up. They have used every means in their power for the upholding of the compulsory vaccination law, which, to them, has been such a source of revenue, although under it thousands of children have been killed and tens of thousands ruined in health, and honest and respectable citizens thrust into prison as criminals for no other offence than the protection of their offspring from a ghastly danger.²²

Here, West draws attention to a major change in the fundamental nature of the vaccination debate following the introduction of the 1867 amendment; vaccination was now seen as the superstition. In the earlier phases of vaccine objection, it was the 'ignorant mother' who was seen as superstitious, particularly in Cornwall and the broader South-West where Celtic folk traditions and Methodist beliefs intertwined to create a deeply superstitious and fatalistic culture. The 'ignorant mother' clung to inoculation and rejected vaccination because she was superstitious. Following the entrance of the middle-classes into the vaccination debate, largely in protest of the repeated prosecutions allowed through the 1867 amendment to the Vaccination Act, the notion of 'superstition' was turned on its head. Now, it was the orthodox medical establishment that was accused of harbouring a superstitious belief, one that just happened to be very financially lucrative for its proponents as well. For the Cornish educated classes, attempting to overthrow the 'Old Cornwall' stereotype that saw

²¹ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 2 June 1898.

²² *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 18 January 1901.

them classified as nothing more than antediluvian and un-Enlightened provincials, this re-assignment of the concept of 'superstition' was extremely beneficial. No longer were the Cornish anti-vaccinationists considered backwards but rather, their opponents had assumed that unfortunate mantle. Albertus Cragoe took this reclassification of 'superstition' and ran with it, arguing that it was not the provincial anti-vaccinationists like himself that were out of touch with modernity, but rather it was the medical orthodoxy. Cragoe claimed that:

It has been a veritable silver mine to the medical men, and they are now trying to transform the discredited old bal [Cornish term for mine] ('vaccination') into a gold mine, the profession to take the dividends, and the public to take the unlimited liability of costs and disease.²³

Conspiracy to incite fear

If, as many anti-vaccinationists claimed at the turn of the twentieth century, vaccination was superstition, then doctors were simply upholding the practice to ensure their own financial benefit. The medical profession had now assumed the role that was previously played by so many Cornish witch-doctors, fortune-tellers, and con-artists; they were preying on the fears of an uneducated public. To anti-vaccinationists, this was particularly callous as doctors were seen to have manufactured the fears that they were profiting from. As was discussed previously, Albertus Cragoe, following the death of his young son William, had come to deny that smallpox was really a dangerous disease. In the minds of Albertus and his brother Thomas, natural smallpox was nothing to be feared. Rather, it was the smallpox that had been manipulated over the previous century, through both inoculation and vaccination, that had killed William and infected some of Albertus' other children. The Cragoe brothers were not alone in this belief, although it is perhaps more radical in their case, given the fatal results of smallpox that had been witnessed in their own family. To James R Williamson, smallpox was not a dangerous disease at all, if the correct treatment was applied: 'with proper treatment and nursing, no one afflicted with small-pox should be disfigured or rendered blind'.²⁴ Whilst Williamson says nothing of the potentially fatal effects of a smallpox outbreak, the underlying message in this statement is clear; the medical profession exaggerated the dangers of a disease that should be simple to treat. For Williamson, this argument was based on a belief that, in previous centuries, smallpox had not been treated correctly and that this had rendered the disease fatal. He maintained that such practices as 'sweating' the patient and confining them to an unventilated room with other smallpox sufferers had caused some patients to die from smallpox in the past. This interpretation naturally aligned with his overarching belief that sanitation was the true preventative of smallpox. In his worldview, Williamson could argue that smallpox was only ever a threat to human life when true sanitary reform was not undertaken. In the enlightened age of sanitary theory, smallpox was essentially rendered harmless as patients who

²³ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 28 April 1899.

²⁴ *West Briton*, 11 March 1897.

were unfortunate enough to contract the disease would be treated 'correctly' (i.e. following sanitary principles of diet, cleanliness, and ventilation) and would emerge unscathed and reinvigorated to live a moral and sanitary life.

To other anti-vaccinationists writing to Cornish newspapers at the time, morality was the critical issue in the vaccination debate. One anonymous correspondent, calling themselves 'Northern Light' and giving their place of residence as Edinburgh, wrote numerous letters to the *West Briton* in the early 1900s, and placed great emphasis on Biblical interpretations of medical science. To 'Northern Light', sanitation was supported by the Bible whilst vaccination was not, meaning that sanitation must be the true preventive of smallpox. In another example of the clash between modern scientific theories and the understandings of old, 'Northern Light' presents their understanding of disease transmission, encompassing notions of germ theory, immunology, the 'latent seed' theory, and theology:

Pox germs, after being humanised ... are thrown off the vaccinated; and, unless the health defences are perfect, these germs ... gather their forces together and attack your weakest points. The more numerous they are, at any time, the grater the danger. The Bible truly states that whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap. If you sow disease germs in a suitable soil you will reap disease and disease germs.²⁵

Whilst 'Northern Light's' understanding of medical science may seem convoluted and overly complex, it is simply evidence of the way in which new scientific theories worked their way into the mind of the general public. 'Northern Light' combines what they know to be true with the new information trickling down into the broader society from scientists and doctors. In this worldview, pro-vaccinationists were literally ignoring the word of God, sowing the seeds of disease and reaping disease in kind. For 'Northern Light' there was only one true preventative of smallpox; 'it is my humble opinion that if inoculation and vaccination had not been practised, small-pox would, owing to sanitary improvements, be much less rampant than it is to-day'.²⁶ The key role that theology and morality played in interpretations of medical science for some anti-vaccinationists led them to the conclusion that doctors and other medical practitioners were exaggerating the severity of smallpox. According to 'Northern Light: 'to listen to some folk, you must think that if it were not for vaccination we would be pestered with small-pox all the days of our life. Nothing of the kind, for it cannot be supposed that God made us with that object in view'.²⁷

Conspiracy to extend class warfare

For some anti-vaccinationists, including the Cragoe brothers, a critical component of their agitation was their assumed role as 'defender of the poor'. As Durbach indicated, the Vaccination Act, in all

²⁵ *West Briton*, 3 April 1902.

²⁶ *West Briton*, 27 March 1902.

²⁷ *West Briton*, 27 March 1902.

its various forms, was always explicitly designed to target the lower classes of society.²⁸ The first Vaccination Act in 1840 was designed to force the lower classes to stop adhering to the practice of inoculation which had fallen out of favour with the more highly-educated classes when Edward Jenner proved vaccination was a much safer substitute. The first amendment to the Act in 1853 had been put in place to force the lower classes to take up vaccination. According to Durbach, ‘the Compulsory Vaccination Act of 1853 thus aimed to secure the vaccination of those children whose parents were not taking advantage of the free service provided by the Poor Law medical officers’ that had become available in 1840.²⁹ The 1867 amendment gave rise to the middle-class anti-vaccinationist and the vaccine ‘martyr’ precisely because it enforced repeated fines for the same child, up until that child reached the age of 14. This meant that the vast majority of working-class anti-vaccinationists could no longer afford to continue their protest by refusing to vaccinate their children. Even the conscience clause, introduced in the 1898 amendment to the Act, was built upon the notion that a ‘conscientious objection’ was not something that could be claimed by the lower-classes as one had to have an education to truly understand what it meant to ‘conscientiously object’. A poem that appeared in a Lancashire newspaper, the *Blackburn Standard*, in 1898, ridiculed the notion that a working-class father could claim to be a ‘conscientious objector’, with the father depicted in the poem not able to remember which child he was claiming an exemption for:

I conscientiously object
 To vaccinatn’ of my kid;
 In vaccination as a check
 I don’t berlieve an’ never did.
 I do berlieve it’s bin imposed
 The workin’ classes to annoy;
 And that is w’y I ain’t disposed
 To try it on my girl – or boy.

I says my boy or girl becos
 I don’t know if it’s he or she,
 But my old woman ‘ere is poz
 That it’s a girl – so let it be.
 But wot she’s called I couldn’t say;
 I know my wife is called the same,
 I think it’s Rose, or Kate, or May,
 Or Poll, or Sue, or some such name.

I ain’t quite certain w’er we live,
 W’en she was born I couldn’t tell;

²⁸ Durbach, *Bodily Matters*, 23.

²⁹ Durbach, *Bodily Matters*, 23.

I didn't come up 'ere to give
'Er blooming pedigree as well.
If you want facks you'll 'ave ter go
And arst my missus, I expeck,
But for meself, I only know,
I conscientiously object.³⁰

Anti-vaccinationists were acutely aware of the class-divide that existed in the enforcement of the Vaccination Act and used this issue to their own advantage. If the government was using the Vaccination Act to discriminate against the lower-classes, then the anti-vaccination movement made sure that it was seen to be acting in the best interests of their less-fortunate counterparts. Without universal suffrage, it was only through membership of organised anti-vaccination societies that those without voting rights could exert any form of political power to overturn the Vaccination Act. The sheer number of working-class anti-vaccinationists bolstered the membership bases of these societies and, as Durbach argues, the working-class agitators were critical to the success of the anti-vaccination movement in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries.³¹ For Durbach, the anti-vaccination movement is a critical component of the 'longer history of the making and re-making of the British working class'.³² However, this interpretation has its limitations when Cornwall is taken into consideration. Without any local branches of anti-vaccination societies being successfully established in the county, there was no organisation of the working-classes to support the cause. This is not to say that the lower classes of Cornish society did not want to see the Vaccination Act overturned; quite the opposite in reality. In 1885, an anonymous correspondent to the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* revealed that, if a Cornish anti-vaccination society could be established to represent the workers, its membership would be substantial and it would potentially hold a great deal of sway in the government:

It is certain that the Cornish miners can, if they will, carry their choice to Parliament, even if it were in spite of privileged elements in the constituency. That they mean to do so there can be no doubt; and Mr. Conybeare has, in opposing compulsory vaccination, pledged himself to do that which will fire their zeal.³³

Noted anti-vaccinationist, Charles Augustus Vansittart Conybeare was elected MP for Camborne in 1885. Nicknamed the 'Miner's Friend', Conybeare defeated the official Liberal candidate, Arthur Pendarves Vivian, in a struggle described by L.L. Price as an 'intense and bitter ... contest between Whig and Radical', that brought tensions within the Liberal Party to a head in the local

³⁰ *Blackburn Standard*, 24 September 1898.

³¹ Nadja Durbach, "They Might As Well Brand Us": Working-Class Resistance to Compulsory Vaccination', *Social History of Medicine*, vol. 13, no. 1, 2000, 45-62.

³² Durbach, "They Might As Well Brand Us", 46.

³³ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 14 August 1885.

context.³⁴ Conybeare had a broad political manifesto that reflected his Radical ideals; not only was he an ardent anti-vaccinationist, but Conybeare also favoured anti-landlordism, the abolition of the House of Lords, the disestablishment of the Church of England, the local option (Sunday closing in public houses), female suffrage, a graduated income tax, and Home Rule (including Cornwall).³⁵ Conybeare's victory in Camborne in 1885 reflects Henry Pelling's assertion that Camborne, in the 1880s, 'was very Radical', with the *West Briton* of 24 September 1885 similarly describing Conybeare's victory as a reflection of 'the creed of the overwhelming majority [of the Camborne electorate]', stated as being 'neatly, precisely democratic ... It is as Cornish as the Cornish pilchard and Cornish humour ... These men are so downright democratic even in their religion'.³⁶ The influence of religion in the widespread support for Conybeare is critical as Methodism had become a significant plank of the Cornish identity by the nineteenth century. According to D.H. Luker, Methodism was the 'popular religion' of Cornwall and 'there was an increasingly articulated regional sensitivity on the part of the Cornish which fuelled an exaggerated identification of Methodism as "theirs"'.³⁷ Critically, Deacon contends that, by the 1880s, 'Methodism and Liberalism had become virtually synonymous' in Cornwall.³⁸ Methodism itself, however, was a broad church, and more radical factions such as the Bible Christians and the Primitive Methodists, who had broken away from the Wesleyans, were more likely to be through their support behind the anti-vaccinationist rhetoric of radicals such as Conybeare.

If the political agitation of these Cornish miners could be harnessed into a single organisation that represented their interests in the absence of universal suffrage, they could influence elections on a county-wide basis. It was not just the miners who were staunchly anti-vaccinationist either. The same anonymous correspondent noted that 'the farm labourers ... are kindred to the miners, and both are bitterly opposed to compulsory vaccination'.³⁹ The potential for political change was great, and yet, it was never achieved. The Cragoe brothers had tried in 1881 with their failed attempt to launch an anti-vaccination society in Truro.⁴⁰ However, one of the most critical issues that they faced in harnessing the power of the working-classes was cost. The lecture that the Cragoe brothers had organised in January 1881 to rally the community in the fight against vaccination had failed to attract a large enough audience to set in motion any attempt to form a local branch of the anti-vaccination society. As the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* reported, this lecture was poorly attended,

³⁴ L.L. Price, 'West Barbary', 1895, reprinted in Roger Burt (ed.) *Cornish Mining: Essays on the Organisation of Cornish Mines and the Cornish Mining Economy*, David & Charles, Newton Abbot, 1969, 130.

³⁵ Bernard Deacon, 'Conybeare For Ever! Redruth and the 1885 Election', in Terry Knight (ed.), *Old Redruth: Original Studies of the Town's History*, Redruth Old Cornwall Society, Redruth, 1993, 37-43; Philip Payton, *One and All: Labor and the Radical Tradition in South Australia*, Wakefield Press, Adelaide, 2016, 48-49.

³⁶ Henry Pelling, *Social Geography of British Elections 1885-1910*, Macmillan, London, 1967, 165; *West Briton*, 24 September 1885.

³⁷ D.H. Luker, 'Cornish Methodism, Revivalism and Popular Belief c.1780-1870', unpublished DPhil thesis, University of Oxford, 1987, 290, 322.

³⁸ Deacon, *A Concise History of Cornwall*, 144.

³⁹ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 14 August 1885.

⁴⁰ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 21 January 1881.

largely due to the high cost of admission which had excluded most of the lower-class anti-vaccinationists from the region. This failure led to a substantial loss of momentum in the region and middle-class anti-vaccinationists from Cornwall instead paid their membership fees to the established London-based societies, rather than attempting to organise a branch of their own.

Anti-vaccinationists from across the country also saw the great potential for political agitation amongst the working-classes of Cornwall. James R Williamson wrote to the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* in 1898 to urge the lower-classes of the county to unite and overthrow the Vaccination Act:

If the working classes will now rise to the occasion and show their power ... freedom may be conquered. This can be accomplished by meeting together, and making their voices heard in vigorous resolutions of protest; and by instructing their Parliamentary representatives to vote against this iniquitous Bill ... A determined effort at this crisis against the dictation and domination of an interested medical hierarchy will put an end to an unspeakable evil and an intolerable injustice.⁴¹

Albertus Cragoe, too, refused to give up on the dream he had shared with his brother – a united working-class anti-vaccination movement in Cornwall. Writing to the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* in 1899, Cragoe lamented that the lower-classes of the county had the power to bring about change but that they would not do anything with it:

All this misery and waste of millions of public money will be stopped when the people see that they have been grossly plundered and trampled on, compelling them to turn and exert themselves at all elections; they have the power, why on earth don't they make more use of it?⁴²

An anonymous correspondent to the *Cornubian* in the same year saw the lack of unified anti-vaccination agitation in Cornwall as further evidence of vaccination-based class warfare. According to 'Ratepayer', the people of the Redruth Union, particularly those at Stithians, had been deliberately kept in the dark and had not been informed of their rights under the Vaccination Act amendment of 1898. 'Ratepayer' argued that 'never in the history of Stithians was there such excitement among parents, as what we have witnessed in the last few days owing to the remarkable manner in which this quackery business has been sprung upon them'.⁴³ The 'excitement' that was generated at Stithians was in relation to a public vaccinator appearing to forcibly vaccinate children in the district whose parents had not been informed by the authorities that they were entitled to obtain a legal exemption from the practice. The implication was clear; how could the lower-classes of Cornwall unite to overthrow a law if they had no actual understanding of the law they were trying to overthrow? In this way, 'Ratepayer' saw the deliberate misinformation being fed to the people of the Redruth Union as nothing more than a conspiracy to keep the lower-classes from rising up in opposition to the Vaccination Act.

⁴¹ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 19 May 1898.

⁴² *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 18 May 1899.

⁴³ *Cornubian*, 28 July 1899.

It was not just those on the ground in Cornwall who saw the mark of class-warfare in the administration of the Vaccination Act. Alfred Russel Wallace, celebrated naturalist and scientist, was a staunch anti-vaccinationist and his writings on the subject served as the scientific legitimisation that many anti-vaccinationists felt their movement needed.⁴⁴ Wallace was not simply a figurehead for the movement; he genuinely believed that vaccination was an unnecessary and dangerous procedure. In a personal letter to his daughter Violet in 1894, Wallace revealed his concerns regarding the impact that vaccination had apparently had on his own family:

I have had dreadful news from California. My poor brother ... has tumours on the face & neck, which were cancerous. They had to be cut out at a hospital in San Francisco ... they cut the nerves so that he can not open one eye & can hardly move his jaw to eat, & besides all this the cancer is not got rid of but will grow again. He has only had one illness before all his life. None of our family ever had cancer that I ever heard of, so I impute it to that horrid vaccination.⁴⁵

An earlier letter to prominent anti-vaccinationist campaigner Joseph Collinson revealed that Wallace believed he had substantial medical and scientific grounds for believing that vaccination could cause cancer, an illness which was still believed by many to be transmissible.⁴⁶ In 1898, Wallace authored a pamphlet entitled *Vaccination a Delusion: It's Penal Enforcement a Crime*, in response to the findings of the Royal Commission into Vaccination. Aside from this pamphlet, much of Wallace's communications regarding his anti-vaccination beliefs were private, sent to specific members of the anti-vaccination movement or to family members. However, he allowed his name and his research into the controversy to be promoted by the anti-vaccination societies in order to legitimise their movement. This approach changed in mid-1907, when Wallace produced a letter that was reprinted in the correspondence columns of several newspapers across England, outlining his reasons for believing that the Vaccination Act should be overthrown entirely. One such newspaper was the *West Briton*, who published Wallace's letter on the 27 May. The letter revealed that Wallace was firmly of the belief that the Vaccination Act 'continues the cruel and unjust discrimination against the poor. The wealthy and middle classes will be to some extent relieved [by the introduction of new statutory declarations in 1907 in place of individual vaccination exemption certificates], but to the poor man there will be little or no relief'.⁴⁷

Conspiracy to do evil

As the nineteenth-century drew to a close, some anti-vaccinationists began to see something more sinister in the pro-vaccination movement. Drawing upon the long-standing notion that supporters of

⁴⁴ A discussion of the role that Wallace played in the later anti-vaccination movement can be found in Fitchett and Heymann, 'Smallpox Vaccination and Opposition by Anti-Vaccination Societies'.

⁴⁵ NHM WP/1/2/55, Letter (WCP256.256). Sent by Alfred Russel Wallace, Parkstone, Dorset, to Violet Isabel Wallace on 5 November 1894.

⁴⁶ A.R. Wallace Literary Estate, Letter WCP3632.3533. Sent by Alfred Russel Wallace, Parkstone, Dorset, to Joseph Collinson on 8 October 1893.

⁴⁷ *West Briton*, 27 May 1907.

the procedure were maintaining it simply for financial benefit, anti-vaccinationists, such as Albertus Cragoe, began to link the threads of differing conspiracy theories together and came to the conclusion that there was something inherently evil about the enforcement of the Vaccination Act. Drawing upon his staunchly Methodist beliefs, Cragoe saw a definitive comparison between medical professionals who promoted vaccination in the nineteenth century and the leaders of the established church who had persecuted non-conformists as heretics in previous centuries. Writing to the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* in April 1899, Cragoe declared that ‘doctor-craft and priest-craft are Hell-born twins, baneful alike to body and soul ... the love of persecution is as refreshing to a mean mind as liquor to the palate of a drunkard’.⁴⁸ This apparent persecution of anti-vaccinationists was financially very lucrative for doctors and others involved in the enforcement of the Vaccination Act throughout England and Wales.

Stuart Blume has contended that nineteenth-century anti-vaccinationists in England focused ‘much of the[ir] resistance ... against the compulsory nature of vaccination, rather than vaccination itself’.⁴⁹ However, this is an oversimplification of a highly complex situation as the arguments of anti-vaccinationists themselves dispute this claim. Blume was indeed correct in the assertion that post-1867 anti-vaccinationists were largely concerned with ending the compulsory aspects of the Vaccination Act yet their writing also reveals a strong belief that the hated vaccination procedure was only being practised in England because of compulsion. Thus, bringing down compulsion would also end the practise of vaccination and the two strands of the argument are intrinsically linked. As William Tebb argued:

This beneficent discovery [vaccination] is naturally so repugnant to their instincts and is so frequently attended with mischievous and sometimes fatal results that intelligent Englishmen refuse to accept it without the aid of the policeman, the seizure of their household goods, and the prison cell.⁵⁰

These punishments were a significant concern for anti-vaccination campaigners during this time and are associated with the compulsion aspect of the Vaccination Act. William Tebb’s statement, and those presented by countless others of a similar mindset, reveals that the nineteenth-century anti-vaccinationist often held the staunch belief that the compulsory vaccination law was the only factor keeping the entire practice of vaccination afloat, given that ‘intelligent Englishmen’ found it so ‘repugnant’.⁵¹

Opinions such as those being shared by William Tebb began to morph over time as anti-vaccinationists began to question if vaccination was necessary at all. Years of arguing back and forth with pro-vaccinationists, usually doctors, about the minute details of statistics had only

⁴⁸ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 27 April 1899.

⁴⁹ Stuart Blume, ‘Anti-Vaccination Movements and Their Interpretations’, *Social Science & Medicine*, no. 62, 2006, 628-642.

⁵⁰ *Gloucester Citizen*, 7 February 1884.

⁵¹ *Gloucester Citizen*, 7 February 1884.

cemented the belief that the procedure was essentially useless. This tied well with the notion that pro-vaccinationist doctors only supported the procedure because it benefitted them financially. For many anti-vaccinationists writing to the Cornish press, there was something inherently sinister in this notion as it was believed that doctors were aware of the dangers of the procedure but continued to support it simply for their own financial benefit. Thomas Cragoe described doctors as ‘bowing down before the vaccine idol’, a clear reference to the idea that pro-vaccinationists were actively resisting the laws of God and nature.⁵² This view was not limited to the Cornish vaccination debate and it permeated the broader anti-vaccination movement of the 1890s; doctors weren’t just keeping the ‘ruse’ of vaccination going in order to benefit financially, they were actively persecuting the ‘intelligent Englishmen’ and gaining sinister spiritual or personal benefit from doing so. Arthur Trobridge, a sub-manager of an alkali works outside of Birmingham, was a passionate supporter of the anti-vaccination movement and wrote to the *Bristol Mercury* in late 1893, intimating that a conspiracy had been formed amongst medical professionals and government officials to keep the revelation that vaccination was dangerous secret from the general public in order to maintain their positions of authority, along with the supplementary income that vaccination provided to those who practised it. Trobridge claimed: ‘The inner circle of the vaccine cult is not at all anxious to advertise or endorse Jenner’s whimsical theories, for an intimate and critical knowledge of Jenner and his works is necessarily fatal to the modern vaccine faith’.⁵³

The notion of the ‘vaccine cult’, the inner workings of which were presented as being fundamentally heretical in nature, began to take hold amongst anti-vaccinationists in the 1890s. As the words of Albertus Cragoe reveal, religious non-conformists within English society were particularly swayed by the notion that vaccination was an evil practice, enforced only through the persecution of the non-believer. This understanding of the pro-vaccination movement as a heretical ‘cult’ was supported by those unorthodox medical professionals labelled as ‘rebel doctors’ by Anna Kata in her study of the modern anti-vaccination movement.⁵⁴ Kata’s ‘rebel doctors’ were just as important in the nineteenth-century anti-vaccination movement. One of these ‘rebel doctors’ in the late-nineteenth century was Thomas Allinson, a physician from London, who wrote to the *Gloucester Citizen* in 1892 comparing the ‘vaccine cult’ to the Spanish Inquisition, stating:

Medical men arrogate themselves the position of high priests, and would excommunicate and ruin all who dare to differ from their dogmas, and refuse to aid in the worship of the golden calf which they have set up. The spirit of the Inquisition of Spain was never more tolerant than that of this inquisition of medical men.⁵⁵

⁵² *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 3 January 1889.

⁵³ *Bristol Mercury*, 27 October 1893.

⁵⁴ Anna Kata, ‘A Postmodern Pandora’s Box: Anti-Vaccination Misinformation on the Internet’, *Vaccine*, vol. 28, 2010, 1709-1716.

⁵⁵ *Gloucester Citizen*, 6 January 1892. Allinson’s allusion to the ‘golden calf’ was a popular one amongst anti-vaccinationists at the time as it had a powerful double meaning, referring both to the literal calf (the original source of Jenner’s cowpox and later the source of the calf lymph that replaced humanised lymph)

Another prominent 'rebel doctor' was Walter Hadwen who practised in Gloucester and was a committed anti-vivisectionist as well as anti-vaccinationist. Hadwen was a popular ally for non-medically trained anti-vaccinationists as, in a similar fashion to the role played by Alfred Russel Wallace, his credentials lent scientific legitimacy to the movement. When anti-vaccinationists mentioned Hadwen in their writing to the press, they often listed his credentials in full to reinforce the notion that he was an accepted authority on the subject. An example of this can be found in a letter to the *Burnley Express* of Lancashire, where correspondent Robert Henry Place, described Hadwen as 'L.R.C.P., M.R.C.S., F.S.A. (gold medallist in medicine and surgery)' and noted that he only 'put his degrees so fully merely to show your readers that this gentleman stands higher in the ranks of the profession than either of the two medical gentlemen who are writing to the papers in defence of vaccination, and that he is therefore a better authority'.⁵⁶ Hadwen promised that he would never give up the fight to bring the Vaccination Act down, ending both compulsion and the procedure itself, claiming that he and other 'rebel doctors' 'never intend to rest until this grotesque relic of a superstitious past ceases to be forced upon us against our consciences by the bigotry of a tyrannical clique'.⁵⁷

James R Williamson considered this 'tyrannical clique' to be the source of great shame for the nation, boldly declaring that 'it is a mistake to suppose that the barbarous races have a monopoly of cruel and disgusting superstitions, for there is hardly any superstition more cruel or disgusting than to mix the blood of healthy children with cow-pox'.⁵⁸ For Williamson, the supposedly 'Enlightened' England was no better than the 'barbarous races' they considered beneath them, as

there is no tyranny more inexcusable than to harass, persecute, and subject to fines or ignominious and degrading punishments those thoughtful and conscientious parents who reject such superstitions and exhibit an invincible determination to protect their defenceless offspring, at all costs, from its mischievous effects.⁵⁹

According to Job West, the end of compulsion would be intrinsically linked with the downfall of vaccination entirely and he believed that doctors would do anything in their power to prevent this from happening. In the *Royal Cornwall Gazette* at the beginning of 1900, West even went so far as to accuse doctors from Hull, in Yorkshire, of actively killing their own unvaccinated patients to ensure that the death-rate amongst the unvaccinated remained higher than their vaccinated counterparts during an epidemic. West based this accusation on the well-established notion

and the golden calf of the Book of Exodus (the false idol worshipped by the Israelites while Moses was receiving the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai).

⁵⁶ *Burnley Express*, 23 January 1907. Similar descriptions can also be found in the *Bradford Daily Telegraph*, 16 July 1906 and the *Derby Daily Telegraph*, 2 March 1905.

⁵⁷ *Gloucester Citizen*, 1 August 1906. Hadwen is memorialized by Animal Free Research UK (still known as the Dr Hadwen Trust) for his anti-vivisection stance. The Trust website makes no mention of his anti-vaccinationist views.

⁵⁸ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 20 April 1899.

⁵⁹ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 20 April 1899.

amongst anti-vaccinationists that the pre-vaccination era death-rate from smallpox only averaged approximately 18 percent, a figure that also supported the idea that doctors were inflating the threat of smallpox to force the public to vaccinate their children. West then countered this figure, the origins of which are unclear even amongst anti-vaccinationists at the time, against the recorded death-rate amongst the unvaccinated at Hull of 50 percent during a recent epidemic.⁶⁰ According to West, this figure indicated only two possible explanations: that 'the Hull doctors of to-day are less skilful than those of a century ago' or, more shockingly, 'that in order to save vaccination from reproach they kill about 32 per. cent of their small-pox patients'.⁶¹ West was not the only anti-vaccinationist to make such an assertion. Henry Clark, of Derby, wrote to the *Derby Daily Telegraph* in 1882, almost two decades before West was active in the debate, arguing that 'if the unvaccinated die at the rate of fifty per cent. they are killed – they don't die of the small-pox'.⁶² Whilst accusations such as these may seem radical, they fit well within a worldview that saw the medical profession as, at best, untrustworthy, and, at worst, inherently evil. West saw the Vaccination Act as enslaving the English population, declaring it 'an anomaly in a country which professes a regard for freedom, and a tyranny not long to be endured by a people who are not vassals or slaves'.⁶³

Conspiracy by Magistrates

Following the seven year-long Royal Commission into Compulsory Vaccination, investigators came to the conclusion that anti-vaccinationists who held conscientious objections to the procedure were being unfairly treated under the Vaccination Act. According to Hennock, the final report of the Royal Commission had indicated, in no uncertain terms, that 'conscientious objection to vaccination should not be penalized'.⁶⁴ As a result, in 1898, a conscientious objection clause was added to the Act. Whilst vaccination was still considered compulsory throughout England and Wales, objectors were able to 'opt out' and prevent their children from being vaccinated if they obtained the proper exemption certificate from the magistrates. When the Royal Commission advised the government to allow for the establishment of a conscientious objection clause, pro-vaccinationists were outraged – and so were the anti-vaccinationists. To the latter group, this measure did not go far enough as they wanted the entire compulsory vaccination system to be brought down. As Durbach argues, the introduction of the conscience clause into the Vaccination Act even created a new kind of anti-vaccinationist, those who 'refused conscientious-objector status' on the grounds that it would

⁶⁰ Some anti-vaccinationists quoted the work of Dr James Jurin in the eighteenth century who calculated smallpox mortality at approximately 16 percent; others simply quoted 'hospital records' as showing a death-rate of 17 or 18 percent, with no further information. In the absence of any actual statistics for the pre-vaccination era, this estimation was impossible to disprove, a fact that often worked in the favour of anti-vaccinationists.

⁶¹ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 25 January 1900.

⁶² *Derby Daily Telegraph*, 15 May 1882.

⁶³ *Cornubian*, 24 May 1901.

⁶⁴ Hennock, 'Vaccination Policy Against Smallpox', 60.

enable only the wealthy, who could afford the excessive fees, to claim exemption from the Act, at the expense of the conscientious poor.⁶⁵ This apparent economic discrimination seems to be supported by the evidence from Cornwall as an examination of the total applications made under the conscience clause in Cornish courts reveals that the clear majority were made by wealthier individuals (such as engineers, clerks, and a large number of police officers) in comparison to their working-class counterparts.⁶⁶ Thus, even though the Royal Commission had technically found in their favour, many anti-vaccinationists only continued on their downward spiral into the depths of radical conspiracy theories about the nature of the medical industry. The introduction of the conscience clause added a new dimension to the theory that the enforcement of the Vaccination Act was nothing more than a conspiracy to make the medical profession wealthier at the expense of children's lives. Across the length and breadth of England, anti-vaccinationists began to theorise that magistrates were now part of this conspiracy.

Magistrates had long been considered part of the problem by anti-vaccinationists. Prior to the 1898 amendment, agitators had attempted to generate sympathy amongst magistrates for non-vaccinating parents and reminded them that they were not bound by law to enforce harsh penalties under the Act. As early as 1870, Henry Pitman informed Cornish magistrates that it was entirely lawful for them to decide not to punish defendants in vaccination cases at all, the Vaccination Act indicating that a defendant could face a fine of up to 20s, not that such a fine had to be enforced.⁶⁷ When Thomas and Albertus Cragoe appeared before the magistrates at the West Powder Petty Sessions in the 1880s, their lawyer, Dobell, often plead with the Bench to mitigate the fines to be inflicted on his clients as it was entirely within their power to do so. By the time the Conscience Clause was introduced, however, the problem of magistrates treating non-vaccinating parents harshly was a well-established trope within anti-vaccinationist rhetoric and the new clause presented an entirely new avenue for anti-vaccinationists to explore; magistrates' refusals to grant exemption certificates to conscientious objectors.

The outrage that spread across the country in the wake of the 1898 amendment to the Vaccination Act provides valuable insight into exactly how influential the propaganda of the organised anti-vaccination societies could be in the absence of local branches. As has been noted, both Thomas and Albertus Cragoe were members of London-based anti-vaccination societies, as were many other middle-class individuals in Cornwall and, as such, were recipients of the vast amount of propaganda and printed material that was produced by such societies. As Durbach reveals, the anti-vaccination movement was prolific in its publication of materials to support the cause; 'the campaign's publicists produced hundreds of handbills and pamphlets of various shapes, sizes, and

⁶⁵ Durbach, *Bodily Matters*, 189.

⁶⁶ The list of all exemption applications made in Cornwall can be found in [Appendix 2](#).

⁶⁷ *Cornubian*, 18 March 1870.

genres aimed at the popular reader, some with runs of 100,000'.⁶⁸ Dorothy Porter and Roy Porter also draw attention to the sheer volume of printed materials disseminated by the anti-vaccination movement, particularly in the 1870s and 1880s.⁶⁹ Even in the absence of a local branch of an anti-vaccination society, it is not fanciful to suggest that these materials were disseminated freely amongst the broader Cornish population, through the auspices of those who, like the Cragoe brothers, were members of the larger societies.

In 1899, Albertus Cragoe wrote to the *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, discussing the role that magistrates were playing in the continued enforcement of the Vaccination Act, even in the wake of the introduction of the conscience clause. He lamented that, where once magistrates had excused their punishment of anti-vaccinationists as simply being part of their duty to uphold the law, 'now the law is altered, these gentlemen are actually found using the influence of their official position' to prevent members of the public from 'availing themselves of the privileges of the new Act'.⁷⁰ Cragoe further noted that he was 'truly sorry that this has occurred in the county of Cornwall'.⁷¹ This argument was further detailed by Job West later in the same year:

Previous to the passing of the Vaccination Act of 189[8], magistrates never wearied of telling parents who were summoned before them for vaccination default that they (the magistrates) were not makers of the law, that they were not concerned with its righteousness or otherwise, but had to administer it as it stood. Now, that the law recognises the conscientious objector to vaccination, many magistrates appear to think that their only functions are to sit in judgment on the law and severely catechise all applicants who apply to them for their statutory right.⁷²

James R Williamson had similarly accused magistrates of 'behav[ing] like a lot of ill-bred schoolboys', whilst an anonymous correspondent to the *West Briton* complained that 'the magistrates should have no right to question or lecture a man on the point of conscience. The law should be altered to allow the man to obtain the exemption without giving any reason whatever'.⁷³

That magistrates in Cornish courts frequently lectured applicants under the Conscience Clause is clear. When an applicant appeared before the Tywardreath Petty Sessions in 1907, Job West wrote to the *Cornubian* to protest the treatment that the individual had received from the Chairman of the Bench, Sir Colman Rashleigh. Describing Rashleigh's response to the application as a 'homily', West revealed that the Chairman had reluctantly granted the exemption certificate (which he considered 'very, very wrong') after remarking that he firmly believed in vaccination and stated that 'it was a most foolish thing to object to vaccination'.⁷⁴ However, of a greater concern for anti-vaccinationists at the time was the refusal of some magistrates to even grant exemption

⁶⁸ Durbach, *Bodily Matters*, 47.

⁶⁹ Porter and Porter, 'The Politics of Prevention', 239.

⁷⁰ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 12 January 1899.

⁷¹ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 12 January 1899.

⁷² *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 18 May 1899.

⁷³ *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 10 November 1898; *West Briton*, 8 May 1902.

⁷⁴ *Cornubian*, 9 February 1907.

certificates. An anonymous correspondent to the *West Briton*, tellingly identifying themselves only as ‘Sanitate and Isolate’, complained that Cornish magistrates were showing ‘no respect for the law’ by refusing to allow conscientious objectors to claim exemption under the law.⁷⁵ According to another anonymous correspondent to the *West Briton* (‘Fair Play’), magistrates were rapidly gaining a reputation for refusing to grant exemption certificates if they believed the applicant could not appropriately justify their ‘conscientious objection’ to the Bench; ‘I do not see that any magistrate has any right to tell him that the expression of his conscientious opinion is “a deliberate falsehood”’.⁷⁶ This was a recurring theme in anti-vaccinationist correspondence throughout the country following the 1898 amendment. However, the question remains to what extent were the claims made by ‘Sanitate and Isolate’ and ‘Fair Play’ influenced less by actual events in Cornwall and more by the propaganda machine of the major anti-vaccination societies? To answer this question, it is necessary to examine the reality of vaccination exemption applications in Cornish courts following the introduction of the Clause in 1898.

Between September 1898 and the end of November 1907, there were a total of 578 exemption cases heard in Cornish courts. Of these, magistrates refused to give exemption certificates in only 28 cases, meaning that fewer than five percent of all applications heard by Cornish magistrates were refused. The numbers of refusals recorded in each Poor Law Union are listed in [Table 15](#). **Table 15: Number of exemption applications recorded by PLU.**

Poor Law Union	Refusals	Total Applications
Bodmin	1	16
Camelford	1	41
Falmouth	0	11
Helston	0	22
Launceston	0	51
Liskeard	6	58
Penzance	4	163
Redruth	13	100
St Austell	1	8
St Columb	1	8
St Germans	0	2
Stratton	0	16
Truro	1	71
Devonian Unions	0	11
Total	28	578

Only 16 of these cases can be identified as having a recorded reason for the magistrates rejecting the application. These 16 cases are outlined in [Table 16](#).

Table 16: Magistrates’ reasons for rejecting applications for exemption certificates in Cornwall.

Date	Applicant	PLU	Reason for Refusal
Feb 1899	S Laity	Redruth	Child too old

⁷⁵ *West Briton*, 11 September 1902.

⁷⁶ *West Briton*, 8 May 1902.

Feb 1899	-	Redruth	No birth certificate
Feb 1900	Edward Herbert Griffin	Penzance	Child too old
Jun 1900	Henry Peters	Penzance	Child too old
Oct 1901	Robert Stephens Rowe	Penzance	Conscientious objection not proven
Jan 1902	Lee	Redruth	Needed a medical postponement
Apr 1902	William Henry Stephens Chapman*	Truro	Conscientious objection not proven
May 1902	Edwin A Foster	Liskeard	Conscientious objection not proven
May 1902	William Blake	Launceston	Conscientious objection not proven
Jun 1902	John Parsons	Camelford	No birth certificate
Jun 1902	John Rouncefield	Penzance	Magistrates refused
Jul 1902	Richard Roseveare	Liskeard	Conscientious objection not proven
Jul 1902	William Samuel Ashton	St Austell	Medical certificate not provided
Feb 1903	Charles Marks*	Penzance	No birth certificate
Feb 1907	Frederick Charles Jenkin	Redruth	Wrong district
Feb 1907	Peters	Redruth	Child too old

* Exemption subsequently granted

As is demonstrated by the 16 cases outlined in [Table 16](#), the reasoning behind magistrates' refusals to grant exemption certificates in Cornish courts generally fell into one of three categories; either the application itself was incorrect (too late, wrong district, wrong certificate), the application was not supported by the necessary documentation (no birth certificate or medical certificate), or the magistrates decided the application was not genuine (conscientious objection not proven). The only outlier was one case in which magistrates simply refused to sign an exemption certificate. The first two categories are fairly straightforward. If an application was made incorrectly or the appropriate documentation was not provided to support it, magistrates were well within their rights to refuse to grant the certificate of exemption. The conscience clause may have entitled parents to exempt their child from compulsory vaccination but the parents were still required to comply with the letter of the law. In February 1900, Edward Herbert Griffin, a member of the Penzance Town Band, applied to have his son Gordon exempted from vaccination. Griffin informed the court that 'in his ignorance he had not come there is [sic] proper time, for the child was now five months old'.⁷⁷ The Vaccination Act amendment of 1898 clearly stated that for every child born subsequent to the introduction of the conscience clause, an application for exemption had to have been made before the child reached four months of age. Thus, when Griffin appeared at the Penzance Petty Sessions to exempt Gordon from the procedure, he was informed by the clerk that 'if you have let the exemption go over the four months ... you must have the child vaccinated'.⁷⁸ Griffin plead with the

⁷⁷ *Cornish Telegraph*, 14 February 1900.

⁷⁸ *Cornish Telegraph*, 14 February 1900.

magistrates that he did not know there was a time restriction on exemption applications but the Bench held firm with Mayor R. Pearce Couch declaring that they were powerless to act as 'the law will not allow us to grant a certificate now'.⁷⁹

A similar ruling was made in the case of St Ives fisherman, Henry Peters, who applied in June of the same year to exempt his son Jacob Ward from the procedure. Jacob Ward was born on the 6th February 1900 but Peters did not apply for an exemption certificate for the boy until the end of June. Peters informed the Bench that he wanted to exempt his son from the procedure because his 'wife's brother is weal in one arm as the result of vaccination' but when Magistrate Craze asked him if he actually had a conscientious objection himself, Peters did not respond.⁸⁰ Another magistrate, R.S. Read then took issue with the lateness of the application:

Mr. Read: Why did you not apply before?

Peters: I was out mackerel fishing, sir.

Mr. Read: What, out fishing all the month of February?

Peters: Yes, sir.

Mr. Read: There were no mackerel boats out in February.⁸¹

With his excuse summarily dismissed, there was no longer any obligation for the magistrates at St Ives to show leniency in the case and the Bench refused to grant the application. An exemption certificate could also be refused if the application was made to the wrong court. This was the case for Frederick Charles Jenkin, a carpenter who applied to the East Penwith Petty Sessions in February 1907 to exempt his son Henry Gordon from vaccination. Jenkin resided in the village of Pencoys, just two miles south of Redruth. Due to its proximity to Redruth, Jenkin had applied to the East Penwith sessions that covered that region. However, due to a boundary change in previous years, Pencoys and the nearby village of Four Lanes were actually under the administration of the Helston Board of Guardians and, as a result, the East Penwith magistrates could not handle Jenkin's case.⁸² When cases such as those of Griffin, Peters and Jenkin occurred, it is understandable that parents who had their applications refused would be unhappy with the outcome. However, anti-vaccinationists' claims that magistrates were simply being petty cannot be applied to cases such as these as the magistrates were entitled to reject any application that did not meet the basic requirements of the law.

Similarly, when an individual appeared without the proper documentation to support their application, magistrates could refuse to grant the certificate of exemption. This was the case in June 1902 when John Parsons, a slate quarryman from Tintagel, applied to the Camelford Petty

⁷⁹ *Cornish Telegraph*, 14 February 1900.

⁸⁰ *Cornish Telegraph*, 27 June 1900.

⁸¹ *Cornish Telegraph*, 27 June 1900.

⁸² *Cornish Telegraph*, 14 February 1907.

Sessions to have his daughter Daisy Bell exempted from vaccination. Parsons stated to the court that he had a conscientious objection to vaccination because 'he did not believe in it' and 'if there was any evidence in its favour he would not object'.⁸³ The magistrates attempted to inform Parsons that there was evidence to support vaccination because the majority of the doctors believed it to be beneficial but Parsons was not swayed. His application was rejected, however, because he did not provide a birth certificate to the court to prove that the application had come within four months of Daisy Bell's birth. Parsons was told he would have to apply again in the following month but there are no records available to indicate that this ever occurred. In 1903, Charles Marks, of Penzance, made a similar application for his daughter Lilian. Appearing before the magistrates in February, Marks did not provide Lilian's birth certificate and, like Parsons had been, was instructed to apply again the following month.⁸⁴ When the magistrates sat in March, Marks indeed appeared before them again, this time possessing a birth certificate and proving that Lilian was within the age range allowable for an exemption to be granted and Marks was issued with a certificate. Along with birth certificates, magistrates could also refuse to grant exemptions in cases when an applicant claimed that their objection to the procedure was based upon health reasons, not upon a conscientious objection, but did not provide a medical certificate to support their claim that the child's ill-health was likely to be ongoing and that it would be more expedient to simply claim exemption than repeatedly provide medical certificates to the vaccination officer to postpone the procedure.

When incorrect applications were made or documentation was not provided, magistrates were well within their rights to refuse to grant an exemption. However, it was when magistrates rejected applications on the grounds that they believed the conscientious objection was not entirely genuine, that anti-vaccinationists began to claim they were being unfairly discriminated against. The cause of this conflict was the wording of the conscience clause itself:

Section II, Subsection (I). – No parent or other person shall be liable to any penalty under Section xxiv or Section xxxi of the Vaccination Act of 1867 if within four months from the birth of the child he satisfies two justices or a stipendiary or metropolitan police magistrate in petty sessions that he conscientiously believes that vaccination would be prejudicial to the health of the child, and within seven days thereafter delivers to the vaccination officer for the district a certificate by such justices or magistrate of such conscientious objection.⁸⁵

The inclusion of the word 'satisfies' was extremely problematic. For anti-vaccinationists, the implication was that they would have to justify their opposition to the procedure to at least two of the magistrates who heard their case (or just one if the case was heard in a police court) but the exact definition of what would constitute the 'satisfaction' of these magistrates was left entirely open to interpretation. Even the pro-vaccinationist camp predicted the problems that the wording of this clause would induce, with the *British Medical Journal* reporting in September 1898 that:

⁸³ *Cornish and Devon Post*, 14 June 1902.

⁸⁴ *Cornish Telegraph*, 25 February 1903.

⁸⁵ Amendment to *Vaccination Act 1867* (1898). Emphasis added.

It will be interesting to note how the magistrates deal with objectors. It may be assumed that magistrates who are themselves thorough believers in, and supporters of, vaccination, will not be lightly induced to grant certificates. What evidence they will require besides the mere statement of the parent or other guardian of the child has not as yet been put to the test.⁸⁶

Durbach summarises the problem thus:

Since the conscience was intangible, it was impossible to evaluate unless it could be rendered visible or measurable. As Victorians grew increasingly reliant on new scientific technologies that rendered the unseen visible to the naked eye, the very intangibility of the conscience made its existence both suspect and highly problematic ... This meant that application hearings often devolved into a yes-I-do, no-you-don't circular argument.⁸⁷

Once again, the Vaccination Act was essentially open to individual interpretation and, just as attitudes towards prosecution varied amongst the Guardians of differing Poor Law Unions, so too would the granting of exemption certificates vary from magistrate to magistrate. An application may satisfy a quorum of magistrates in one court but the same application could be rejected at the next. Naturally, this was problematic for anti-vaccinationists and this led to the complaints of mistreatment and discrimination that permeated the printed material produced by the anti-vaccination societies. In Cornwall, however, there were relatively few cases in which applications for exemption certificates were rejected on grounds that could be classified as 'questionable'. A total of five cases were rejected due to magistrates not being 'satisfied' that the conscientious objection presented by the applicant was entirely genuine. In October 1901, Robert Stephens Rowe, of Penzance, applied to the magistrates to have his daughter Mabel exempted from vaccination. Rowe stated that he believed there were too many risks involved in the procedure and that he believed there was a good chance Mabel could be injured by undergoing vaccination. At face value, this claim seems to fit the criteria laid out in the Conscience Clause, which allows for an exemption to be granted if the magistrates are 'satisfied' that the applicant 'conscientiously believes that vaccination would be prejudicial to the health of the child'.⁸⁸ However, the Penzance magistrates who heard Rowe's case apparently were not of the opinion that an objection based upon the grounds of potential ill-health constituted a genuine conscientious objection as 'the Chairman said [the] applicant had given them no conscientious objection, but simply an opinion that the child might be injured'.⁸⁹ Rowe's application was refused.

The fickleness of the Conscience Clause became an issue once again in 1902, when St Agnes farmer, William Henry Stephens Chapman, applied to the West Powder Petty Sessions in the Truro Union to exempt his son William James from vaccination. Facing one of the magistrates who had

⁸⁶ 'The Vaccination Act, 1898: A Legal View of Its Effect', *British Medical Journal*, vol. 2, no. 1966, 1898, 638.

⁸⁷ Durbach, *Bodily Matters*, 182. Durbach's summary also includes an interesting quote from a Bromley magistrate who stated that he wished they had a 'Roentgen ray' that would allow them to measure an applicant's conscience.

⁸⁸ Amendment to *Vaccination Act 1867* (1898).

⁸⁹ *Cornish Telegraph*, 16 October 1901.

taken issue with Thomas Cragoe in the 1880s, T.R. Polwhele, Chapman's application had little hope of being approved. When asked to justify his application, Chapman stated 'I conscientiously believe there is no virtue in vaccination to prevent small-pox. I believe also it is a curse to humanity, injurious to health, and a sin in the sight of the Almighty'.⁹⁰ The *Cornish Telegraph* recorded the response of the magistrates:

The Chairman (Mr. T.R. Polwhele): That is a deliberate falsehood. It has been proved over and over again that it is to the contrary.

Mr. Carus-Wilson (one of the magistrates): What is the ground for the applicant stating what he does? I shall not consent to a certificate on such a statement as that.

The Chairman: The Bench are not satisfied at your conscientious objection and they refuse to grant the certificate.⁹¹

Chapman, however, did not give up and less than two months later he applied again to exempt William James from vaccination. This time, Chapman's case was heard by more sympathetic magistrates and he was granted his exemption certificate, having apparently 'satisfied' them that his objection was genuine.

Between Chapman's first and second applications to the West Powder Petty Sessions, two applications for exemptions were heard in the petty sessions at Callington. Edwin A Foster, a mineral water maker from Callington, applied to exempt his daughter Audrey Ella from vaccination. Audrey Ella was apparently in good health and Foster believed vaccination would ruin this; 'he knew of a child becoming a perfect cripple in consequence of vaccination'.⁹² Similarly, William Blake, a farmer from Stoke Climsland, applied to the same hearing at Callington to exempt his son William Matthews from the procedure as he too believed vaccination was prejudicial to his child's health. The Callington magistrates, however, were apparently not 'satisfied' with these arguments and claimed that as 'no specific evidence had been given by applicants' they would not grant either of them exemptions.⁹³ Just two months later, the magistrates at the Callington Petty Sessions again refused to grant an exemption certificate to an applicant for similar reasons. Richard Roseveare, a butcher from the town of Callington, applied to exempt his son George Harold from the procedure. However, once again, Roseveare's reasons for objecting to vaccination did not 'satisfy' the magistrates and his application was rejected.

Whilst the cases of magistrates rejecting applications for exemption because they were not 'satisfied' by the applicants' claims of conscientious objection are problematic, there was only one recorded case in Cornwall of magistrates outright refusing to sign an exemption certificate because of their own beliefs in the efficacy of vaccination. John Rouncefield, a fisherman, applied to the St

⁹⁰ *Cornish Telegraph*, 30 April 1902.

⁹¹ *Cornish Telegraph*, 30 April 1902.

⁹² *Cornish and Devon Post*, 10 May 1902.

⁹³ *Cornish and Devon Post*, 10 May 1902.

Ives Petty Sessions in June 1902 to have his son William John exempted from compulsory vaccination. This was not the first application that Rouncefield had made before the magistrates at St Ives and it certainly was not the first to cause controversy amongst anti-vaccinationists. In 1899, Rouncefield's wife Isabel appeared in court to claim the exemption her husband had applied for in relation to their daughter Rebecca Williams. Rouncefield's objection to the procedure was based upon his belief that two of his own brothers had been killed by vaccination. This was apparently enough to allow the exemption to be granted, but magistrates still took issue with the case. Isabel Rouncefield was not the only woman to apply for an exemption from the magistrates at the St Ives Petty Sessions that day; Clarinda Noall, an unmarried domestic servant was also granted an exemption certificate by the magistrates. However, when Isabel appeared in her husband's place, the St Ives magistrates took exception and ordered that 'no more certificates would be granted unless the father appeared in person'.⁹⁴ This announcement related to another issue of wording that plagued the 1898 amendment to the Vaccination Act – that of the legal definition of parent. The term 'parent' had been clearly defined in the Vaccination Act of 1867 and it was presumed by many within society that, as the particular interpretation clause that defined the term was not altered by the 1898 amendment, the definition would still stand; 'The word "Parent" shall include the father and mother of a legitimate child and the mother of an illegitimate child'.⁹⁵

However, some magistrates maintained a belief that, because the father was considered the legal head of the household, applications for the exemption of children from vaccination could only be made by the father. This belief allowed for women who were widowed to claim exemption for their children as the technical head of the household but, in cases like Isabel Rouncefield's, some magistrates were of the opinion that only a child's father could apply for, and receive, an exemption certificate under the Vaccination Act. Clarinda Noall's case was a very different one, as an unmarried mother her child was illegitimate and, the Vaccination Act of 1867 made it very clear that the mother of an illegitimate child was entitled to claim an exemption alone. Ultimately, Isabel was granted an exemption certificate for Rebecca Williams but the magistrates at St Ives made sure she was fully aware that they interpreted the Vaccination Act to mean that only a child's father could apply to receive an exemption certificate, excluding widows and unmarried mothers, of course. In 1902, John Rouncefield appeared in person before the magistrates at St Ives, having apparently taken notice of their earlier threat not to grant a certificate to a married mother. Rouncefield's objection to vaccination was the same as it had been when the exemption was granted for Rebecca Williams. He again informed the court that he objected to having William John vaccinated as 'two of his brothers had died through vaccination', this time adding that 'another [brother] could not raise his arm to his head from the same cause'.⁹⁶ Once again, Rouncefield's case demonstrates the fickleness of the Conscience Clause as the objection he had raised in 1899

⁹⁴ *Cornish Telegraph*, 15 June 1899.

⁹⁵ *Vaccination Act 1867*.

⁹⁶ *Cornish Telegraph*, 11 June 1902.

to claim exemption for his daughter was apparently not enough to 'satisfy' the magistrates three years later. Whether or not the Bench in 1902 consisted of any of the magistrates that had heard the earlier application is not clear but the *Cornish Telegraph* revealed that the 1902 magistrates were determined not to allow Rouncefield to claim a second certificate:

Mr. R.S. Read said whatever the other magistrates thought he should certainly not sign the certificate.

Mr. H.H. Robinson questioned whether the Bench had the right of refusal, but if so he should certainly refuse it.

The Mayor agreed, and after consulting with the other magistrates the application was refused.⁹⁷

In Rouncefield's second case, then, the magistrates did not even pretend to have been 'unsatisfied' with his claim of conscientious objection. Instead, they simply refused to sign an exemption certificate because they believed in vaccination and their own conscientious beliefs would not allow them to exempt young William John Rouncefield from the procedure.

The actions of the St Ives magistrates in John Rouncefield's 1902 case were exactly what the anti-vaccinationists who wrote to Cornish newspapers were protesting against; magistrates openly flouting the law in order to discriminate against non-vaccinating parents and refusing to allow them to claim a right they were legally entitled to. This is highly problematic and is symptomatic of an Act of Parliament that was poorly worded and open to interpretation. In addition, without strict guidelines outlining exactly what constituted a conscientious objection, the Conscience Clause was bound to be very poorly enforced. However, the extent to which Cornish newspapers published the complaints of anti-vaccinationists regarding the apparent discriminatory rulings of magistrates does not accurately reflect the reality of the situation. As stated previously, fewer than five percent of the 578 cases heard in Cornish courts resulted in an application being refused by magistrates. The breakdown of reasons for these refusals can be found in [Table 17](#). Of the 16 cases with a recorded reason for rejection, only 5 rejections can be classified as being questionable; Robert Stephens Rowe (Penzance, 1901), Edwin A Foster (Callington, 1902), William Blake (Callington, 1902), John Rouncefield (St Ives, 1902), and Richard Roseveare (Callington, 1902). Whilst the initial dismissal of William Henry Stephens Chapman's application at the West Powder Petty Sessions in 1902 was questionable, his subsequent application was granted and thus, is excluded from the final tally. This ultimately means that just 31.25 percent of all cases with identifiable reasons for refusal were rejected on questionable grounds, leaving almost 70 percent of refusals entirely valid. If the figure of 31.25 percent questionable cases is extrapolated to reflect the total 28 cases that were refused in Cornwall, it can be suggested that only 8 of the total 578 applications heard in Cornwall were likely rejected for reasons that could be considered questionable. Thus, when Cornish anti-vaccinationists complained that magistrates were treating applications under the Conscience

⁹⁷ *Cornish Telegraph*, 11 June 1902.

Clause unfairly, they were likely referring to the outcomes of less than 1.5 percent of the applications that were made throughout the county.

Table 17: Breakdown of magistrates' reasons for refusing to grant exemption certificates.

Reason Category	Number of Refusals	Percentage (%) of Total Identifiable
Incorrect application	6	37.50
Documentation not provided	4	25.00
Objection not proven genuine	5	31.25
Conscience of magistrates	1	6.25
TOTAL	16	100.00%

Conspiracy was a strong theme amongst Cornish anti-vaccinationists at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, and was presented in a variety of forms (conspiracy to do evil, to increase profits, etc.) However, it is the apparent conspiracy amongst magistrates that offers the best opportunity to examine the extent to which the conspiracy theme was directed by outside influences. Whilst Cornwall may not have been home to one of the countless local branches of the major anti-vaccination societies that existed throughout the country in the nineteenth century (excepting the short-lived Penryn and District Anti-Vaccination League) but this does not necessarily mean that Cornwall was unaffected by the enormous propaganda machine of the organised anti-vaccination movement. The notion that a conspiracy existed amongst magistrates to refuse anti-vaccinationist attempts to obtain exemption certificates after the 1898 amendment was introduced is a clear indication of the influence that these societies had in the farthest-flung reaches of English periphery. Anti-vaccinationists, such as Albertus Cragoe, regularly repeated this notion of a magisterial conspiracy within the Cornish press, indicating that it was a problem that was rampant within the Cornish judiciary. However, from an extrapolated sample of rejected cases, it is clear that this was not actually the case. Throughout Cornwall, just 28 of the 578 total exemption applications made were refused and, of these, it can be argued that at least 70% were rejected for legitimate reasons. In many of these cases, the application was made incorrectly or the necessary documentation was not provided. In just one case within the sample, magistrates refused outright to grant an exemption certificate based upon their own consciences and in only five cases were the magistrates not convinced that the application was 'genuine'. The sample cases also reveal that an individual whose application was initially rejected could return to the court and apply again, giving anti-vaccinationists an opportunity to rectify the issues that had prevented an exemption from being granted in the first instance.

Thus, if the notion of a conspiracy amongst Cornish magistrates to refuse to grant exemptions cannot be proven to have existed through statistical evidence, it is necessary to look elsewhere for

the source of such a theory. The best candidate for such a source is the organised anti-vaccination movement itself. The propaganda machine of this movement, as indicated by Durbach, as well as by Porter and Porter, was substantial and, through connections and memberships around the country, was disseminated widely throughout the population. In the case of Cornwall, the lack of a local branch did little to halt the spread of anti-vaccinationist literature and ideas amongst the people. As was noted by the Truro Guardians at the end of the nineteenth century, a large proportion of the anti-vaccinationists in the Union were paid members of London-based societies, circumventing the problem of a lack of access to a local branch. The arguments of the Cragoes, along with other Cornish anti-vaccinationists closely mirror those being expressed by others across the country. Similar sources, similar figures, and similar arguments were presented in letters to the editors of newspapers throughout England, and Cornwall was no exception. Anti-vaccinationism in Cornwall may have differed in a wide variety of ways to many other regions in the country but this was not due to a lack of organisational influence amongst the population, rather it was predicated upon long-standing regional and local identities and social structures that gave Cornish anti-vaccinationism its own unique brand.

Conclusion

In 2004, Ann Clark argued that region-specific studies of the administration of the Vaccination Act were critical to furthering our understanding of the way in which the law operated throughout England. This thesis has taken up this challenge and presented an in-depth analysis of the Vaccination Act (in all its varying forms) across the county of Cornwall. As has been shown through this thesis, Cornwall presents a unique opportunity to study the impact of the Act outside of the metropolis. This thesis has employed a combination of the growing field of Cornish Studies and the new history of medicine to undertake a micro-analysis of a macro-history. A major component of the Cornish experience of the Vaccination Acts relates specifically to opposition. Previous studies into the operation of the Poor Laws in the county, as well as the Cousin Jack support network that spanned the globe, have revealed that both passive and active resistance to government intervention, particularly in relation to health and medicine, have characterised Cornish history in the nineteenth century. Whilst Cornwall, and the broader south-west to a certain extent, became one of the key focal points of the pro-vaccination movement's call for legislation and compulsion to be enforced, the origins of these laws can be traced back to the plight of the poorest residents of inner-city London. The prosecution of Sophia Vantandillo in 1815 was symptomatic of a growing desire amongst health officials to restrict access to the inoculation procedure that had once been promoted by the medical profession itself as a prophylactic measure against the spread of smallpox. Following the introduction of the less-contagious cowpox alternative, inoculation had rapidly fallen out of favour with much of the established medical orthodoxy.

When the first Vaccination Act was introduced in 1840, it was intended, not to make vaccination compulsory under threat of penalty, but to outlaw inoculation, leaving vaccination as the only viable preventive of smallpox available to the general public. As the Cornish experience reveals, however, this criminalisation of inoculation did little to halt the practice of the procedure which remained popular across the south-west of England. This thesis has argued that this period, beginning with the introduction of the Vaccination Act in 1840 and ending with the amendment in 1867, can be characterised as the 'ignorant mothers' phase, a period in which the medical profession saw the ignorance of poor women in regional areas as the major hurdle to the nationwide acceptance of vaccination. This oversimplification of a very complex issue resulted in growing calls for the procedure to be mandated by the state. Cornwall presents a very unique insight into the problems that were facing the pro-vaccinationist movement during this time. The close relationship between Cornish folk beliefs and traditional medicine is critical as it reveals the inherent problems associated with enforcing state-mandated biomedical procedures upon a population that was largely unwilling to accept them. However, this systemic rejection of governmental intervention through state medicine was fundamentally misunderstood by medical authorities who continued to push for vaccination to be made compulsory. This resulted in the 1853 amendment to the

Vaccination Act, enforcing compulsory vaccination for all children across England and Wales before they reached three months of age.

The compulsory measures of the 1853 amendment were very loosely enforced by Poor Law Guardians across Cornwall. Whilst some Boards, such as those at St Austell, Liskeard, and Falmouth embraced the new law and began prosecuting vaccine defaulters in earnest, other Boards hesitated to do the same. Initial prosecution rates were low in the large Penzance and Truro Unions, revealing an unwillingness to inflict penalties upon a population that was so opposed to the procedure. As prosecutions in these Unions began to increase by the mid-1860s, the reverse was happening in those Unions that had initially been so enthusiastic about enforcing the Act. Prosecutions had come to a complete standstill in Falmouth and were slowing in St Austell. When Parliament increased the penalties for vaccine defaulters through the 1867 amendment to the Act, a new phase of opposition to the procedure began to emerge. In Cornwall, this phase reflects the increased influence of the 'conscientious father', man concerned, not just with the potential dangers of vaccination itself, but also with the intervention of the state into the domestic life of its citizens. The first 'conscientious father' to emerge in Cornwall was William Wallace Walker, a Scotsman cut from a very similar cloth to that of legendary vaccine martyr Charles Washington Nye. Walker not only refused to have his children vaccinated but also attempted to circumvent the law by taking advantage of a rather large loophole; vaccination was made compulsory by the Vaccination Act, but there was no law enforcing the compulsory registration of births. Thus, by not registering the births of his children, Walker was able to avoid incurring further penalties under the Vaccination Act. His actions enraged pro-vaccinationists across the county and his commitment to the cause is further supported by his refusal to even give the names of his younger children in the 1871 census.

When William Wallace Walker and his family left Cornwall for the ill-fated Wilgefontein settlement in Natal, the void he left in the county's anti-vaccination movement was quickly filled by two brothers, Thomas and Albertus Cragoe, whose influence would come to shape the vaccine debate throughout the county for the remainder of the nineteenth century. As 'conscientious fathers', the Cragoes were extremely vocal in their opposition to the Vaccination Act and not even the loss of Albertus' son to the horrors of confluent smallpox could dissuade them from their cause. Whilst the tale of heartbreak and public denial that encompasses the Cragoe family is fascinating on a personal level, it also provides a telling insight into the way in which opposition to the Vaccination Act functioned in a region that was outside the bounds of the established anti-vaccination societies that have since come to dominate the historiography of the period. With no local branches of organised anti-vaccination societies taking hold in Cornwall until 1902, the county operates outside of the established mould of anti-vaccinationism that exists in the historiography. Although the role of individuals, such as the Cragoe brothers, was a critical component of Cornish anti-vaccinationism in the latter part of the nineteenth century, the administration of the Act itself shaped the way in which the Vaccination Act was perceived in the county.

Although other historians have pointed to the post-1867 period as a time of increased stability in the enforcement of the Vaccination Act, the experience of Cornwall presents a staunch challenge to this notion. Prosecutions after 1867 were just as intermittent or non-existent in various Poor Law Unions as they had been prior to the amendment. Crucially, the Cornish example reveals that punishments for vaccine defaulters varied widely between unions; an offence that might have received a harsh punishment in one union may not have even made it before a magistrate in another. The punishment an anti-vaccinationist received in Cornwall depended, not only on their geographic location, but also on the time in which the offence occurred. For the eight unions that made up the east of Cornwall, issues of rurality and the sparseness of population centres meant that the legal ramifications of opposing the Vaccination Act were rarely enforced. The exception to this rule was the more densely-populated St Austell Union which prosecuted the highest number of cases under the Act of any Cornish union. In the more rural unions, however, the lack of large, urbanised centres meant that the threat of smallpox outbreaks was extremely limited and, as a result, the enforcement of the Vaccination Act was not a key priority for the Guardians of these unions. In the more urbanised and populated western unions, however, there was a very different experience of the Vaccination Act. As has been noted in the historiography of the Poor Laws in Cornwall, the relationship between the general population and Poor Law officials was already strained by the time vaccination was made compulsory. In this region, an established mutual aid network meant that those most in need of parish support preferred to turn to their friends, family members, or neighbours for support, rather than to the authorities. In addition to this, the Poor Law officials themselves were dealing with much more pressing issues than the enforcement of vaccination as their unions continued to suffer from the effects of rapid urbanisation due to the primacy of mining in the Cornish economy.

As the last decade of the nineteenth century reveals, however, the lack of an established local branch of a major anti-vaccination society may not have been as much of a critical limitation as it may have initially seemed. By the 1890s, anti-vaccinationists across Cornwall were showing evidence that they were being increasingly influenced by massive propaganda machine of the organised anti-vaccination societies that has already been documented by multiple other scholars. Increasingly elaborate conspiracy theories began to work their way into the writings of Cornish anti-vaccinationists, revealing a clear link to the writing of other anti-vaccinationists across the country. Instead of being isolated from the centres of the anti-vaccination movement, in places such as London and Leicester, Cornish anti-vaccinationists were becoming increasingly connected as the twentieth century dawned. The impact that this influence had on the Cornish experience of the Vaccination Act is examined through the lens of one particularly dominant conspiracy – the notion that magistrates were conspiring to refuse to grant exemptions under the newly created conscience clause of the 1898 amendment to the Act. Anti-vaccinationists, both from within Cornish society and from the outside, wrote scathing accounts to the Cornish press of Cornish applicants being

refused their right to exemption by heartless magistrates, serving as tools of a wide-reaching and all-compassing conspiracy to continue the promotion of vaccination, despite its apparent dangers. However, when a sample of rejected applications is examined, it is revealed that, in reality, only a handful of applications were being rejected by Cornish magistrates for reasons that could be considered less than legitimate. In fact, the majority of applications that were rejected in the county were, in fact, rejected due to errors made during the application process or due to a lack of corroborating evidence being presented, as was required under the conscience clause.

If anti-vaccinationists in Cornwall were not being denied their right to exemption wholesale by a conspiracy amongst magistrates, how did the notion that this was indeed the case enter the Cornish anti-vaccinationist's psyche? This thesis has contended that it was through the undeniable influence of the major anti-vaccination organisations – even without a locally-established branch – that Cornish opponents to the law came to believe that they were being victimised by a wide-reaching conspiracy. This contention supports the overall goal of this thesis – to complement the existing historiography of the Vaccination Act as much as it challenges it. Whilst there are identifiable gaps in the established literature relating to the issue of vaccination in England, this thesis has argued that these gaps can be filled with more detailed studies of regional areas. In the case of Cornwall, this thesis has examined how just one county experienced state-mandated vaccination. At its most fundamental level, it is a very different story to that put forward by Ann Clark, Nadja Durbach, and Stanley Williamson, amongst others. However, there are also some similarities, particularly relating to the role of the middle-classes following the 1867 amendment. This thesis has shown that there is room at the table for regionalised studies of the Vaccination Act and that the insights that can be derived from such investigations only add to the richness of the existing scholarship.

Appendix 1 – Complete List of Vaccination Act Prosecutions in Cornwall (1840-1907)

Date	Defendant	M/F	Charge	Outcome	Petty Sessions	Residence	Occupation	Child/ren
Jun 1852	Priscilla Menear	F	Inoculation	Gaol (1m)	St Austell	St Dennis	Tin streamer's wife	-
Jun 1852	Anne Crowle	F	Inoculation	-	St Austell	St Dennis	China stone labourer's wife	-
Dec 1853	Nicholas Coom	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (mitigated)	St Austell	St Austell	-	-
Dec 1853	Thomas Hore	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (mitigated)	St Austell	St Austell	Iron miner	Harriett
Dec 1853	James Grose	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (mitigated)	St Austell	St Austell	Carpenter	William Walkley
Dec 1853	John Brown	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (mitigated)	St Austell	St Austell	-	-
Dec 1853	Thomas Lawry	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (mitigated)	St Austell	St Austell	Copper miner	Edward
Dec 1853	Thomas Harvey	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (mitigated)	St Austell	St Austell	Sawyer	Rosena
Dec 1853	Joseph Tucker	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (mitigated)	St Austell	St Austell	Farm labourer	James
Jun 1854	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Fine (mitigated)	Falmouth	-	-	-
Jun 1854	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Fine (mitigated)	Falmouth	-	-	-
Jun 1854	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Fine (mitigated)	Falmouth	-	-	-
Jun 1854	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Fine (mitigated)	Falmouth	-	-	-
Jun 1854	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Fine (mitigated)	Falmouth	-	-	-
Jun 1854	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Fine (mitigated)	Falmouth	-	-	-
Jun 1854	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Fine (mitigated)	Falmouth	-	-	-
Jun 1854	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Fine (mitigated)	Falmouth	-	-	-
Jun 1854	George Brown	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (mitigated)	Penryn	Gwennap	-	-
Jun 1854	Thomas Richards	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (mitigated)	Penryn	Gwennap	-	-
Jun 1854	Thomas Morcom	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (mitigated)	Penryn	Gwennap	Copper miner	William
Jun 1854	William Stevens	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (mitigated)	Penryn	Gwennap	-	-
Jun 1854	Richard Williams	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (mitigated)	Penryn	Gwennap	Miner	-
Jun 1854	Edward Stodden	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (mitigated)	Penryn	Gwennap	Copper miner	Richard
Jun 1854	John Nettle	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (mitigated)	Penryn	Gwennap	-	-
Jun 1854	Thomas Williams	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (mitigated)	Penryn	Gwennap	-	-
Aug 1854	William Lucas	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (mitigated)	Callington	-	-	-
Aug 1854	Henry Pomeroy	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (mitigated)	Callington	-	-	-
Aug 1854	John Toms	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (mitigated)	Callington	Callington	Miner	Maria
Aug 1854	Henry Jowl	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (mitigated)	Callington	-	-	-
Aug 1854	William Rogers	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (mitigated)	Callington	-	-	-
Aug 1854	Samuel Peters	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (mitigated)	Callington	-	-	-
Jun 1855	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Fine (mitigated)	St Austell	-	-	-
Jun 1855	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Fine (mitigated)	St Austell	-	-	-
Jun 1855	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Fine (mitigated)	St Austell	-	-	-
Jun 1855	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Fine (mitigated)	St Austell	-	-	-
Jun 1855	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Fine (mitigated)	St Austell	-	-	-
Jun 1855	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Fine (mitigated)	St Austell	-	-	-

Jun 1855	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Fine (mitigated)	St Austell	-	-	-
Jun 1855	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Fine (mitigated)	St Austell	-	-	-
Jun 1855	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Fine (mitigated)	St Austell	-	-	-
Jun 1855	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Fine (mitigated)	St Austell	-	-	-
Jun 1855	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Fine (mitigated)	St Austell	-	-	-
Jun 1855	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Fine (mitigated)	St Austell	-	-	-
Jun 1855	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Fine (mitigated)	St Austell	-	-	-
Jun 1855	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Acquitted	St Austell	-	-	-
Jun 1855	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Acquitted	St Austell	-	-	-
Jun 1855	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Acquitted	St Austell	-	-	-
Jul 1855	Mary Ann Dennis	F	No Inspection	Costs	West Penwith	Paul	Stonemason's wife	John Thomas
Feb 1859	Richard Bettis	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (1s)	Launceston	-	-	-
Feb 1859	John Hodges	M	Non-Vaccination	Acquitted	Launceston	-	-	-
Jun 1859	John Lobb	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (1s)	Trecan Gate	Morval	Farm labourer	Elizabeth Ellen
Jun 1859	Henry Bettenson	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (1s)	Trecan Gate	West Looe	Mine labourer	James
Jun 1859	Richard Marshall	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (5s)	Trecan Gate	West Looe	Fisherman	Phillippa
Sep 1860	Richard Symons	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (2s 6d)	Trecan Gate	-	-	-
Sep 1860	Charles Bettinson	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (2s 6d)	Trecan Gate	-	-	-
Sep 1860	William Best	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (2s 6d)	Trecan Gate	-	-	-
Sep 1860	William Williams	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (2s 6d)	Trecan Gate	-	-	-
Nov 1862	William Johns	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (20s)	West Kerrier	Wendron	-	-
Nov 1862	Bennet Oppy	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (20s)	West Kerrier	Wendron	Copper miner	Thomas
Nov 1862	William Danstone	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (20s)	West Kerrier	Wendron	-	-
Oct 1863	Charles Stone	M	Non-Vaccination	Caution	West Penwith	Marazion	Miner	John Teague; William Charles
Nov 1863	Elizabeth Tiddy	F	Non-Vaccination	Fine (2s 6d)	Truro	Chacewater	-	-
Nov 1863	Elizabeth Ann Uren	F	Non-Vaccination	Fine (2s 6d)	Truro	Chacewater	-	-
Mar 1864	William Wallace Walker	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (£1)	St Austell	Gorran Haven	Coastguard	Clement St Gorran Braddy Wallace
Sep 1864	Jonathan Pedler	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (£1)	St Austell	St Austell	Grocer	Albert
Dec 1864	Robert Knapp	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (1s)	Liskeard	Liskeard	Miner	Albert Edwin
Dec 1864	Charles Smith	M	Non-Vaccination	Acquitted	Liskeard	Liskeard	Miner	-
Dec 1864	John Peek	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (1s)	Liskeard	Liskeard	Tanner	-
Dec 1864	George Sherlew	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (1s)	Liskeard	Liskeard	Carpenter	-
Dec 1864	Joseph Abrams	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (10s)	Liskeard	Liskeard	Labourer	Jane
Dec 1864	Thomas Pascoe	M	Non-Vaccination	Acquitted	Liskeard	Liskeard	Labourer	Thomas
Dec 1864	John Veal	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (1s 6d)	Trecan Gate	Lanreath	-	-
Dec 1864	Thomas Edwards	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (1s 6d)	Trecan Gate	Lanreath	-	-
Dec 1864	William Cost	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (1s 6d)	Trecan Gate	Lanreath	-	-
Dec 1864	William Brown	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (1s 6d)	Trecan Gate	St Pinnock	Farmer	Bessie
Jan 1865	Joseph Abrams	M	Non-Payment	Gaol (7d)	Liskeard	Liskeard	Labourer	Jane
May 1865	Mary Ann Nicholls	F	No Inspection	Adjourned	West Penwith	Gulval	-	-
Jun 1865	Edward Williams	M	No Inspection	Fine (4s 6d)	Helston	Wendron	-	-
Jul 1865	Bowden	F	Non-Vaccination	Fine (4s)	West Penwith	Marazion	-	-

Jul 1865	Isaac Penberthy	M	Non-Vaccination	Adjourned	West Penwith	Ludgvan	Tin miner	Edith Mary
Oct 1866	Sarah Hill	F	Non-Vaccination	Fine (1s)	West Powder	Kea	-	-
May 1867	William Wallace Walker	M	Non-Vaccination	Acquitted	St Austell	Gorran Haven	Coastguard	Unnamed son
Oct 1869	John Hocking	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (2s 6d)	West Powder	St Erme	-	-
Oct 1869	Henry May	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (2s 6d)	West Powder	St Erme	Farmer	Annie
Oct 1869	Thomas Courtis	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (2s 6d)	West Powder	St Agnes	-	-
Oct 1869	Paul Stephen Tonkin	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (2s 6d)	West Powder	St Agnes	Tin miner	Rosalina
Oct 1869	John Bryant	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (2s 6d)	West Powder	Perranzabuloe	Lead miner	Stephen Hosking
Oct 1869	Richard Richards	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (2s 6d)	West Powder	St Agnes	-	-
Oct 1869	John Webber	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (2s 6d)	West Powder	Kenwyn	-	-
Oct 1869	John Best	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (2s 6d)	West Powder	Kenwyn	Farmer	William Frederick
Jun 1870	Richard Lawry	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (5s)	West Penwith	-	-	-
Mar 1871	Jonathan Chapple	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (1s)	West Penwith	Gulval	Farmer	William Withall Carman
Mar 1871	Thomas Bond Tredrea	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (1s)	West Penwith	Gulval	Builder	Mary Elizabeth
Mar 1871	Andrew Nicholls	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (1s)	West Penwith	Ding Dong	Tin miner	Rosetta
Mar 1871	John Richards	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (1s)	West Penwith	Gulval	-	-
Mar 1871	Joseph Thomas	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (1s)	West Penwith	Polgoon	Mason	Joseph
Mar 1871	William Guy	M	Non-Vaccination	Acquitted	West Penwith	Gulval	-	-
Apr 1871	Richard Parsons	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (10s)	St Teath	St Teath	Draper	John Alfred
Apr 1871	Richard Harvey	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (1s)	West Penwith	Paul	-	-
Apr 1871	Joseph Pollard	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (1s)	West Penwith	Paul	Labourer	Christiana
May 1871	John Friggens	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	Penzance	Penzance	Carrier	Emily
May 1871	Edward Mannaton	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	Penzance	Penzance	Brewery cellarman	John
May 1871	John Charles Pengelly	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	Penzance	Penzance	Saddler	Edmund Thomas
May 1871	Joseph Hill	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	Penzance	Penzance	Pilot	Amelia
May 1871	Adolphus Mitchell	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	Penzance	Penzance	Sawyer	Adolphus Sharp
Sep 1872	William Henry Mitchell	M	No Inspection	Fine (1s)	Camborne	Illogan	Mine engine driver	Philip
Sep 1872	Hugh Jory	M	No Inspection	Fine (1s)	Camborne	Illogan	Blacksmith	Hugh
Feb 1873	Thomas Prior	M	No Inspection	Fine (2s 6d)	Falmouth	Falmouth	Mason	-
Apr 1873	William Oke	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (1s)	Camborne	-	-	-
Apr 1873	William Trevithick	M	Non-Vaccination	Arrest warrant	Camborne	-	-	-
Dec 1873	William Henry Phillips	M	No Inspection	Fine (1s)	Camborne	Gwennap	Cooper	Elizabeth
Dec 1873	Nancy Bice	F	No Inspection	Fine (1s)	Camborne	Gwennap	-	-
Dec 1873	William Wallace Walker	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (£2)	St Austell	Gorran Haven	Coastguard	Unnamed son
Dec 1873	Millon	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	St Austell	Mevagissey	-	-
Mar 1874	William Henry Williams	M	Non-Vaccination	Acquitted	Penzance	Penzance	-	-
Mar 1874	Benjamin Paul	M	Non-Vaccination	Acquitted	Penzance	Penzance	Mariner	John
Mar 1874	John Nankervis	M	No Inspection	Fine (1s)	West Penwith	St Just	-	-
Aug 1874	William H Hill	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	Truro	St Mary	Grocer	Alfred Henry
Aug 1874	James Francis	M	Non-Vaccination	Acquitted	Truro	-	-	-
Aug 1874	Richards	F	Non-Vaccination	Fine (10s)	Truro	-	-	-
Sep 1874	W Brokenshire	M	Non-Vaccination	Costs	Camborne	Camborne	Mine labourer	Thomas
Sep 1874	Maria Allen	F	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	St Austell	Carbean	-	-

Sep 1874	Thomas Truscott	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine	St Austell	-	-	-
Sep 1874	William C Truscott	M	No Inspection	Fine	St Austell	-	-	-
Oct 1874	J Trener	M	No Inspection	Fine (1s)	Redruth	-	-	-
Oct 1874	Thomas Vincent	M	No Inspection	Fine (1s)	Redruth	-	-	-
Oct 1874	Anna Mary Craddick	F	No Inspection	Acquitted	St Austell	-	-	-
Sep 1875	Nicholas Johns	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (5s)	West Powder	-	-	-
Jul 1876	Charles Llewellyn	M	Non-Vaccination	Adjourned	West Penwith	Paul	Labourer	William Benjamin
Jul 1876	Samuel Warren	M	Non-Vaccination	Adjourned	West Penwith	-	-	-
Aug 1876	Elizabeth Pascoe	F	No Inspection	Inspection Order	Redruth	Redruth	Tin miner's wife	-
Aug 1876	William Floyd	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	Redruth	-	-	-
Aug 1877	Richard Jackson	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	Redruth	Redruth	Tin miner	Ellen
Sep 1877	Frederick Ashwell	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (5s)	Truro	St Clement	Architect	Bernard
Jul 1878	John Andrew	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (1s)	Tuckingmill	Tuckingmill	Grocer	William
Nov 1878	Nicholas Eade	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	Redruth	Redruth	Greengrocer	Dorcas Jane
Apr 1879	Walter Parsons	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (1s)	Launceston	Launceston	Scavenger	-
Aug 1879	James Williams	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (2s 6d)	Launceston	Launceston	Furniture dealer	-
Aug 1879	James Dunstan	M	No Inspection	Fine (1s)	Camborne	Camborne	Tin miner	Beatrice
Sep 1879	William Jenkin	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (1s)	East Penwith	Camborne	Grocer's manager	Baldwin Henry James Toy
Feb 1880	J W Burt	M	Non-Vaccination	Acquitted	Bodmin	Lostwithiel	-	-
Feb 1880	John Rowe	M	Non-Vaccination	Acquitted	Bodmin	Lostwithiel	-	-
Dec 1880	Thomas Adolphus Cragoe	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	West Powder	Kea	Gentleman	Alfred Spencer
Dec 1880	Thomas Adolphus Cragoe	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (10s)	West Powder	Kea	Gentleman	Isabel
Dec 1880	Albertus Martin Cragoe	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	West Powder	Penhellick	Farmer	Percy Adelaide; Alberta Mary
Feb 1881	Thomas Adolphus Cragoe	M	Non-Compliance	Fine (£1)	West Powder	Kea	Gentleman	Alfred Spencer
Feb 1881	Albertus Martin Cragoe	M	Non-Compliance	Fine (£2)	West Powder	Penhellick	Farmer	Percy Adelaide; Alberta Mary
Mar 1881	Emily Pedlar	F	Refusal of Lymph	Fine (1s)	Bodmin	Bodmin	Bugler's wife	Emily
Apr 1881	Albertus Martin Cragoe	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (£1)	West Powder	Penhellick	Farmer	William Sydney Neville
Aug 1881	W H Cornish	M	Non-Vaccination	Adjourned	Callington	Luckett	Schoolmaster	-
Aug 1881	Richard Maddern	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine	Redruth	Redruth	Fishmonger	Mabel Maud
Aug 1881	Richard Maddern	M	No Inspection	Fine	Redruth	Redruth	Fishmonger	Thomas Henry
Aug 1881	William Watling	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine	Redruth	Redruth	Tin miner	Elizabeth Mary
Aug 1881	Charles Phillips	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine	Redruth	-	-	-
Aug 1881	William Nicholls	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine	Redruth	Redruth	-	-
Aug 1881	John Phillips	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (1s)	Redruth	Redruth	-	-
Nov 1881	Albertus Martin Cragoe	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (£3)	West Powder	Penhellick	Farmer	Percy Adelaide; Alberta Mary; William Sydney Neville
Nov 1881	Thomas Adolphus Cragoe	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (£1)	West Powder	Kea	Gentleman	-
Mar 1882	John Freeman	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (2s 6d)	West Penwith	St Ives	Mariner	William/Gyles
Apr 1884	Elizabeth Hocking	F	Non-Vaccination	Adjourned	East Penwith	Camborne	-	-
Apr 1884	Elizabeth Hocking	F	Non-Vaccination	Acquitted	East Penwith	Camborne	-	-
Aug 1884	John Wellington	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	West Kerrier	Breage	Innkeeper	Walter Rowe
Aug 1884	John Tonkin Body	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	West Kerrier	Breage	-	-
Aug 1884	Joseph Andrewartha	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	West Kerrier	Breage	-	-
Feb 1885	Thomas Adolphus Cragoe	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	West Powder	Kea	Gentleman	Alfred Spencer; Isabel; Lucy

								Fortescue
Mar 1885	Thomas Adolphus Cragoe	M	Non-Compliance	Fine (£1 10s)	West Powder	Kea	Gentleman	Alfred Spencer; Isabel; Lucy Fortescue
Jul 1886	Edward John Thomas	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	Truro	Truro	Police constable	-
Jul 1886	James Henry Faull	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	Truro	Truro	Tailor's accountant	Emily Teague
Jul 1886	W T Eastlake	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	Truro	Truro	Accountant	Gordon Opie
Jul 1886	Moses Roberts	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	Truro	Truro	Newspaper reporter	Moses William Hotten
Oct 1886	James Henry Faull	M	Non-Compliance	Fine (5s)	Truro	Truro	Tailor's accountant	Emily Teague
Oct 1886	Moses Roberts	M	Non-Compliance	Fine (5s)	Truro	Truro	Newspaper reporter	Moses William Hotten
Dec 1887	John Martyn Jennings	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (6d)	Launceston	St Thomas	Railway works manager	William
Jun 1888	Andrew Nicholls	M	Non-Vaccination	Adjourned	East Penwith	Camborne	-	-
Jun 1888	Elias Langdon	M	Non-Vaccination	Adjourned	Redruth	Redruth	Carpenter	Clara
Jun 1888	John Johns	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (5s)	Redruth	Treleigh	Innkeeper	-
Jul 1888	Elias Langdon	M	Non-Vaccination	Acquitted	East Penwith	Redruth	Carpenter	Clara
Jul 1888	Nicholas Chapman	M	Non-Vaccination	Acquitted	East Penwith	Redruth	Ropemaker	Mildred
Sep 1888	William George Curtis	M	Non-Vaccination	Acquitted	Callington	Linkinhorne	Schoolmaster	Jane Elizabeth
Mar 1889	William George Curtis	M	Non-Vaccination	Acquitted	Callington	Linkinhorne	Schoolmaster	Jane Elizabeth
Apr 1889	William George Curtis	M	Non-Vaccination	Distress Warrant	Callington	Linkinhorne	Schoolmaster	Jane Elizabeth
May 1889	Sampson Hall Williams	M	Non-Vaccination	Adjourned	East Kerrier	Redruth	Fruit merchant	Ethel
May 1889	William Noel	M	Non-Vaccination	Adjourned	East Kerrier	Redruth	-	-
May 1889	John N Penrose	M	Non-Vaccination	Adjourned	East Kerrier	Redruth	-	-
Jun 1889	Sampson Hall Williams	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (10s 6d)	Penryn	Redruth	Fruit merchant	Ethel
Jun 1889	William Noel	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (10s 6d)	Penryn	Redruth	-	-
Jun 1889	John N Penrose	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (10s 6d)	Penryn	Redruth	-	-
Jun 1889	Edwin Penrose	M	Non-Vaccination	Adjourned	Camborne	Redruth	Jeweller	Cecil Staunton
Jun 1889	Arthur James Beckerleg	M	Non-Vaccination	Adjourned	Camborne	Redruth	Baker	Barzillai
Jun 1889	Frederick George Cox	M	Non-Vaccination	Adjourned	Camborne	Redruth	-	Frederick George
Jun 1889	Thomas Kistle	M	Non-Vaccination	Adjourned	Camborne	Redruth	Carpenter	Gwendoline Mary; William Tredinnick
Jun 1889	William Thomas Carter	M	Non-Vaccination	Adjourned	Camborne	Redruth	-	Thomas
Jun 1889	Luke Smith	M	Non-Vaccination	Adjourned	Camborne	Redruth	Bootmaker	Frank Ernest Leman
Jun 1889	William John Hall	M	Non-Vaccination	Acquitted	Camborne	Redruth	Mason	John Richard
Jun 1889	John Trevithick Hockin	M	Non-Vaccination	Adjourned	Camborne	Redruth	-	Willie
Jun 1889	James Pooley	M	Non-Vaccination	Adjourned	Camborne	Redruth	Tin miner	Ernest; Edgar
Jul 1889	Edwin Penrose	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (4s 6d)	Camborne	Redruth	Jeweller	Cecil Staunton
Jul 1889	Arthur James Beckerleg	M	Non-Vaccination	Acquitted	Camborne	Redruth	Baker	Barzillai
Jul 1889	John Trevithick Hockin	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (8s 6d)	Camborne	Redruth	-	Willie
Jul 1889	William Thomas Carter	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (8s 6d)	Camborne	Redruth	-	Thomas
Jul 1889	Thomas Kistle	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (17s)	Camborne	Redruth	Carpenter	Gwendoline Mary; William Tredinnick
Jul 1889	Luke Smith	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (5s)	Camborne	Redruth	Bootmaker	Frank Ernest Leman
Jul 1889	James Pooley	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (7s 6d)	Camborne	Redruth	Tin miner	Ernest; Edgar
May 1890	James Perry	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	St Austell	St Austell	Grocer's assistant	Archibald James

May 1890	Arthur Edward Gaved	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	St Austell	St Austell	General merchant	Irene Helen
May 1890	Timothy Dunn	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	St Austell	Mevagissey	Net manufacturer	Ida Leonora
Sep 1890	J M Williams	M	Non-Vaccination	Acquitted	St Austell	Fowey	Hotel proprietor	Frances
Apr 1893	W C Jasper	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	Callington	Calstock	Carriage builder	-
May 1893	Robert Leverton	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (10s)	Callington	Calstock	Schoolmaster	Winifred Mary
Aug 1894	James Colenso Truscott	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (1s)	Penzance	Penzance	Telegraphist	Norah Estelle
Aug 1894	Richard Henry Piper	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (1s)	Penzance	-	-	-
Aug 1894	William Henry Roberts	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (1s)	Penzance	-	-	-
Aug 1894	Thomas Duckett Taylor	M	Non-Vaccination	Acquitted	Penzance	Penzance	Telegraphist	Florence Louise
Sep 1894	James Andrew Treglown	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	West Penwith	Marazion	Auctioneer	William House
Sep 1894	William Ambrose Taylor	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	West Penwith	Madron	Accountant	Arthur Cecil
Oct 1894	William Richards	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (5s 6d)	East Penwith	Camborne	-	-
Oct 1894	Henry Lee	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (5s 6d)	East Penwith	Camborne	Butcher	Ethel Maud
Nov 1894	Richard Henry Roberts	M	Non-Vaccination	Distress Warrant	Penzance	Penzance	Fruit hawker	Aubrey Bertie Clifford
Nov 1894	Samuel John Banbury	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (5s)	East Penwith	Camborne	Grocer	Francis Alfred
Dec 1894	William Bridgman	M	Non-Compliance	Adjourned	Launceston	Treneglos	Farmer	Matthew Henry
Dec 1894	Richard Henry Roberts	M	Non-Payment	Gaol (14d)	Penzance	Penzance	Fruit hawker	Aubrey Bertie Clifford
Feb 1896	Edgar Whitton	M	Non-Compliance	Fine (5s)	St Austell	Mevagissey	Minister	-
Apr 1896	Robert Leverton	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	Callington	Calstock	Schoolmaster	Wilfred Pawley
May 1896	Ernest Charles Curnow Richards	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (5s)	East Penwith	Redruth	Assurance agent	Beatrice Mary; Martin Leonard
May 1896	William Henry Bunt	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (2s 6d)	East Penwith	-	County councillor	-
May 1896	Jabez Henry Harvey Bunt	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (4s)	East Penwith	Redruth	Board guardian	-
May 1896	William Jenkyn	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (5s)	East Penwith	-	-	-
May 1896	Samuel John Banbury	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (6s 6d)	East Penwith	Camborne	Grocer	Francis Alfred; Herbert Cecil; Leila Dunstan
May 1896	William Medlin	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (6s 6d)	East Penwith	-	County councillor	-
Sep 1896	Robert Rice Alford	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	Callington	Calstock	Railway clerk	Audrey
Sep 1896	Alfred Rowse	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	Callington	Calstock	Farmer	Laura
Dec 1896	Robert Rice Alford	M	Non-Compliance	Fine (5s)	Callington	Calstock	Railway clerk	Audrey
Dec 1896	Alfred Rowse	M	Non-Compliance	Fine (10s)	Callington	Calstock	Farmer	Laura
Apr 1897	Richard Morris	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (10s)	Penzance	Penzance	Baker	-
Apr 1897	Henry Stewart	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (10s)	Penzance	Penzance	Plumber	Henry Leonard
Apr 1897	Edwin Rowe	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (10s)	Penzance	-	-	-
Apr 1897	Tobias Symons	M	Non-Vaccination	Acquitted	Penzance	Penzance	Grocer	Nora Emily
Mar 1899	Richard H Sarah	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	West Kenwyn	Kea	Farmer	Henry Gordon
Mar 1899	Thomas Henry Cowling	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	West Kenwyn	St Agnes	Farmer	Emma May
Mar 1899	James Jennings	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	West Kenwyn	-	-	-
Mar 1899	Francis Trebilcock	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	West Kenwyn	-	-	-
Mar 1899	Frederick Arthur Tremewan	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	West Kenwyn	-	-	-
Mar 1899	Thomas Woodward	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	West Kenwyn	-	-	-
Mar 1899	Briton S Rickeard	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	West Kenwyn	-	-	-
Apr 1899	William Lory Hosking	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	Tregony	-	-	-
Apr 1899	Henry Grove	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	Tregony	-	-	-

Apr 1899	Francis Charles Phillips	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	Tregony	-	-	-
Apr 1899	Frank Mitchell	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (3s)	Tregony	-	-	-
May 1899	Edward B Stevens	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (£1)	West Penwith	St Ives	-	-
May 1899	Alfred Whittaker	M	Non-Vaccination	Acquitted	West Penwith	St Ives	-	-
May 1899	Peter Noall	M	Non-Vaccination	Adjourned	West Penwith	St Ives	Seaman	-
May 1899	William Pearce	M	Non-Vaccination	Acquitted	West Penwith	St Ives	-	-
May 1899	James Cocking	M	Non-Vaccination	Adjourned	West Penwith	St Ives	-	-
May 1899	Matilda Curnow Uren	F	Non-Vaccination	Fine (£1)	West Penwith	-	-	-
May 1899	Edwin Cothey	M	Non-Vaccination	Acquitted	West Penwith	St Ives	Fisherman	Betsy Jacobs
May 1899	Henry Grove	M	Non-Compliance	Acquitted	Tregony	-	-	-
May 1899	Frederick Arthur Tremewan	M	Non-Compliance	Fine (£2 1s 6d)	West Powder	-	-	-
May 1899	Thomas Henry Cowling	M	Non-Compliance	Fine (19s 6d)	West Powder	St Agnes	Farmer	Emma May
Jun 1899	James Carter	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	West Powder	-	-	Gerald Adolfus
Jun 1899	Thomas Henry Cowling	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	West Powder	St Agnes	Farmer	Emma May
Jun 1899	William Lory Hosking	M	Non-Compliance	Fine (17s 6d)	Tregony	-	-	-
Jun 1899	Frank Mitchell	M	Non-Compliance	Fine (16s 6d)	Tregony	-	-	-
Jun 1899	Thomas Manuel	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	Tregony	-	-	-
Jun 1899	Charles Thomas Mitchell	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	Tregony	-	-	-
Jun 1899	Thomas Henry Cowling	M	Non-Compliance	Fine (10s)	West Powder	St Agnes	Farmer	Emma May
Jun 1899	James Carter	M	Non-Compliance	Fine (£1 10s)	West Powder	-	-	Gerald Adolfus
Jul 1899	George Henry Goodman	M	Non-Vaccination	Adjourned	Penzance	Penzance	Marine engineer	Clara; Lavina
Jul 1899	William John Beith	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (£2)	Penzance	Penzance	Post office clerk	-
Jul 1899	James Cocking	M	Non-Vaccination	Acquitted	West Penwith	St Ives	-	-
Aug 1899	Peter Noall	M	Non-Vaccination	Adjourned	West Penwith	St Ives	Seaman	-
Aug 1899	Edwin Cothey	M	Non-Vaccination	Acquitted	West Penwith	St Ives	Fisherman	Betsy Jacobs
Aug 1899	William Lory Hosking	M	Non-Compliance	Fine (£2 14s 9d)	Tregony	-	-	-
Aug 1899	Thomas Manuel	M	Non-Compliance	Fine (£1 16s 6d)	Tregony	-	-	-
Aug 1899	Charles Thomas Mitchell	M	Non-Compliance	Fine (19s 3d)	Tregony	-	-	-
Nov 1899	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	St Austell	-	-	-
Nov 1899	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	St Austell	-	-	-
Nov 1899	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	St Austell	-	-	-
Nov 1899	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	St Austell	-	-	-
Nov 1899	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	St Austell	-	-	-
Nov 1899	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	St Austell	-	-	-
Nov 1899	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	St Austell	-	-	-
Nov 1899	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	St Austell	-	-	-
Nov 1899	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	St Austell	-	-	-
Nov 1899	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	St Austell	-	-	-
Nov 1899	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	St Austell	-	-	-
Nov 1899	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	St Austell	-	-	-
Nov 1899	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	St Austell	-	-	-

Nov 1899	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	St Austell	-	-	-
Nov 1899	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	St Austell	-	-	-
Nov 1899	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	St Austell	-	-	-
Nov 1899	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	St Austell	-	-	-
Nov 1899	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	St Austell	-	-	-
Nov 1899	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	St Austell	-	-	-
Nov 1899	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	St Austell	-	-	-
Nov 1899	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	St Austell	-	-	-
Nov 1899	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	St Austell	-	-	-
Nov 1899	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	St Austell	-	-	-
Nov 1899	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	St Austell	-	-	-
Nov 1899	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	St Austell	-	-	-
Nov 1899	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	St Austell	-	-	-
Nov 1899	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	St Austell	-	-	-
Nov 1899	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	St Austell	-	-	-
Nov 1899	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	St Austell	-	-	-
Jan 1900	John Percy	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	Launceston	Tresmorrow	Farmer	Alice
Jan 1900	Thomas Gartrell	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	Launceston	Rezarer	Mason	Florrie
Jan 1900	James Henry Coombe	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	Launceston	Stoke Climsland	-	-
Jan 1900	Emma Luke	F	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	Launceston	-	-	-
Jan 1900	Edwin Goodman	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	Launceston	Launceston	Outfitter	Leslie Walklate; Agnes Lorna
Feb 1900	William Thomas White	M	Non-Vaccination	Adjourned	Penzance	-	-	-
Feb 1900	Joseph Beare	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (10s)	Penzance	Penzance	Butcher	Elsie Pryor
Feb 1900	Daniel H Isaacs	M	Non-Vaccination	Adjourned	Penzance	Penzance	Naval officer	Violet May
Mar 1900	John Pope	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (3s)	West Kerrier	Breage	-	-
Mar 1900	John Humphrey Rowe Trembath	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (5s)	West Kerrier	Sithney	Farmer	Phyllis
Mar 1900	Alfred King	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (5s)	West Kerrier	Sithney	Domestic gardener	Harry Milward
Mar 1900	Daniel H Isaacs	M	Non-Vaccination	Acquitted	Penzance	Penzance	Naval officer	Violet May
Mar 1900	Arthur Tyzzer	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	St Austell	Mount Charles	-	-
Mar 1900	Jessie Rosevear	F	Non-Vaccination	Acquitted	St Austell	Mount Charles	-	-
Mar 1900	Arthur Edward Gaved	M	Non-Compliance	Fine (10s)	St Austell	St Austell	General merchant	-
Mar 1900	Alfred Emmanuel Strickland	M	Non-Compliance	Fine (12s)	St Austell	St Austell	-	-
Mar 1900	Amos Bawden	M	Non-Compliance	Fine (12s)	St Austell	Tregonissey	-	-
Mar 1900	Joseph Henry Dixon	M	Non-Compliance	Fine (14 6d)	St Austell	Trewhiddle	Schoolmaster	Margaret Eugenie
Mar 1900	William J C Bawden	M	Non-Compliance	Fine (£1)	St Austell	St Austell	-	-
Apr 1900	Robert G Pearce	M	Non-Vaccination	Acquitted	Liskeard	Pelynt	-	-
Apr 1900	John Hoskin	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (6s)	Liskeard	East Looe	-	-
Jun 1900	Alfred Oliver	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (2s 6d)	Callington	South Hill	Farm labourer	Wilfred
Jun 1900	Montague White	M	Non-Compliance	Adjourned	St Ives	St Ives	-	-
Jul 1900	Timothy Dunn	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (£1)	St Austell	Mevagissey	Fisherman	Ronald
Jul 1900	William Thomas	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (12s)	St Austell	-	-	-
Jul 1900	Enoch Rowse	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (12s)	St Austell	-	-	-
Sep 1900	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Acquitted	Callington	-	-	-

Sep 1900	-	-	Non-Vaccination	Acquitted	Callington	-	-	-
Feb 1901	Henry Mann	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	East Kerrier	Constantine	Farmer	-
Apr 1901	William Rail	M	Non-Vaccination	Acquitted	Penryn	Constantine	Farmer	William
Apr 1901	William Wills	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	Penryn	Constantine	-	-
Oct 1901	Thornton Kitto Sara	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (1s)	East Penwith	Redruth	Mining engineer	Thomas Tregaskis
Oct 1901	Frederick G Channon	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (1s)	East Penwith	Redruth	Baker	Olive Gwendoline
Dec 1901	Frederick C Dawes	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	Truro	St Clement	Victualler	Edward Percy Charles
Dec 1901	Albert H Berryman	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	Truro	Kenwyn	Gardener	William Clarence
Dec 1901	John Nicholas	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	Truro	St Mary	Railway porter	Ruby Margaret
Dec 1901	Joseph Badcock	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	Truro	St Clement	Grocer's assistant	Janie
Dec 1901	P Stephens	M	Non-Vaccination	Adjourned	Truro	Truro	-	-
Dec 1901	William Fillbrook	M	Non-Vaccination	Adjourned	Truro	Kenwyn	Mason	Rose Hetta
Jan 1902	Albert H Berryman	M	Non-Compliance	Gaol (1m)	Truro	Kenwyn	Gardener	William Clarence
Jan 1902	Joseph Badcock	M	Non-Compliance	Fine (10s)	Truro	St Clement	Gricer's assistant	Janie
Mar 1902	Arthur Henry Huss	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	Penryn	Budock	Electrician	Lilian May Catherine
Mar 1902	T H Williams	M	Non-Compliance	Fine (20s)	Penryn	Falmouth	Former town councillor	-
Mar 1902	William Rail	M	Non-Compliance	Fine (15s)	Penryn	Constantine	Farmer	John
May 1902	Frederick George Thomas Dent	M	Non-Compliance	Vaccination Order	West Penwith	St Just	Minister	Norman Horrocks
Jul 1902	Frederick George Thomas Dent	M	Non-Compliance	Fine (£1)	West Penwith	St Just	Minister	Norman Horrocks
Aug 1902	John Mann	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	Penzance	Penzance	Dairyman	William Percival
Dec 1902	Clement Williams	M	Non-Vaccination	Fine (£1)	St Ives	St Ives	Fisherman	Clement
Nov 1903	Edwin John Trewin	M	Non-Vaccination	Adjourned	Truro	Truro	Labourer	-
Nov 1903	Edwin Mutton	M	Non-Vaccination	Adjourned	Truro	Kenwyn	Butcher	Charles Cyril
Nov 1903	George William Slater	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	Truro	Truro	Grocer	George Newton
Nov 1903	Edward Charles Hosken	M	Non-Vaccination	Adjourned	Truro	Truro	Labourer	-
Nov 1903	Robert Charles Walters	M	Non-Vaccination	Adjourned	Truro	Truro	-	-
Nov 1903	Ernest Lamerton	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	Truro	Truro	Cellarman	Florence May
Nov 1903	James Tyacke	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	Truro	Truro	Cab driver	-
Nov 1903	Edgar Arthur Behenna	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	Truro	Truro	Carpenter	Joseph Horace
Dec 1903	George William Slater	M	Non-Compliance	Fine (10s)	Truro	Truro	Grocer	George Newton
Dec 1903	Edgar Arthur Behenna	M	Non-Compliance	Fine (£1)	Truro	Truro	Carpenter	Joseph Horace
Dec 1903	-	-	Non-Compliance	Adjourned	Truro	-	-	-
Oct 1905	William Frederick Lenten	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	Truro	Truro	Mason	Frank
Nov 1905	William Frederick Lenten	M	Non-Compliance	Fine (10s)	Truro	Truro	Mason	Frank
Jun 1907	W Stacey	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	Stratton	Poundstock	-	-
Oct 1907	Thomas Walkley Rowland	M	Non-Vaccination	Vaccination Order	Stratton	Poundstock	Farmer	Helena

Appendix 2 – Complete List of Exemption Applications Under the Vaccination Act in Cornwall (1898-1907)

Date	Applicant	M/F	Outcome	Petty Sessions	Residence	Occupation	Child/ren
Sep 1898	John Luscombe	M	Granted	Callington	-	-	-
Sep 1898	Robert Leverton	M	Granted	Callington	Calstock	Schoolmaster	Conrad
Nov 1898	E J Harris	M	Granted	Callington	St Ive	-	-
Nov 1898	W Dawe	M	Granted	Callington	Linkinhorne	-	-
Nov 1898	W Coad	M	Refused	Callington	Linkinhorne	-	-
Nov 1898	G Ryder	M	Refused	Callington	Linkinhorne	-	-
Nov 1898	Christopher Bartlett	M	Granted	Callington	South Hill	-	-
Nov 1898	Thomas Mutton	M	Granted	Callington	St Ive	Farmer	Frances Lena
Nov 1898	May	M	Refused	Callington	St Ive	-	-
Nov 1898	James Andrew Treglown	M	Granted	West Penwith	Marazion	Auctioneer	John Benfield; William House; Francis George
Nov 1898	Edgar Whitton	M	Granted	West Penwith	Marazion	Minister	-
Nov 1898	Elisha Aver	M	Granted	Truro	St Mary	Watchmaker	Mary Ethel
Nov 1898	Arthur Barrett	M	Granted	Truro	-	-	-
Nov 1898	Henry Dixon Hawke	M	Granted	Truro	Kenwyn	Engineer	-
Nov 1898	Frederick J Mansfield	M	Granted	Truro	-	-	-
Nov 1898	Thomas Moyle Whitford	M	Granted	Truro	St Mary	Clerk	Doris Irene
Nov 1898	Richard Henry Benney	M	Granted	West Powder	-	Police constable	Ethel Jane; Joseph William; Richard Henry; June
Dec 1898	-	-	-	West Penwith	-	-	-
Dec 1898	-	-	-	West Penwith	-	-	-
Dec 1898	Richard Henry Roberts	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Fruit hawker	Thomas Oakley Richard; Aubrey Bertie Clifford; Cyril Harold Gordon
Dec 1898	Thomas Mills Cara	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Dental surgeon	Arthur Lewis; Thomas Alfred; Harold
Dec 1898	Henry Gray	M	Granted	Penzance	Alverton	Hairdresser	Doris
Dec 1898	Alfred Laity	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Insurance agent	-
Dec 1898	Edward Wilkinson	M	Granted	St Ives	St Ives	Boatman	-
Dec 1898	George Thomas Barnicoat	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Police constable	Violet Gwendoline
Dec 1898	George Orchard	M	Granted	West Penwith	Heamoor	-	-
Dec 1898	Joseph T Hawken	M	Granted	St Columb	-	-	-
Dec 1898	John Marks	M	Granted	West Powder	-	Police constable	Stanley
Dec 1898	John Frederick Healey	M	Granted	West Powder	Perranzabuloe	Grocer	Donald Mitchell
Dec 1898	William Roberts	M	Granted	West Powder	-	-	Emma
Dec 1898	William Elford	M	Granted	West Powder	-	-	Mary Eliza
Dec 1898	Pearce	M	Granted	Truro	-	Police constable	-
Dec 1898	Rundle	M	Granted	Truro	-	Police constable	-
Dec 1898	Alenzo Parkin	M	Granted	Truro	-	-	-
Dec 1898	Luke	M	Granted	Truro	-	-	-
Jan 1899	William George Chinn	M	Granted	East Penwith	Gwinear	Railway signalman	-

Jan 1899	Thomas Rowe	M	Refused	East Penwith	Camborne	-	-
Jan 1899	Henry Eley	M	Granted	West Powder	Greenbottom	Farmer	Frederick
Feb 1899	C E Brown	M	Granted	Lostwithiel	-	-	-
Feb 1899	N Stephens	M	Granted	Lostwithiel	-	-	-
Feb 1899	J Lander	M	Granted	Lostwithiel	-	-	-
Feb 1899	Pedler	M	Refused	Lostwithiel	-	-	-
Feb 1899	S Laity	M	Refused	East Penwith	Gwinear	-	-
Feb 1899	-	-	Refused	East Penwith	-	-	-
Mar 1899	W Morris	M	Granted	Callington	St Ive	-	-
Mar 1899	John Jenkin	M	Granted	West Penwith	Sancreed	-	-
Mar 1899	Francis Trebilcock	M	Granted	West Kenwyn	-	-	-
Apr 1899	R S Burt	M	Granted	Falmouth	-	-	-
Apr 1899	William Thomas Passmore	M	Granted	East Penwith	Camborne	Engineer's fitter	Annie Morcom
Apr 1899	Edmund Ellis	M	Granted	Truro	-	-	-
May 1899	Charles Pascoe	M	Granted	Tregony	-	-	-
Jun 1899	Clarinda Noall	F	Granted	St Ives	St Ives	Domestic servant	-
Jun 1899	John Rouncefield	M	Granted	St Ives	St Ives	Fisherman	Rebecca Williams
Jun 1899	William J Underwood	M	Granted	East Penwith	Camborne	Minister	Winifred Laura
Jun 1899	William Lory Hosking	M	Granted	Tregony	-	-	-
Jul 1899	J Bishop	M	Granted	Penryn	-	-	-
Jul 1899	H Cox	M	Granted	Penryn	-	-	-
Jul 1899	H Dale	M	Granted	Helston	-	-	-
Jul 1899	Thomas Hocking	M	Granted	West Kerrier	Breage	Farmer	Nellie
Jul 1899	Alfred Henry Johns	M	Granted	West Kerrier	Ruan Minor	Farmer	Philippa Annie
Aug 1899	William Tresise	M	Granted	Callington	-	-	-
Aug 1899	Charles Henry Brighton	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Butcher	William Charles
Aug 1899	Frank William Lee	M	Granted	West Penwith	Chyandour	-	-
Aug 1899	Lewis Keast	M	Granted	West Powder	St Allen	Farmer	Mary Mildred
Aug 1899	William Tonkin	M	Granted	West Powder	-	-	Ernest
Sep 1899	John Sampson	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Watchmaker	Arnold John
Oct 1899	Peter Henry Blake	M	Granted	St Austell	St Austell	-	-
Oct 1899	Amos Bawden	M	Granted	St Austell	St Austell	-	-
Oct 1899	Ernest Whetter	M	Granted	St Austell	St Austell	-	-
Oct 1899	William Pappin	M	Granted	St Austell	Mount Charles	-	-
Nov 1899	G Harris	M	Granted	Helston	Carmenellis	Minister	-
Nov 1899	H J Sincock	M	Granted	Helston	St Keverne	-	-
Nov 1899	John Moyle	M	Granted	Helston	Wendron	-	-
Nov 1899	J Trevaskis	M	Granted	Helston	Treskow Common	-	-
Nov 1899	George Yelland	M	Granted	St Columb	-	-	-
Nov 1899	Robert Crowle	M	Refused	St Columb	-	-	-
Nov 1899	John Thomas Williams	M	Granted	St Columb	-	-	-
Nov 1899	Richard Henry Dennis	M	Granted	Truro	-	-	-
Nov 1899	Maria Helford	F	Granted	West Powder	-	-	-

Jan 1900	John Jose	M	Granted	Camelford	Otterham	-	-
Jan 1900	Charles Hicks	M	Granted	Camelford	Davidstow	-	-
Jan 1900	William Albert Roberts	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Bandmaster	-
Jan 1900	Charles James	M	Granted	West Powder	St Agnes	Oil merchant	Olive Mary
Feb 1900	William Folley	M	Granted	Callington	Callington	Insurance agent	Maurice Henry Seymour
Feb 1900	Edward Davis	M	Granted	Callington	Callington	-	-
Feb 1900	James H Davey	M	Granted	Callington	Gunnislake	-	-
Feb 1900	Edward Herbert Griffin	M	Refused	Penzance	Penzance	Band member	Gordon
Feb 1900	John Hollow	M	Granted	West Penwith	Buryan	Farmer	Baden Powell Mann
Feb 1900	J Martin Box	M	Granted	St Austell	St Austell	-	-
Feb 1900	N J Grose	M	Granted	St Austell	St Ewe	-	-
Feb 1900	Samuel Harry Stanbury	M	Granted	Callington	Calstock	Tailor	Leslie John
Feb 1900	John Stacey	M	Granted	Callington	Latchley	Copper miner	Winfred May
Feb 1900	William J Escott	M	Granted	Truro	-	-	-
Mar 1900	Ernest Charles Curnow Richards	M	Granted	East Penwith	Redruth	Assurance agent	Mary Catherine Olive
Mar 1900	J Thomas	F	Granted	East Penwith	Redruth	-	-
Mar 1900	J Davey	M	Granted	East Penwith	Redruth	-	-
Mar 1900	William Lawry	M	Granted	St Columb	-	-	-
Mar 1900	Edwin Richard Allen	M	Granted	Truro	-	-	-
Mar 1900	Thomas Stephens Thomas	M	Granted	Truro	-	-	-
Apr 1900	Annie Martin	F	Granted	Callington	-	-	-
Apr 1900	William Henry Crocker	M	Granted	Callington	-	-	-
Apr 1900	John Thomas Toom	M	Granted	Callington	-	-	-
Apr 1900	Henry Ernest Pascoe	M	Granted	Callington	-	-	-
Apr 1900	Richard H Richard	M	Granted	Penzance	-	-	Richard Henry
Apr 1900	William Ambrose Taylor	M	Granted	West Penwith	Madron	Accountant	Arthur Cecil
Apr 1900	Thomas Henry Cowling	M	Granted	West Powder	St Agnes	Farmer	Thomas Austin
May 1900	George Charles Watson	M	Granted	Falmouth	-	-	-
May 1900	Frederick Thomas Hall	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	China dealer	Marion Beatrice
May 1900	Richard Trembath	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Plumber	Myra
May 1900	James Albert Rogers	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Carrier	Clarice Eveline Audrey
May 1900	Edward Francis Johns	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Butcher	Beatrice Jane
May 1900	F C Truran	M	Granted	Callington	Calstock	-	-
May 1900	J Youlden	M	Granted	Callington	Albaston	-	-
Jun 1900	Jacobs	M	Granted	Camelford	Camelford	Minister	-
Jun 1900	Henry Wright	M	Granted	Callington	Callington	Copper miner	William
Jun 1900	J H Sobey	M	Granted	Callington	-	-	-
Jun 1900	J H Paynter	M	Granted	Callington	-	-	-
Jun 1900	W J Davey	M	Granted	Callington	-	-	-
Jun 1900	Henry Peters	M	Refused	St Ives	St Ives	Fisherman	Jacob Ward
Jul 1900	H Blatchford	M	Granted	Launceston	Tregeare	Farm bailiff	Edith Emily
Jul 1900	R Roseveare	M	Granted	Callington	Callington	Butcher	William Henry
Jul 1900	Hannaford	F	Granted	Callington	St Dominick	Farm carter's wife	Annie

Jul 1900	T Folland	M	Granted	Callington	Callington	Baker	Doris May
Jul 1900	Benjamin Downing	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Grocer	Minnie Norah
Jul 1900	Joseph Jackson	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Carpenter	Ruby Ernestine
Jul 1900	Edward Daniel	M	Granted	St Ives	St Ives	Basketmaker	William
Jul 1900	W Reed	M	Granted	St Austell	-	-	-
Jul 1900	James	F	Granted	Callington	Calstock	-	-
Aug 1900	G H Seldon	M	Granted	Camelford	-	-	-
Aug 1900	J Gregory	M	Granted	Camelford	-	-	-
Aug 1900	S B Axford	M	Granted	Falmouth	-	-	-
Aug 1900	Thomas Smale	M	Granted	Callington	Gunnislake	-	-
Aug 1900	Joel Deeble	M	Granted	Callington	Linkinhorne	Miner	Hilda
Aug 1900	Henry Bullen	M	Granted	Callington	Callington	Mason	Emily Jane
Aug 1900	John Lansallos	M	Granted	Callington	Woodah Bridge	Farm labourer	Harold John
Aug 1900	John Pett	M	Granted	Callington	St Ive	Farmer	Owen
Aug 1900	Richard Morris	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Baker	Leonard
Aug 1900	William Burdon	M	Granted	St Columb	-	-	-
Aug 1900	John Brewer	M	Granted	St Columb	-	-	-
Aug 1900	Sidney William Davis	M	Granted	West Powder	St Agnes	-	Rosetta Maud
Aug 1900	John Kitt Smith	M	Granted	West Powder	St Agnes	Mortar mason	Annie Winifred
Sep 1900	Richard Duance	M	Granted	Callington	-	-	-
Sep 1900	Edwin John Sandercock	M	Granted	Callington	-	-	-
Sep 1900	William Henry Parsons	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Baker	Monica
Sep 1900	Richard Joseph Angwin	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Sculptor	Lilian Eva
Sep 1900	Nicholas John Heller	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Sorting clerk	William Thomas
Sep 1900	David Paul James	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Carpenter	Violet Gwendoline
Sep 1900	W H Littlejohns	M	Granted	Stratton	Morwenstow	-	-
Oct 1900	James Pickard	M	Granted	Camelford	Boscastle	Shoemaker	William Luxon
Oct 1900	Samuel Gilbert	M	Granted	Launceston	Lezant	-	-
Oct 1900	William Lanxon	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	-	Winifred Mary
Oct 1900	George Frances	M	Granted	East Penwith	Redruth	-	-
Oct 1900	William Thomas Passmore	M	Granted	East Penwith	Camborne	Engineer's fitter	Frederick Albert
Nov 1900	-	-	Granted	Falmouth	-	-	-
Nov 1900	John Eynon Hooper	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Bank clerk	Brian Eynon
Nov 1900	William Nankervis	M	Granted	St Ives	-	-	-
Nov 1900	George Edward Quick	M	Granted	West Penwith	Mousehole	Fisherman	Maud
Nov 1900	William E Brimacombe	M	Granted	Stratton	Morwenstow	Farmer	Doris Mary
Nov 1900	Lewis Keast	M	Granted	West Powder	St Allen	Farmer	William Charles Lewis
Nov 1900	John Burrows Tippett	M	Granted	West Powder	Kenwyn	Domestic gardener	Fanny
Dec 1900	Edwin Evens	M	Granted	Camelford	Warbstow	Schoolmaster	Muriel Mary
Dec 1900	Annie Abraham	F	Granted	Penryn	-	-	-
Dec 1900	George King Nicholls	M	Granted	Penryn	-	-	-
Dec 1900	William Henry Bishop	M	Granted	Launceston	St Thomas the Apostle	Railway warehouseman	Dorothy Elizabeth
Dec 1900	Thomas Turner Champion	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Sorting clerk	Dorothy Frances

Dec 1900	Charles Daniel Barriball	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Minister	Gladys Evelina Maude
Dec 1900	John Lanxon	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	-	Beatrice May
Dec 1900	Richard Henry Rowling	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Plumber	Elsie Winifred
Dec 1900	John Batten	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	House painter	Dora Nanny
Dec 1900	William Charles Francis	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Bootmaker	Mary Catherine
Dec 1900	W Crispin	M	Granted	Truro	-	-	-
Dec 1900	P H Tonkyn	M	Granted	Truro	-	-	-
Dec 1900	John May	M	Granted	West Powder	St Agnes	Pumping engine worker	Doris Ada
Jan 1901	Thomas Henry Liddicoat	M	Granted	Penzance	Madron	Sorting clerk	Thomas Henry
Jan 1901	Mary Thomas	F	Granted	Penzance	Penzance		Violet Mary
Feb 1901	Venning	M	Granted	Launceston	Launceston	Gardener	-
Feb 1901	R Sleep	M	Granted	Callington	-	-	-
Feb 1901	Thomas Mutton	M	Granted	Callington	St Ive	Farmer	Redvers Raymond
Feb 1901	J Pridham	M	Granted	Callington	-	-	-
Feb 1901	Frederick Carne	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Painter	Gladys; Frederick Baden
Feb 1901	Arthur James Beckerleg	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Baker	Gordon Raby
Feb 1901	Sarah Downing	F	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Marine engineer's wife	Francis Garnet
Feb 1901	Eliza Rowe	F	Granted	West Powder	Penwethers	-	Thomas Charles
Mar 1901	Williams	M	Granted	Sithney	Sithney	-	-
Mar 1901	Thomas Henry Wood	M	Granted	Launceston	Altarnun	-	-
Mar 1901	Edith Prowse	F	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Gas engineer's wife	Violet May
Mar 1901	James Henry Bryant	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Assurance collector	Irene Millicent
Mar 1901	George Hall	M	Granted	West Penwith	Mousehole	Fisherman	Annie
Mar 1901	Edwin Chirgwin	M	Granted	West Penwith	Paul	-	-
Mar 1901	Laity	M	Granted	East Penwith	Gwinear	-	-
Mar 1901	Thomas Stevens	M	Granted	East Penwith	Redruth	-	-
Mar 1901	Samuel John Banbury	M	Granted	East Penwith	Camborne	Grocer	Audrey Muriel
Apr 1901	Edwin Strickland	M	Granted	Trigg	-	-	-
Apr 1901	Richard Nicholls	M	Granted	West Penwith	Newlyn	-	-
Apr 1901	William J Underwood	M	Granted	East Penwith	Camborne	Minister	Doris Margery
Apr 1901	John Webber	M	Granted	West Powder	-	-	John Henry
May 1901	Walter Smith	M	Granted	Launceston	Egloskerry	Farmer	Walter
May 1901	J Chapman	M	Granted	Callington	Linkinhorne	Carrier	Marjorie Kathleen
May 1901	A Harris	M	Granted	Callington	Quethiock	Grocer	Winifred
May 1901	William Bawden Russell	M	Granted	East Penwith	Redruth	Insurance agent	Roy
May 1901	F C Prowse	M	Granted	Stratton	Morwenstow	-	-
May 1901	William Ruse	M	Granted	Truro	Kenwyn	Railway porter	Hilda Mary
May 1901	Arthur J Julian	M	Granted	Truro	St Clement	Railway labourer	Ivy Pearl
Jun 1901	Stanley Buckley	M	Granted	West Penwith	Newlyn	Minister	Stanley Elvet
Jun 1901	James Andrew Treglown	M	Granted	West Penwith	Marazion	Auctioneer	Marie Elizabeth
Jun 1901	J Carlsen	M	Refused	East Penwith	Redruth	-	-
Jun 1901	C Edward Thomas	M	Granted	East Penwith	-	-	-

Jun 1901	William Tonkin	M	Granted	West Powder	-	-	Leonard Garfield
Jul 1901	Elisha Rickard	M	Granted	Camelford	Davidstow	-	-
Jul 1901	Harry	M	Granted	Launceston	-	-	-
Jul 1901	George Branwell Wallis	M	Granted	Penzance	Gulval	Printer	Nicholas George
Jul 1901	William Wills	M	Refused	East Penwith	Redruth	Tin miner	Elizabeth Gribble
Jul 1901	S J Treloar	M	Refused	East Penwith	Camborne	-	-
Jul 1901	Thomas Charles Cock	M	Granted	West Powder	-	-	Thomas Arthur
Aug 1901	Charles Knight	M	Granted	Camelford	Davidstow	Carpenter	Thomas John
Aug 1901	F Bolt	M	Granted	Callington	-	-	-
Aug 1901	A Woolcock	M	Granted	Callington	-	-	-
Aug 1901	W Pascoe	M	Granted	Callington	-	-	-
Aug 1901	Arthur Frederick Rowe	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Grocer's labourer	Elizabeth Violet
Aug 1901	John H Cock	M	Granted	East Penwith	-	-	-
Sep 1901	Thomas Francis Boase	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Police constable	William John
Oct 1901	-	-	Granted	Falmouth	-	-	-
Oct 1901	Robert Stephens Rowe	M	Refused	Penzance	Penzance	-	Mabel
Oct 1901	Henry George Newton	M	Granted	Penzance	Hayle	-	Elizabeth Drury
Oct 1901	T Hocking	M	Granted	East Penwith	Redruth	-	-
Oct 1901	Wesley Floyd	M	Granted	East Penwith	Redruth	-	-
Oct 1901	Henry Ditch	M	Granted	West Powder	Kenwyn	Bargeman	Bessie
Oct 1901	William Tonkin	M	Granted	West Powder	-	-	Olive Grace
Oct 1901	Charles James	M	Granted	West Powder	St Agnes	Oil merchant	Florence Emma Vodden
Oct 1901	Amy Louisa Shore	F	Granted	West Powder	St Agnes	-	William
Nov 1901	William Ede	M	Granted	Bodmin	-	-	-
Nov 1901	Thomas John Treleaven	M	Granted	Bodmin	Bodmin	-	-
Nov 1901	Joseph Opie	M	Granted	West Kerrier	Pencoys	-	-
Nov 1901	John Henry Davies	M	Granted	West Powder	St Agnes	Tin miner	John Henry
Nov 1901	William Henry Stigel	M	Granted	West Powder	-	-	Alfred William
Dec 1901	C Pearce	M	Granted	Camelford	Tregatherall	-	-
Dec 1901	Honor Ann Warren	F	Granted	Camelford	Warbstow	Police constable's wife	Hannah Hilda Caroline
Dec 1901	Emmanuel Gilbert	M	Granted	Launceston	Tremaine	Farm labourer	Sydney
Dec 1901	Joseph Badcock	M	Granted	Truro	St Clement	Grocer's assistant	Joseph Raymond
Dec 1901	E Henwood	M	Granted	Truro	Truro	-	-
Jan 1902	Henry Harris	M	Granted	Bodmin	St Minver	Farmer	Rhoda Norah
Jan 1902	Alfred Methven	M	Granted	Bodmin	St Breward	Mason	Alfred Reginald
Jan 1902	Joseph Harvey	M	Granted	West Penwith	Tolcarne	-	-
Jan 1902	Lee	M	Refused	East Penwith	Illogan	Police constable	-
Jan 1902	W M Martin	M	Granted	East Penwith	Redruth	-	-
Jan 1902	John Burrows Tippet	M	Granted	West Powder	Kenwyn	Domestic gardener	Edith
Jan 1902	James Thomas Mitchell	M	Granted	West Powder	-	-	Florence Olga
Jan 1902	Richard Wellington	M	Granted	Truro	-	-	-
Feb 1902	Ernest John James	M	Granted	Bodmin	Bodmin	Railway fireman	William Royston
Feb 1902	Edwin Goodman	M	Granted	Launceston	Launceston	Outfitter	Lyndall Walker Bassington

Feb 1902	-	-	Granted	Callington	-	-	-
Feb 1902	-	-	Granted	Callington	-	-	-
Feb 1902	-	-	Granted	Callington	-	-	-
Feb 1902	Edward Smith	M	Granted	Truro	St Mary	House painter	Frederick George
Feb 1902	William Norton	M	Granted	Truro	St Clement	Grocer	Lewis Maxwell
Feb 1902	A W Austin	M	Granted	Truro	-	-	-
Feb 1902	William J Escott	M	Granted	Truro	-	-	-
Feb 1902	Samuel Cornew	M	Granted	Truro	St Clement	General labourer	Florence
Feb 1902	Hubert Dyer	M	Granted	Truro	-	-	-
Mar 1902	William Stevens	M	Granted	Launceston	-	-	-
Mar 1902	Henry Buckingham	M	Granted	Launceston	Lezant	Agricultural labourer	-
Mar 1902	Samuel John Goodman	M	Granted	Launceston	Lezant	Farmer	Emily Ellen
Mar 1902	Richard Kinsman Brimmacombe	M	Granted	Launceston	St Stephen by Launceston	Merchant	Lora
Mar 1902	James Andrews	M	Granted	Callington	Brayshop	Grocer	Florence
Mar 1902	George Ryder	M	Granted	Callington	Callington	Farmer	John
Mar 1902	Charles Marks	M	Granted	Penzance	-	-	-
Mar 1902	Thomas Henry Cory	M	Granted	East Penwith	-	-	-
Mar 1902	James Trembath	M	Granted	St Columb	St Enoder	China clay labourer	Gwennie
Mar 1902	James Henry Quick	M	Granted	West Powder	-	-	-
Apr 1902	Stanley Tregea Beringer	M	Granted	Falmouth	Falmouth	Watchmaker	John Bawden
Apr 1902	Alfred Thomas Cavey	M	Granted	Launceston	Altarnun	-	-
Apr 1902	Nicholas John Heller	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Sorting clerk	Doris Mary
Apr 1902	William Henry Stephens Chapman	M	Refused	West Powder	St Agnes	Farmer	William James
May 1902	Edwin Sydney Bray	M	Granted	Falmouth	Falmouth	Carpenter	Marie Louise
May 1902	Edwin A Foster	M	Refused	Callington	Callington	Mineral water maker	Audrey Ella
May 1902	William Blake	M	Refused	Callington	Stoke Climsland	Farmer	William Matthews
Jun 1902	John Parsons	M	Refused	Camelford	Tintagel	Slate quarryman	Daisy Bell
Jun 1902	Edward Warren	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Pork cellarman	Minnie
Jun 1902	John Rouncefield	M	Refused	St Ives	St Ives	Fisherman	William John
Jun 1902	Thornton Kitto Sara	M	Granted	East Penwith	Redruth	Mining engineer	Phyllis Nettle
Jun 1902	Harry Tellam	M	Granted	East Penwith	Redruth	Egg dealer	Owen
Jun 1902	William Henry Stephens Chapman	M	Granted	West Powder	St Agnes	Farmer	William James
Jun 1902	William Mennear	M	Granted	West Powder	Point	Bargeman	-
Jul 1902	Collett	M	Granted	Camelford	Camelford	Police constable	-
Jul 1902	R Roseveare	M	Refused	Callington	Callington	Butcher	George Harold
Jul 1902	Thomas Turner Champion	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Sorting clerk	Hilda Mary
Jul 1902	William Samuel Ashton	M	Refused	Tywardreath	Par	-	-
Aug 1902	William Francis Bate	M	Granted	Launceston	Lezant	-	-
Aug 1902	Thomas Strike	M	Granted	Launceston	Newport	Storekeeper	Thomas
Aug 1902	James Rosewarne Edmonds	M	Granted	East Penwith	Redruth	Butcher	-

Sep 1902	Chapman	M	Granted	Camelford	Deremere	-	-
Sep 1902	Richard James	M	Granted	Helston	Helston	-	-
Sep 1902	Charles Henry Crago	M	Granted	Launceston	Launceston	Fish dealer	Kathleen
Sep 1902	John Thomas Nicholas	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Grocer	Margaret Sarah Grenfell
Sep 1902	John Saundrey	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Printer	Arthur John
Oct 1902	Thomas Tank	M	Granted	Bodmin	Bodmin	Carpenter	George
Oct 1902	John W Cavey	M	Granted	Launceston	Race Hill	-	-
Oct 1902	William Ambrose Taylor	M	Granted	West Penwith	Madron	Accountant	Arthur Cecil
Nov 1902	Thomas Francis Boase	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Police constable	Gordon
Nov 1902	Richard Trembath	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Plumber	Richard Edward
Dec 1902	John Penrose	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Butcher	George Henry Harold
Dec 1902	Daniel Rouncefield	M	Granted	St Ives	St Ives	Fish merchant	Hilda
Dec 1902	Frederick George Thomas Dent	M	Granted	West Penwith	Pendeen	Minister	Frederic Hall
Dec 1902	Samuel Charles Treloar	M	Granted	East Penwith	Camborne	-	-
Jan 1903	Walter Raven	M	Granted	West Kerrier	Crowan	Railway signalman	-
Jan 1903	James Jolly	M	Granted	Helston	-	-	-
Jan 1903	Thomas White Christopher	M	Granted	West Penwith	Madron	Farmer	-
Jan 1903	Matthew Wasley	M	Granted	East Penwith	Redruth	Cabinetmaker	Audrey Mary Dungey
Feb 1903	John Hall	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	-	Sydney
Feb 1903	Humphrey Rouncefield	M	Granted	St Ives	St Ives	Fish merchant	Lilian Maud
Feb 1903	Charles Marks	M	Refused	Penzance	Penzance	-	Lilian
Mar 1903	Alfred Methven	M	Granted	Trigg	St Breward	Mason	William
Mar 1903	James Andrews	M	Granted	Callington	Brayshop	Grocer	Eveline Mary
Mar 1903	Mary Elizabeth Wilcocks	F	Granted	Callington	Pensilva	-	-
Mar 1903	Charles Marks	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	-	Lilian
Mar 1903	William Stevenson	M	Granted	West Penwith	Newlyn	-	-
Mar 1903	Richard Hall	M	Granted	West Penwith	-	-	-
Mar 1903	William Whetter	M	Granted	East Penwith	Redruth	Grocer	William Arthur
Apr 1903	William B Michell	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Jeweller	Thomas Bennett
Apr 1903	Elizabeth Beatrice Edmonds	F	Granted	Penzance	-	-	Edgar Roach
Apr 1903	John Gilbert	M	Granted	West Penwith	Newlyn	-	-
Apr 1903	Joseph Veal	M	Granted	East Penwith	Camborne	Foundry smith	William John
Apr 1903	Frederick Charles Rowe	M	Granted	West Powder	Penwethers	-	-
Apr 1903	William John Julian	M	Granted	West Powder	Perranzabuloe	Navy	Kate Frances
Aug 1903	Thomas Polsue	M	Granted	Truro	-	-	-
Aug 1903	James Annear	M	Granted	Truro	St Clement	Porter	-
Aug 1903	Richard Rowe	M	Granted	Truro	-	-	-
May 1903	William John Hutchens	M	Granted	Penzance	-	-	Edwin Carhart
May 1903	Jessie May Rowe	F	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	-	Jessie May
May 1903	Edwin Collins	M	Granted	East Penwith	Carn Brea	Tin dresser	-
May 1903	Edward James Pratt	M	Granted	Stratton	Stratton	Grocer	Ella
Jun 1903	Keast	M	Granted	Helston	St Keverne	Police constable	-

Jun 1903	Edwin Doney	M	Granted	Liskeard	Liskeard	Agent	William
Jul 1903	John Percy	M	Granted	Launceston	St Stephen by Launceston	Farmer	Alice
Jul 1903	Joseph Mutton	M	Granted	Callington	St Ive	Grocer	Gertrude Florence
Aug 1903	Richard Joseph Angwin	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Sculptor	Caroline May
Sep 1903	William Maddever	M	Granted	Callington	Linkinhorne	Farmer	Gwendolen May
Sep 1903	Mary Jane Bennetts	F	Granted	Callington	St Dominick	-	-
Sep 1903	William Henry Harris	M	Granted	East Penwith	Illogan	-	-
Sep 1903	Thornton Kitto Sara	M	Granted	East Penwith	Redruth	Mining engineer	Edward Lambert
Oct 1903	Daniel Cobbledick	M	Granted	Launceston	Boyton	-	-
Nov 1903	Thomas Mutton	M	Granted	Callington	St Ive	Farmer	Edith Gwendoline
Nov 1903	John Bray	M	Granted	Callington	Gunnislake	-	-
Nov 1903	John Thomas	M	Granted	Penzance	-	-	Gordon Vivian
Dec 1903	Annie James	F	Granted	Penzance	-	-	Kathleen Mary
Dec 1903	Frank Jeffery	M	Granted	Stratton	Bude	Coach builder	Frances Grace; Elsie Winifred
Dec 1903	W Bennett	M	Granted	Stratton	Bude	Minister	-
Jan 1904	F Worth	M	Granted	Callington	Callington	Miner	Frederick William
Jan 1904	William Henry Jope	M	Granted	Callington	St Dominick	Farmer	Sydney George
Jan 1904	Robert John Clook	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Draper's assistant	Wallace John
Feb 1904	Thomas Turner Champion	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Sorting clerk	Thomas James Graham
Feb 1904	Thomas Francis Boase	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Police constable	Elizabeth Violet Martha
Feb 1904	Edwin Tizzard Farrant	M	Granted	Penzance	Uny Lelant	Law clerk	Edwin Gould
Feb 1904	Frederick Charles Parkyn	M	Granted	East Penwith	Redruth	Storeman	Edward
Mar 1904	William Thomas Phillips	M	Granted	Launceston	Egloskerry	Postman	Alice Louisa
Apr 1904	Mark Prout	M	Granted	Bodmin	Port Isaac	Carrier	Lillian
Apr 1904	Lewis George Wiltshire	M	Granted	Stratton	Stratton	Farm labourer	Dorothy
May 1904	Collett	M	Granted	Camelford	Camelford	Police constable	-
May 1904	J Ridge	M	Granted	Launceston	Launceston	Insurance agent	-
May 1904	William Phillips Harvey	M	Granted	West Penwith	Mousehole	-	-
May 1904	George Henry Moyse	M	Granted	Stratton	Bude	Mason	William John
Jun 1904	Hoskin	M	Granted	Camelford	Delabole	-	-
Jun 1904	John W Lukes	M	Granted	Helston	-	-	-
Jun 1904	Montague Davey	M	Granted	Launceston	Trewen	Rabbit trapper	Dorothy Clara
Jun 1904	Thomas Hooper	M	Granted	Launceston	Altarnun	Farmer	Mark Guy
Jun 1904	H Venning	M	Granted	Launceston	St Thomas	-	Samuel John
Jun 1904	Frederick Richard Johns	M	Granted	Callington	Stoke Climsland	Accountant	Ronald
Jun 1904	William Thomas Freeman	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	-	-
Jun 1904	Samuel James Rickard	M	Granted	East Penwith	-	-	-
Jun 1904	James Davey	M	Granted	East Penwith	Redruth	Hairdresser	Edward James
Jun 1904	William Thomas George	M	Granted	East Penwith	Redruth	Postman	-
Jul 1904	Edward James Pratt	M	Granted	Stratton	Stratton	Grocer	Edward
Aug 1904	McEvoy	M	Granted	Bodmin	St Maby	-	-
Aug 1904	W J Osborne	M	Granted	East Penwith	Illogan	-	-
Sep 1904	Blake	M	Granted	Launceston	Lezant	Cattleman	Annie

Sep 1904	Francis Gluyas	M	Granted	East Kerrier	Stithians	Farmer	-
Oct 1904	Walter Smith	M	Granted	Launceston	Egloskerry	Farmer	Sidney
Oct 1904	Samuel John Goodman	M	Granted	Launceston	Lezant	Farmer	Frank
Nov 1904	Alfred George Excell	M	Granted	Launceston	Launceston	Boot business manager	Sidney
Nov 1904	H Mill	M	Granted	Callington	Stoke Climsland	-	-
Nov 1904	Clara Markie Olde	F	Granted	Stratton	Launcells	Farmer's wife	Norman Cloke
Dec 1904	W J Heard	M	Granted	Camelford	Altarnun	-	-
Dec 1904	William Ambrose Taylor	M	Granted	West Penwith	Madron	Accountant	-
Dec 1904	John Symons Rodda	M	Granted	West Penwith	Newlyn	Shop assistant	-
Jan 1905	Benjamin Thomas	M	Granted	West Penwith	Sennen	Sexton	Archibald
Feb 1905	W Solomon	M	Granted	Callington	-	-	-
Feb 1905	W Warne	M	Granted	Callington	-	-	-
Feb 1905	Edward George Newton	M	Granted	East Penwith	Hayle	Builder	Edwin George
Mar 1905	Goodman	M	Granted	Launceston	Lezant	-	-
Mar 1905	Walter John Eggins	M	Granted	Launceston	St Stephen by Launceston	Farmer	William Arthur
Mar 1905	C L Taylor	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Coal importer	Theodora Mary
Mar 1905	Richard Trembath	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Plumber	Beatrice Isabel
Mar 1905	Charles Marks	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	-	Winifred
Mar 1905	Ernest Beare	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Dairyman	Ernest Leslie
Mar 1905	Charles Morrish	M	Granted	West Penwith	Heamoor	-	-
Mar 1905	Richard Leggo	M	Granted	West Penwith	Heamoor	Grocer	Florence Hosking
Apr 1905	Henry Warren	M	Granted	Camelford	Boscastle	Police constable	Henry James
Apr 1905	David Prowse	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Dairyman	Godfrey Russell
Apr 1905	Jenkin	M	Granted	East Penwith	Tuckingmill	-	-
May 1905	Thomas Rowe	M	Granted	Launceston	Treburley	Farmer	Walter John
May 1905	William Henry Jope	M	Granted	Callington	St Dominick	Farmer	William Richard Henry
May 1905	Thomas Friggens Martin	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Publican	Lily
May 1905	Stanley R Sara	M	Granted	East Penwith	Camborne	Auctioneer	-
May 1905	Alexander F Ashwell	M	Granted	East Penwith	Hayle	Confectioner	Arthur Henry
May 1905	John Trehane	M	Granted	East Penwith	Camborne	Police constable	Dorothy May
May 1905	Charles H Brunst	M	Granted	Camborne	Redruth	-	-
Jul 1905	Edwin Goodman	M	Granted	Launceston	Launceston	Outfitter	Kennedy Clifford
Jul 1905	William Ryall	M	Granted	Callington	Stoke Climsland	Farmer	Gwendoline Edna
Jul 1905	Alfred Barrett	M	Granted	Callington	Linkinhorne	-	-
Jul 1905	Samuel Lee	M	Granted	Callington	St Dominick	Farm labourer	Harold
Jul 1905	Richard Pomroy	M	Granted	Callington	Calstock	-	-
Aug 1905	John Percy	M	Granted	Launceston	Colhay	Farmer	-
Aug 1905	Walter Raven	M	Granted	East Penwith	Gwinear	Railway signalman	Percival Reginald; Wilhelmina Clara
Sep 1905	William Herbert Nute	M	Granted	Camelford	Tintagel	Butcher	Nehemiah Gordon Philip
Sep 1905	Richard Billing	M	Granted	Camelford	-	-	-
Oct 1905	W T Tucker	M	Granted	Camelford	St Teath	-	-
Oct 1905	James Spry	M	Granted	Camelford	Newhall Green	Slate quarryman	James Roy

Oct 1905	Charles Morrish	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	-	-
Oct 1905	John Brown	M	Granted	East Penwith	Illogan	-	-
Nov 1905	George Martyn	M	Granted	Camelford	Camelford	-	-
Nov 1905	Arthur Frank Scudamore	M	Granted	East Penwith	Hayle	-	-
Dec 1905	John Hoskin	M	Granted	Camelford	Otterham	Farmer	Edgar John
Dec 1905	Gilbert Baker	M	Granted	Camelford	St Teath	Farmer	Alice
Dec 1905	John Richards	M	Granted	West Kerrier	Breage	-	-
Dec 1905	W Treais	M	Granted	Callington	Callington	Grocer	Vernon Clifford
Dec 1905	Alfred Stinton	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	-	-
Dec 1905	William Hunt	M	Granted	West Penwith	Madron	Farmer	Charlotte; Lilly
Dec 1905	Richard Martin	M	Granted	East Penwith	Camborne	-	-
Dec 1905	A Pengelly	M	Granted	Callington	Calstock	-	-
Dec 1905	W Vincent	M	Granted	Callington	Calstock	-	-
Jan 1906	William John Heard	M	Granted	Bodmin	Altarnun	Farmer	Samuel Ephraim
Jan 1906	John Nicholls	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	-	-
Jan 1906	Elizabeth Jane Doble	F	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	-	-
Jan 1906	George Edwards	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Butcher	Clarice Mary
Jan 1906	John Eddy Matthews	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Farmer	Mary Ellen
Jan 1906	Richard Chapman	M	Granted	East Penwith	-	-	-
Feb 1906	William Trevelyan Beckerlegge	M	Granted	Launceston	St Mary Magdalene	Cabinetmaker	William Trevelyan
Feb 1906	Edward James Pratt	M	Granted	Stratton	Stratton	Grocer	Harry
Mar 1906	Sydney Harry	M	Granted	Launceston	St Stephen by Launceston	Carpenter	Charlotte Mary
Mar 1906	Lilly Dugdale Maslin	F	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	House painter's wife	Charles Colenso Rogers
Apr 1906	Collett	M	Granted	Camelford	Tintagel	Police constable	-
Apr 1906	William Spear Maddever	M	Granted	Launceston	Lezant	Farmer	Francis
Apr 1906	Joseph Charles Richards	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Boot dealer	Clifford Charles
Apr 1906	David Chivers	M	Granted	West Penwith	Newlyn	-	-
May 1906	Ethel Wills	F	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	-	-
May 1906	George Grey	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	-	-
May 1906	Richard Joseph Angwin	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Sculptor	Elizabeth Jessie Corin
May 1906	Samuel J Stevens	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Serpentine worker	-
May 1906	John Paull	M	Granted	East Penwith	Illogan	Engine driver	Stephen Charles
May 1906	James Henry Jenkin	M	Granted	East Penwith	Illogan	Farmer	Dorcas
Jun 1906	Edward Stephens Ellacott	M	Granted	Camelford	Davidstow	Farmer	Wilfred Roy
Jun 1906	Harry Sleeman Cornish	M	Granted	Launceston	Lezant	Farm waggoner	John
Jun 1906	James Andrew	M	Granted	Launceston	Lezant	-	-
Jun 1906	Edmund Brent	M	Granted	Callington	South Hill	Farmer	Stanley Edmund
Jun 1906	Richard Thomas Wellington	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Upholsterer	Herbert Thomas
Jun 1906	Thomas Barnes	M	Granted	West Penwith	Newlyn	Fisherman	-
Jun 1906	F C Eddy	M	Granted	East Penwith	Camborne	Merchant	John Charles
Jun 1906	Richard Rogers	M	Refused	East Penwith	Illogan	Farmer	Mary Courtenay
Jun 1906	Florence Dale	M	Granted	East Penwith	Camborne	Grocer	Florence Mary

Jun 1906	John Francis Davis	M	Granted	Callington	Pillaton	-	-
Jul 1906	Richard Cory	M	Granted	Camelford	Delabole	Quarryman	Mary Doreen
Jul 1906	William Stephens	M	Granted	Camelford	Warbstow	-	-
Jul 1906	William L Rich	M	Granted	Penzance	-	-	-
Jul 1906	Edwin Trewavas Tregenza	M	Granted	West Penwith	Paul	Head teacher	Dora
Jul 1906	T S Smith	M	Granted	East Penwith	Redruth	-	-
Jul 1906	George Henry Moyse	M	Granted	Stratton	Bude	Mason	George Henry
Aug 1906	Thomas Edwin Wakefield	M	Granted	Camelford	Lanteglos by Camelford	Printer	Richard Henry
Aug 1906	Matthias Dunn	M	Granted	West Penwith	Wall	Fish curer	-
Aug 1906	Osborne	M	Granted	Camborne	Praze	Police constable	-
Aug 1906	Simon Magor	M	Granted	East Penwith	Redruth	Bootmaker	Ivy May
Aug 1906	Francis Trythall	M	Granted	East Penwith	Beacon Hill	-	-
Aug 1906	Joseph Cock	M	Granted	East Penwith	Camborne	Carpenter	Thomas Powning
Aug 1906	William George Chinn	M	Granted	East Penwith	Carnhell Green	Railway signalman	-
Aug 1906	Andrews	M	Granted	Stratton	Stratton	-	-
Aug 1906	Edward Smith	M	Granted	West Powder	Kenwyn	House painter	Daisy Evelyn Emily Rose
Aug 1906	Kate Ellery	F	Granted	West Powder	St Agnes	-	-
Sep 1906	John Rodda	M	Granted	East Penwith	Camborne	Tin dresser	Gordon
Sep 1906	William Holman Phillips	M	Granted	East Penwith	Redruth	Motor agent	Madeline Eugenie
Sep 1906	Thornton Kitto Sara	M	Granted	East Penwith	Redruth	Mining engineer	Mabel Tregaskis
Sep 1906	William Robinson	M	Granted	East Penwith	Redruth	Farm labourer	Florence May
Oct 1906	William Henry Tregear	M	Granted	West Kerrier	Breage	-	-
Oct 1906	Frank Maddock	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Political agent	Edward John
Oct 1906	Ashford	M	Granted	East Penwith	-	Police constable	-
Nov 1906	Frederick Mitchell	M	Granted	Trigg	Port Isaac	-	-
Nov 1906	William Sandry	M	Granted	Trigg	Port Isaac	-	-
Nov 1906	Richard Warman	M	Granted	Trigg	Port Isaac	-	-
Nov 1906	John Harland Rush	M	Granted	Camelford	Tintagel	Rockman	Sydney Arthur
Nov 1906	Studley Clements	M	Granted	Camelford	Delabole	Baker	Christabel
Nov 1906	Luke Lane	M	Granted	Launceston	Lewannick	-	-
Nov 1906	W B Mitchell	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	-	-
Nov 1906	Philip White	M	Granted	West Penwith	Paul	Mason	-
Nov 1906	Thomas Henry Pascoe	M	Granted	West Penwith	Heamoore	Monumental mason	Leslie John
Nov 1906	Edward Warren	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Pork cellarman	William
Nov 1906	William Henry Harris	M	Granted	East Penwith	Illogan	Assurance agent	William Clarence
Dec 1906	Joseph Kent	M	Granted	Camelford	St Teath	Slate dresser	Evelyn
Dec 1906	James Symons	M	Granted	Camelford	-	-	-
Dec 1906	William J Smith	M	Granted	Camborne	Redruth	-	-
Dec 1906	Matthew Henry Polkinghorne	M	Granted	East Penwith	Kehelland	Tin miner	Florence Maud
Dec 1906	Joseph Ernest Allen	M	Granted	East Penwith	Carn Brea	-	-
Jan 1907	William Hodge	M	Granted	West Kerrier	St Keverne	-	-
Jan 1907	William John Heard	M	Granted	Launceston	Altarnun	Farmer	Edith

Jan 1907	Alfred William Vanstone	M	Granted	Launceston	St Thomas	Wholesale dealer	Pamela Ada
Jan 1907	E Chesterfield Nicholls	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	-	-
Jan 1907	William Francis Martin	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Mason	Norman Beresford
Jan 1907	Caroline Gilbert	F	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Cab driver's wife	Elizabeth Theophila
Jan 1907	John Collins	M	Granted	East Penwith	-	-	-
Jan 1907	William Thomas George	M	Granted	East Penwith	Redruth	Postman	-
Jan 1907	Isaac Berryman	M	Granted	East Penwith	Camborne	Tin miner	Eveline May
Feb 1907	William H W McGinniss	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Postman	Telfer Warren
Feb 1907	John Laity	M	Granted	West Penwith	St Hilary	-	-
Feb 1907	Charles Jilbert	M	Granted	West Penwith	Newlyn	-	-
Feb 1907	William Nicholls	M	Granted	West Penwith	Newlyn	-	-
Feb 1907	Sidney Simmons	M	Granted	East Penwith	Redruth	Farmer	Sidney Tressider
Feb 1907	Frederick Charles Jenkin	M	Refused	East Penwith	Pencoys	Carpenter	Henry Gordon
Feb 1907	Peters	F	Refused	East Penwith	Redruth	-	-
Mar 1907	Joseph Dunn Harry	M	Granted	Launceston	St Stephen by Launceston	Carpenter	Agatha Mary
Mar 1907	John Williams	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Tailor	Clarice
Mar 1907	Benjamin Thomas	M	Granted	West Penwith	Sennen	Sexton	Mary Hilda
Apr 1907	Thomas Freeman Lugg	M	Granted	West Kerrier	Gunwalloe	Turner	Albert
Apr 1907	William Edward Mann	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Assurance agent	Phillis
Apr 1907	William Phillips Harvey	M	Granted	West Penwith	St Levan	-	-
Apr 1907	William John Hollow	M	Granted	East Penwith	Tuckingmill	Safety fuse packer	Evelyn
Apr 1907	Samuel Williams	M	Granted	East Penwith	Camborne	Wagon driver	Sidney Stewart
Apr 1907	Alfred Thomas	M	Granted	East Penwith	Redruth	Grocer	Alfred Foster
Apr 1907	Thomas Carter	M	Granted	Camborne	Troon	School teacher	Francis James
Apr 1907	Crocker	M	Granted	Camborne	Gwinear	Police constable	-
Apr 1907	Fred Rogers	M	Granted	Truro	Truro	-	-
Apr 1907	Edgar Arthur Behenna	M	Granted	Truro	Truro	Carpenter	Minnie
May 1907	Thomas Downing	M	Refused	East Penwith	Vogubeloth	Builder	-
Jun 1907	Alfred Stapleton	M	Granted	Camelford	Tintagel	Stonemason	Alfred Cyril
Jun 1907	Thomas Cock	M	Granted	Camelford	-	-	-
Jun 1907	Jonathan Wickett	M	Granted	Camelford	-	-	-
Jun 1907	William Hatch	M	Granted	Launceston	Southpetherwin	-	-
Jun 1907	William Oliver	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Farm labourer	William George
Jun 1907	Henry Davey	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Clerk	Ronald
Jun 1907	Charles John Colliver	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Drapery manager	John Arthur
Jun 1907	David Prowse	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Dairyman	Ivy Kathleen
Jun 1907	Edmund George	M	Granted	West Penwith	Sennen	Fisherman	Edmund
Jun 1907	John Stanford	M	Granted	East Penwith	Gwinear	-	-
Jun 1907	Herbert John Paul	M	Granted	East Penwith	Redruth	Builder's foreman	Arthur John
Jun 1907	Thomas Hocking	M	Granted	East Penwith	Redruth	Brewery labourer	-
Jun 1907	Richard Oliver	M	Granted	East Penwith	Camborne	General labourer	Luane
Jun 1907	John Hopper Axford	M	Granted	Stratton	Kilkhampton	Farmer	Winnifred Mary
Jul 1907	Frederick John Irons	M	Granted	Camelford	Wadebridge	Wine merchant	May

						manager	
Jul 1907	W T Tucker	M	Granted	Camelford	St Teath	-	-
Jul 1907	William James Dawe	M	Granted	West Penwith	Gulval	Farmer	Joseph Henry
Jul 1907	Robert Moreton Nance	M	Granted	West Penwith	Towednack	Artist	Robert Trengove Moreton
Jul 1907	Samuel Woolcock	M	Granted	West Penwith	St Just	Hotel proprietor	Lawrence Hugh
Jul 1907	Ebenezer Orlando Horswell	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Assistant grocer	Louisa May
Jul 1907	William Spargo	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Shopkeeper	Marjorie
Jul 1907	W J Rogers	M	Granted	Stratton	Bude	-	-
Aug 1907	Parsons	F	Granted	Camelford	St Teath	-	-
Aug 1907	Joseph James Medlyn	M	Granted	West Kerrier	Wendron	Farmer	Audrey Jane
Aug 1907	William Henry Pollard	M	Granted	West Kerrier	Ruan Minor	-	-
Aug 1907	John Alexander Lindsey	M	Granted	West Kerrier	Lizard	-	-
Aug 1907	Charles Noy	M	Granted	Penzance	Gulval	Surveyor	Charles Berryman
Aug 1907	John James	M	Granted	West Penwith	Ludgvan	-	-
Aug 1907	Thomas Eddy	M	Granted	West Penwith	Mousehole	-	-
Aug 1907	William Henry Rowe	M	Granted	West Penwith	Heamoor	-	-
Aug 1907	William Henry Pearce	M	Granted	East Penwith	Camborne	Tobacconist	Alberta Gwendoline
Aug 1907	William Collins	M	Granted	East Penwith	Illogan	Builder	Phyllis Jane
Aug 1907	William Henry Bennetts	M	Granted	East Penwith	Camborne	Schoolmaster	Iris
Aug 1907	Charles Henry Keen	M	Granted	East Penwith	Redruth	Tin miner	-
Aug 1907	Thomas Sullivan	M	Refused	East Penwith	Penponds	Tin miner	Thomas
Sep 1907	Minnie Ethel Thomas	F	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	-	-
Sep 1907	Richard Lambert Vanderluys Reynold	M	Granted	East Penwith	Redruth	-	-
Sep 1907	George Laity	M	Granted	East Penwith	Gwinear	Farmer	Edith
Sep 1907	Frederick William Cann	M	Granted	East Penwith	Illogan	-	-
Oct 1907	Frederick Woolcock	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Storeman	Mavis
Oct 1907	George Grey	M	Granted	Penzance	-	-	-
Oct 1907	Benjamin Hockin	M	Granted	Stratton	Kilhampton	Farmer	Benjamin
Nov 1907	Thomas Pascoe	M	Granted	West Kerrier	Breage	Farmer	Thomas
Nov 1907	George Thomas Bilkey	M	Granted	West Kerrier	Wendron	Farmer	George Clifford
Nov 1907	John Henry Bosanko	M	Granted	Penzance	Penzance	Science master	Edith Mary
Nov 1907	Edith Mildred Green	F	Granted	West Penwith	Gulval	Gardener's daughter	Richard John Warren
Nov 1907	R N Hosking	M	Granted	West Penwith	Gulval	Quarryman	-
Nov 1907	Thomas P Harris	M	Granted	East Penwith	Redruth	-	-
Nov 1907	Herbert Williams	M	Granted	East Penwith	Redruth	-	-

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