Henry Strickland of Parkhurst

(1822-1881)

by Paul Strickland



Contents

	Page
Preface	**1**
Origins	**2**
Ashbury	**6**
St Mark's, Chelsea	**11**
Parkhurst – the Early Years	**17**
The Steward of Parkhurst	**22**
Later Years	**29**

Preface

My great-great grandfather Henry Strickland was born in rural obscurity but rose to become the Steward of Parkhurst Prison on the Isle of Wight – a position he held for a quarter of a century. By the time he retired he could (and did) describe himself as a 'gentleman' although financial difficulties blighted the last few years of his life. However, the three sons and a daughter who survived him continued his social ascension; his sons followed professional careers, and his daughter married a solid Suffolk farmer.

Henry's own career took him into the heart of Britain's penal system which was a subject of intense interest to many in the Victorian age. How to deal with poverty and crime, whether to punish the criminal with draconian severity or attempt to reform him (or her) through moral instruction, and what were the best means to accomplish this, were all issues that were widely and even hotly debated in the Press and in Parliament. At Parkhurst, there were frequent changes of regime depending on what government policy was at the time and what types of prisoner it was decided to send there.

Henry was not the Governor or Deputy Governor of Parkhurst and so was not expected to contribute to this debate. That is why I have not gone into too much detail here, though there is plenty of information available on the internet. But as someone who was very much on the front line, dealing with mostly refractory prisoners on a day-to-day basis, Henry would surely have developed his own views on the subject, and shared them with his superiors.

Parkhurst Prison used to have a small museum attached to it, but it was closed many years ago and all the exhibits dispersed. As for the prison authorities, they have been reluctant to share any archival material they might have had in their possession. I have done my best with what I have been able to find, given the total absence of family papers. These pages therefore contain everything I know about Henry Strickland.

Paul Strickland *September 2026*
(paul.strickland@proximus.be)

Origins

Henry Strickland was, for a quarter of a century, the Steward of Parkhurst Prison on the Isle of Wight. This was a post which not only carried responsibilities but also gave its holder some standing in the local community. It is doubtful, though, if many of the island's citizens were ever aware that his father had been an illiterate gamekeeper, and his grandfather a humble agricultural labourer in Dorset's Piddle Valley.

Given Henry's lowly origins, they are difficult to trace much further back than the late eighteenth century. For a start, his name was not Strickland (more on that later) but Stickland, and Stickland is quite a common name in Dorset. Moreover, before 1837 we are reliant on parish records to trace our ancestors, and many of these records are incomplete or damaged, or have simply disappeared.[1] And even where names have been recorded, it is not always clear to which family they can be attached. In the small villages which studded the Dorset countryside, as indeed elsewhere, many families shared not just the same surnames but the same first names as well, which were carried over from one generation to another.

We can, though, be sure about the identity of Henry's father, Charles. Charles was born in the Dorset village of Alton Pancras which is where the River Piddle rises before meandering in a generally south-eastwards direction towards Poole Harbour.[2] For obvious reasons, the name Piddle has sometimes been changed to Puddle and the village which in Charles's day was called Piddletown is now called Puddletown. The names of nearby Piddlehinton and Piddletrenthide, though, have remained unchanged.

There is a parish record for Charles in Alton Pancras showing that he was baptised there on 2 December 1798. His father Robert, though, was not from the village – indeed, Charles turns out to have been the only Stickland to have been baptised there between 1700 and 1879. Charles's mother Susannah (née Masters), on the other hand, was Alton born and bred, and was baptised in the village church on 19 July 1769 - the same church in which she was later to marry Robert on 20 October 1794. Around that time there were five men called Masters in Alton: one carpenter, two shoemakers and two labourers.[3]

[1] It was only in 1837 that civil registration of births, marriages and deaths was made compulsory.

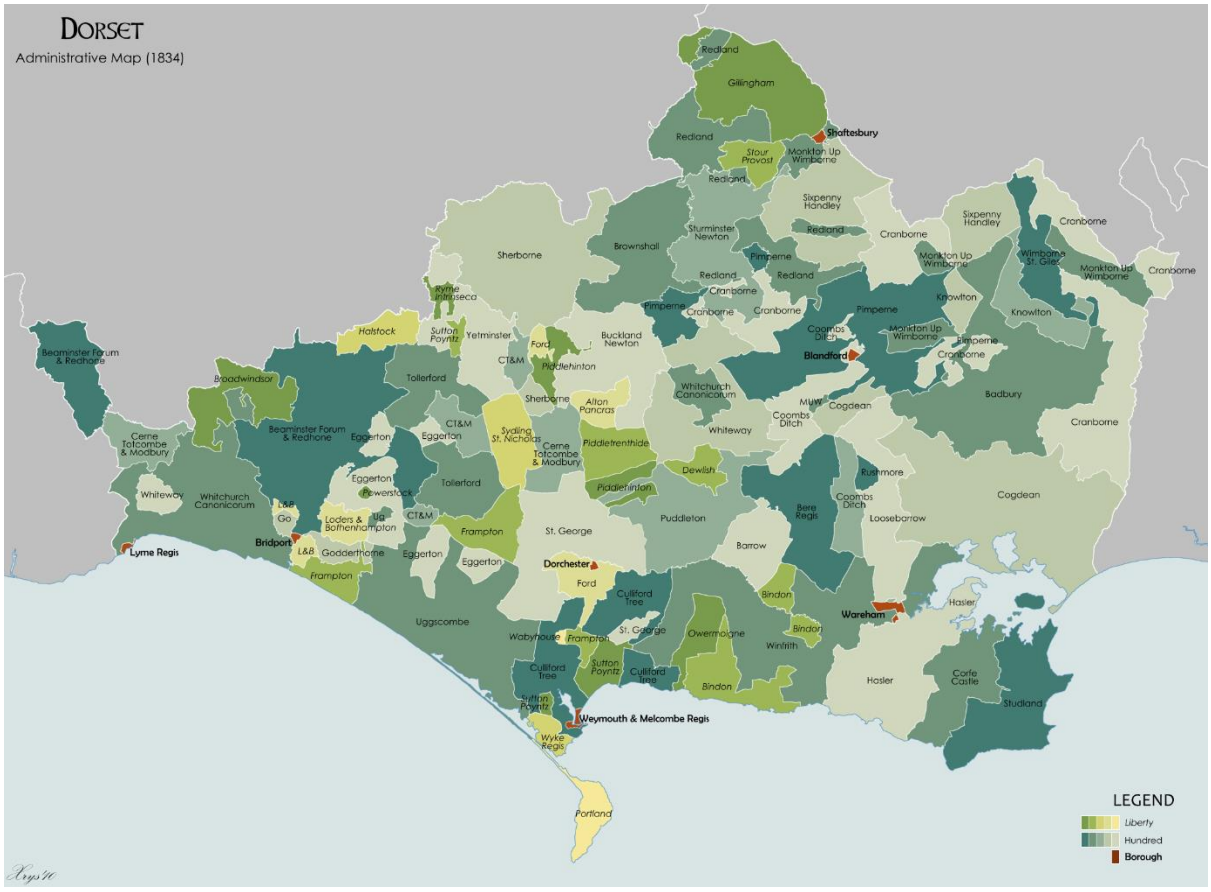
[2] The name is thought to originally have been Awultune, a Saxon name meaning the village at the source of a river. It was never a big village and does not even appear on some early maps. In 1726, there were just twenty-nine dwellings.

[3] This comes from a 1799 document which lists the names of all Alton men liable to be called up for part-time military service.

There had been Masters in Alton for a hundred years or more, and it cheers me to know that at least one of them had run the village alehouse.

Robert Stickland gives us less to go on as we have no knowledge of where or when he was born. There were at least ten Robert Sticklands from as many different villages born just before, during or just after the 1760s but the most likely candidate at the time of writing may be the Robert Stickland who was born in Puddletown on 17 June 1768, the son of William and Mary. Whoever our Robert was, the Alton Pancras Militia List describes him as a labourer.

Not long after Charles was born, Robert and Susannah moved to the neighbouring village of Buckland Newton. In all, they had four children who survived into adulthood: Charles, John, Anna and William. John was a shoemaker who never married and lived with his sister Anna and her family; Anna married an agricultural labourer called William Loveless and had ten children; and William was another agricultural labourer and died a bachelor.



Dorset Administrative Map 1834 - Kain, R.J.P., and Oliver, R.R. (2001) "Historic parishes of England and Wales (used under CC-BY-SA-3.0)
(Alton Pancras, Buckland Newton and Piddletrenthide are all in the centre of the map.)

A Susannah Stickland who was possibly their mother died in Buckland Newton in 1820 and Robert appears to have moved back to Alton Pancras because a Robert Stickland died there in 1834. Anna, John and William seem not to have moved away from the area. Charles, though, took a very different path.

Charles and his family were still living in Buckland Newton when he met Elizabeth Loveless.[4] She came from Piddletrenthide, about three miles away, and had been born there in 1795, making her a little older than Robert. The couple got married in the parish church of Piddletrenthide on 30 June 1818 and two daughters soon came along, one who died in infancy and one, Louisa, who lived. And then, sometime between 1820 and 1821, the Sticklands moved – not to a neighbouring village, but to the neighbouring county of Devon. More precisely, their destination was Ashbury, near Okehampton, which lay no less than one hundred miles away.

How do we know this? Thanks to a newspaper, the *Exeter Flying Post* of 20 September 1821, in which appeared the 'Game List' for the County of Devon. Charles is listed as a gamekeeper and 'assessed servant' to John Morth Woollcombe, Esq., and he was now the holder of a certificate which allowed him to hunt or take game – Woollcombe was well-known as a hunting squire. Somehow along the way Charles had acquired the knowledge and the skills to be taken on by Woollcombe, almost certainly by working for one of the local squires back in Dorset. But how did he get to know of the vacancy? Charles was illiterate – he'd signed the marriage register with his mark – so someone must have informed him of the vacancy, or else his reputation had gone before him.

There was one particularity about Charles's certificate: it named him as Strickland, not Stickland. And Strickland he remained till his dying day. And his children carried on the name after him. Whether the change of name was due to a typographical error by the *Exeter Flying Post*, to Charles's wish to take on a fresh identity, or to Squire Woollcombe's idiosyncratic preference for the name Strickland can never be known. So, Charles and Elizabeth, and their daughter Louisa, all quietly and unobtrusively became Stricklands. Two sons came on the scene soon afterwards – Silas in 1821 and Henry in 1822 – and they were the first to be both born and baptised as Stricklands.

[4] Loveless is another common Dorset name, although some might recognise it as the surname of two of the Tolpuddle Martyrs.



The Gamekeeper
(Talbot, W.H.F. (1843) - National Science and Media Museum, Bradford, UK)
(Note the traditional long-barreled keeper's gun)

Ashbury

Ashbury, which lies a little to the northwest of Dartmoor, was and still is a very small place. In 1801 its population was only forty-one (rising to fifty in 1871), comprising mainly members of the Woollcombe family, their retainers and tenants. In Charles Strickland's time, the squire was John Morth Woollcombe (1783-1866), a magistrate and sometime Deputy Lieutenant of Devonshire. The squire ran a pack of hounds, which it was Charles's job to look after.

Ashbury House, the home of the Woollcombes, was, according to White's *History, Gazetteer and Directory of Devon* of 1878, 'a fine old mansion with tasteful grounds'. The family had been seated there since 1685. Unfortunately, the old house burnt down around the time White was writing and the family and parish records destroyed.



Ashbury House (devonheritage.org)

Small as it was, Ashbury had its own little church dedicated to St Mary the Virgin.[5] Although the church is now redundant, it was purchased by the Woollcombe family from the diocese of Exeter for £1 in 1982 and is now run by a charitable trust.

[5] The Rev. Thomas England, Rector of the neighbouring village of Northlew from 1847 to 1881, had previously been Chaplain at Parkhurst Prison where John Woollcombe's brother, Capt Robert Woollcombe, RA, had been the first Governor, and where Henry Strickland was later Steward.



Ashbury Church, Devon

We know very little about how the Strickland family lived during those years. Ashbury was (and still is) quite an isolated settlement, consisting mainly of woods and fields, criss-crossed by small streams and brooks, plus a few farm buildings, farmhouses and cottages. For the children, there was plenty of space to run around and explore, and it was here that Henry learned about farming and acquired the practical skills which were to be so important in his later life.

In the1841 census, Charles can be found living with his wife Elizabeth and their daughter Louisa at Wadland Cottage on the estate (see next two pages). Charles and Elizabeth are described as male and female servants respectively. There is no mention of sons Silas or Henry who are both elsewhere: Silas is working as a printer in Bristol and Henry is in London where he is a schoolmaster at St Mark's College, Chelsea.

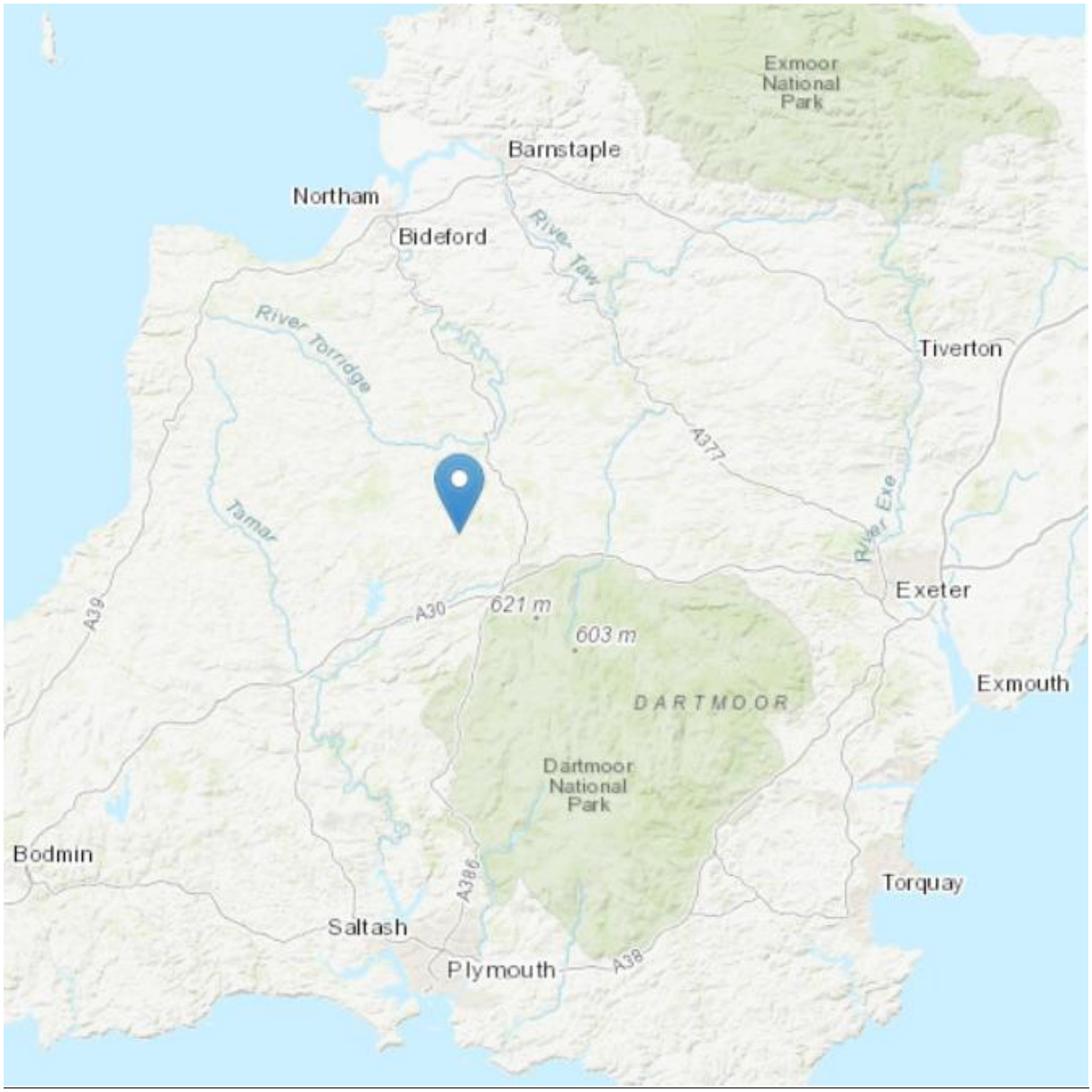
Charles died on 25 June 1859 aged 61. There is a small tablet in the church which simply records his memory: "A man without reproach, beloved by all". His wife Elizabeth lived out her days at Ashbury, dying there in 1875.

On the next page is an extract from the 1842 Apportionment Register for Ashbury. Note that the occupier’s name is given as Charles Stickland, not Strickland, which suggests that his name was still Stickland when he first arrived in Ashbury and was registered as a Woollcombe tenant.

LANDOWNERS.	OCCUPIERS.	Numbers referring to the Plan.	NAME AND DESCRIPTION OF LANDS AND PREMISES.	STATE OF CULTIVATION.	QUANTITIES IN STATUTE MEASURE. A.	R.	P.	Amount of Rent-Charge apportioned upon the several Lands, and Payable to the Rector £.	s.	d.	REMARKS.
			Woodland (cont.)								
Woolcombe John Merth (cont.)	Palmer John (cont.)	221		Brought forward	338	3	13	9	6	10	
		222									
		223									
		224									
		225									
		226	Woodland Down								
		227									
		228									
		229									
		230									
					338	3	13	9	6	10	
			Woodland Part of								
	Sticklund Charles	175	Dwelling House Stable &c		"	"	2				
		161	Pond Field	Arable	1	2	19	"	2	6	A
		176	Little Hays	Garden	"	1	36	"	1	6	A
		177	Garden	Garden	"	1	1	"	1	3	A
		178	Little Bells Field	Pasture	1	"	16	"	2	6	A
					3	1	34	"	7	9	
			Pinnacle								
	Palmer John	311									
		312	Pinnacle Common	Coarse Pasture	13	"	32	"	2	"	A 39997
		313									
		314									
		315									
		316									
		317	Lower Pinnacle Common	Coarse Pasture	37	"	1	"	6	8	A 39997
		318									
		319									
		326									
		327									
		328									

Below is a map of part of Ashbury in 1842 showing the parcels of land mentioned in the Apportionment Register as being attached to the dwelling house occupied by Charles Strickland (house no 175 is the smaller of the two red houses). Besides the dwelling house there was a stable, a plot of land called Poney Field (arable), another called Little Hays (garden), a garden, and Little Colts Field (pasture). Charles occupied in total 3 acres, 1 rood and 34 perches (about 3 ½ acres) for which he had to pay an annual rent charge (formerly called a tithe) to the Rector, amounting to 7s 9d. This is where Henry Strickland grew up.





Ashbury pinpointed on a map of Devon

St Mark's, Chelsea

As mentioned above, Henry had by this time already moved to Chelsea, a long way from Ashbury and not just in terms of the distance between the two places. Henry's background was far from privileged. How did he obtain the education necessary to become a teacher himself? The son of an illiterate gamekeeper would not normally have needed to acquire, been expected to acquire, or to have had the opportunity to acquire an education. He must have received some encouragement and, later, even some financial support, from the Woollcombe family. Despite there being no endowed school in the parish, it seems that the Ashbury children were educated in a school in the neighbouring parish of Northlew which was 'conducted on Dr. Bell's system and supported by subscription'.[6] This, therefore, was probably the school which Henry and his elder brother Silas attended.

In the 1841 census Henry is described as a 'schoolmaster' at the National Society's Training College in Chelsea. He cannot have been much more than nineteen years old at the time. To be a schoolmaster, Henry must have received some prior training at some other establishment, such as The National Society's own St John's College in Battersea which opened its doors in 1840 and specialised in practical training. Alternatively, and less formally, he may have trained at one of the Society's own 'National Schools' – Christian schools that the Society was setting up all over the country for the education of the children of the poor. Or he may have been sent as a pupil teacher to the privately-run 'School of Industry' in Norwood which dispensed vocational training to children sent there by London workhouses and where 'industrial masters' were themselves trained.

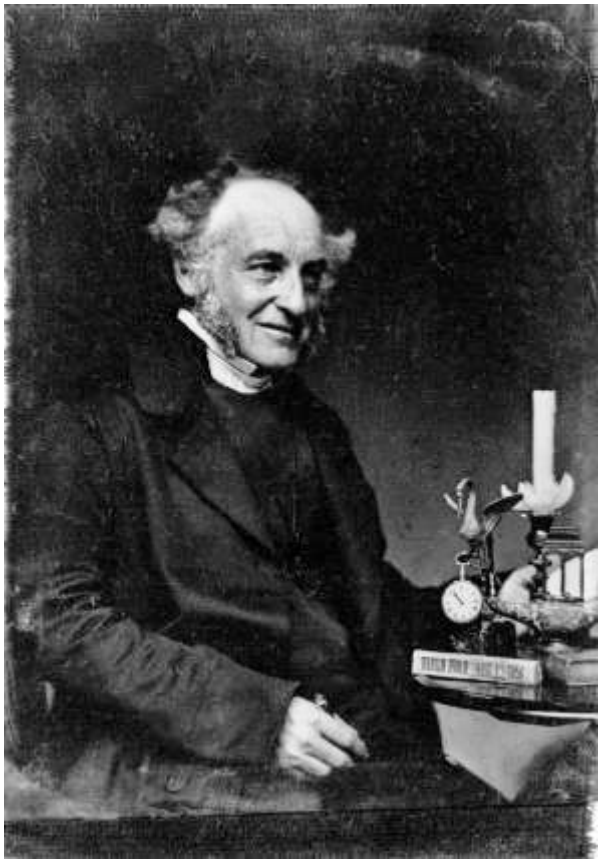
St Mark's was located at Stanley Grove, Chelsea, and had only just been set up that same year with the Reverend Derwent Coleridge as its first Director. Coleridge was the son of the poet and a noted educational reformer, scholar and linguist.[7] According to the College's staff register, Henry had been appointed in January, so he was there from the very beginning when some of the buildings and other facilities were still incomplete. The College's purpose was to train schoolmasters to educate the labouring classes, with a particular emphasis on inculcating Church of England principles.[8]

[6] From *Magna Britannia*, vol.6, by D & S Lysons (1822). Andrew Bell was a Scottish priest who promoted the 'monitorial system' of education in which abler students taught the younger or less able students.

[7] The Coleridges were a respectable Devon family and would have been acquainted with the Woollcombes. A Henry Woollcombe was a founding member of the Plymouth Institution (later renamed the Athenaeum). Coleridge gave a lecture on Wordsworth there on 24 February 1825.

[8] In the early years of its life, there was talk of directing the teachers trained at St Mark's to become missionaries, but this task was eventually given to St Augustine's College, Canterbury, which came into being in 1848 under the wardenship of Coleridge's cousin, William Hart Coleridge.

The census lists the Reverend Coleridge and his family, two schoolmasters (the experienced William Crank and the inexperienced Henry Strickland), nine pupils (the College expected to have sixty when fully up and running) and six servants (five female and one male). Three years later there were sixty-seven pupils and an octagonal 'Practising School' for 125 pupils between the ages of nine and eleven had been built for teaching the poor children of the neighbourhood.



Derwent Coleridge (1800-1883) (public domain)

Stanley House

In 1840, Stanley House and its grounds of about eleven acres were sold by William Hamilton (not the one whose wife had an affair with Nelson) to the National Society for £9000. Hamilton had accompanied Lord Elgin to Greece and had made casts of the friezes at the Parthenon which he kept at the House. The College was described in Charles Knight's 'London' as being 'on a scale of imposing splendour', with beautifully laid out grounds, and 'magnificent buildings erected in the Italian style', although the Chapel could only be

described as Byzantine.[9] Coleridge recalled that at the time the area consisted mainly of market-gardens and meadows intersected by creeks and ditches covered with green water weeds, although it was 'country already condemned to turn into suburb ... '. In 1844, an obvious change occurred when Cremorne Gardens opened just opposite the college and became well-known as pleasure gardens for the next thirty years.



Stanley Grove, King's Road, Chelsea, by GE Brookes (lithograph by Louis Haghe (c1825) (The London Archives)

In his *Letter on the National Society's Training College*, written in 1842, Coleridge wrote: '[o]f the teachers, one only, with the Vice-Principal, will be employed in the schoolroom, the other being fully occupied in directing the labours of the apprentices out of doors. The latter is also the steward of the establishment and has the general oversight and management of the farm and garden.' This was Henry's basic job description, but Coleridge went on to provide further detail. As Steward, Henry was also 'industrial master' and was 'responsible for the manual occupations and supervised those engaged in them: general overseer, office assistant, lawn director, greenhouse keeper, courtyard proposter, school proposter, waiters, operators of the forcing-pump, farm

[9] Stanley House stood upon the site of a house built by Sir Arthur Gorges, a friend of the poet Edmund Spenser. In 1851, Henry Strickland was to marry a direct descendant of Edmund Spenser's sister Sarah in the person of Evelina Travers.

hands, school assistants, cleaners of shoes and knives, dairy attendant and mower operator, and ventilation attendant.'

The object of the school was, according to the Reverend H Moseley's 1845 report to the Committee of Council on Education, 'the education of a superior class of masters for elementary schools'. In that year there were fifty-three masters in training, about half of whom came from National or Diocesan schools, with most of the rest coming from private schools. Pupils were admitted by examination between the ages of fifteen and eighteen. The £25 annual fees - the cost to the college was very much higher - were paid mostly by relatives or private patrons, or by Diocesan Boards, although there was a small number of exhibitions. The trainees were expected to have acquired knowledge in the following subjects: art of teaching; scripture; liturgy, articles and church history; algebra, geometry and trigonometry; natural philosophy; mechanics; reading; arithmetic; English history; geography; English grammar; Latin; astronomy'. This was despite 'the very limited amount of positive attainments with which many of the students enter that institution'. The College syllabus (very comprehensive) and the examination Coleridge set the students (very difficult!) is attached to his report. However, Moseley also thought that in most cases the students finished their training when still too young and immature to take on the responsibilities of the office of schoolmaster, and he regretted the limited availability of assistant schoolmaster posts.

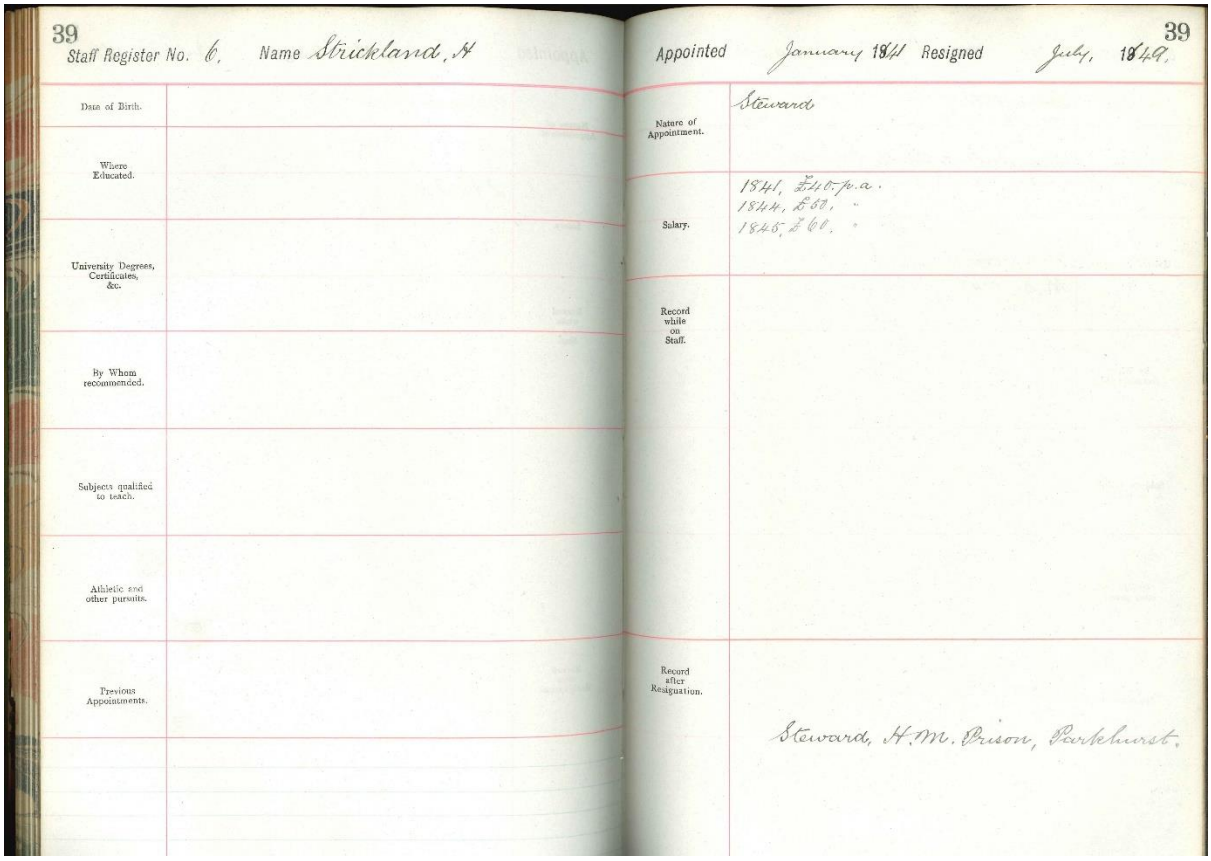
Students at the College rose at half past five and for the first couple of hours they carried out household duties or worked in the gardens or on the farm. Breakfast at eight was followed by more outside work, and then by academic studies until lunchtime. After a plain but substantial lunch, there were afternoon studies indoors followed by more work outside. Tea was at six, after which there was singing practice, more study, lectures and prayers before bedtime at ten. Idleness was not encouraged so there was little free time. In 1843, a Committee of Council on Education report to the House of Commons lists the staff of the College and refers to 'Mr Henry Strickland [who] is industrial master and steward, superintending (with one of the older pupils as clerk) the expenditure of the household, and being responsible for the conduct of the boys during their employment out of doors'.

In 1844, the same Committee quoted Coleridge: 'Scarcely less essential ... is the office of the industrial master by whom the students are superintended when not engaged in study or teaching. It is his duty to maintain order and enforce discipline ... by the influence of his example and the force of his character; to live among [the students] and to lead them on ... ; to settle disputes and allay jealousies; ... to recommend a humble and dutiful industriousness, setting forth the religious obligation and beneficial tendency ... of labour ... .' Coleridge was a keen exponent of manual tasks for his students, deeming them to be ‘elevating’.

Henry Strickland is recalled as being the steward of St Mark's by John Hutchinson, the thirteen-year-old nephew of William Wordsworth (who had been friends with Coleridge's father). Henry once collected John from the White Horse Cellar, a well-known coaching inn in Piccadilly and took him back to Stanley Grove where he was given a meal by the housekeeper - 'bread and cheese and a glass of very mild beer.' This was in 1842. St Mark's is also referred to in the letters of William and Mary Wordsworth.

A schoolmaster at the time could expect to earn somewhere between £50 and £100 a year (and the job usually came with accommodation). Henry had been appointed in 1841 at a salary of £40 pa (he was only 18), rising to £50 pa in 1844 and £60 pa in 1845. However, his job also encompassed the (probably more) demanding job of steward for whom the salary, according to College records, had been fixed at £130 in 1843 and £150 in 1849 (the year of Henry's departure). This latter figure was to include the cost of a servant for attending the Gate, estimated at £20 per annum.

As can be seen below, Henry resigned from his post at St Mark's in July 1849. He had been offered the job of Steward at Parkhurst Prison, near Newport on the Isle of Wight.


39

Staff Register No. 6, Name Strickland, H

Appointed January 1841 Resigned July, 1849.

39

Date of Birth.

Where Educated.

University Degrees, Certificates, &c.

By Whom recommended.

Subjects qualified to teach.

Athletic and other pursuits.

Previous Appointments.

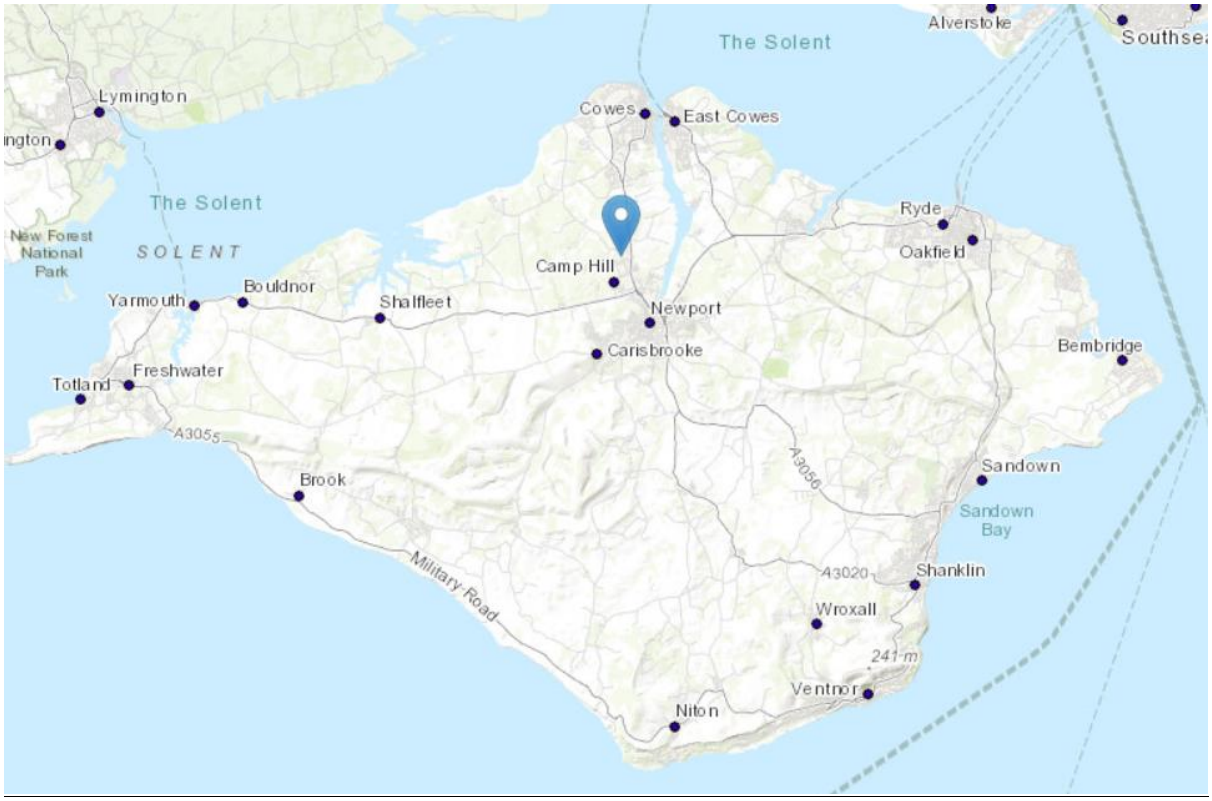
Nature of Appointment. Steward

Salary. 1841, £40 p.a.
1844, £50, "
1845, £60, "

Record while on Staff.

Record after Resignation. Steward, H.M. Prison, Parkhurst.

St Mark's Staff Register (somewhat short on detail)



Location of Parkhurst Prison on the Isle of Wight

Parkhurst – The Early Years

Before continuing with Henry's story, we must first step back a few years to look at the kind of institution he was about to move to. The first Governor of Parkhurst Prison was Captain Robert Woollcombe, ex Royal Artillery, and Squire Woollcombe's brother.[10] He took up his appointment on 26 Dec 1838 following the passing of an *Act for Establishing a Prison for Young Offenders* in August of that year. The idea was something of a novelty as up until then no attempt had been made to separate juveniles from hardened adult criminals. The prison, occupying the buildings of a former military hospital and orphanage, opened with 102 boys taken equally from the York prison hulk and from Millbank Penitentiary in London (although there was accommodation for many more). All were to be transported when older.

What crimes had these boys committed? They were generally aged between twelve and sixteen and had usually been found guilty on more than one occasion of petty thefts, burglary and property offences, though not of major felonies. Many of them had lost at least one parent and few could read or write. They arrived at Parkhurst in poor physical condition and often infested with lice.

In their first official report on Parkhurst submitted on 1st July 1839, the Prison Visitors set out their objectives for the prison. It would aim at 'the general correction of the boy with a view to deter, not only himself, but juvenile offenders generally from the commission of crime'. They also hoped for the 'moral reformation of the culprit.' Considerable emphasis was placed on training for a trade (mainly tailoring, shoemaking and brickmaking) and on education, combined with a gradual easing of discipline.

Governor Woollcombe himself declared to a correspondent from *Chambers's Edinburgh Journal* that his aim was to 'reclaim and instruct, and that by gentle treatment, yet in a manner so little attractive, that none will be tempted to commit crime for the sake of being sent hither' (a constant concern).

From *Chambers's Edinburgh Journal*, September 1840

'For a number of years back, it has not been customary to hang boys. The practice terminated with the reign of George III. Since that period, they have more usually been sent to the prison at Millbank – to the Hulks in the Thames,

[10] Capt Robert Woollcombe (1789-1849) served in the Royal Artillery in Alicante between May 1812 and May 1813. Serving there at the same time was Lt Col Robert Travers of the 95th (Rifle) Regiment, the brother of Nicholas whose daughter Evelina was to marry Henry Strickland. One wonders if the Woollcombe family had a hand in Henry's appointment to Parkhurst. It seems more than likely.

where they have been compelled to work in a condition worse than that of brutes – or transported to New South Wales, where they were assigned as slaves. In only a few instances, and these of a peculiarly favourable nature, have the convicts been reclaimed, instructed, or improved; the greater proportion having been turned loose on society, at home or abroad, much more deeply sunk in moral depravity than at the commencement of their course of servitude. Latterly, an immense improvement has been effected in the disposal of young male convicts. Instead of being permanently lodged in any penal establishments of the old stamp, they are, according to the judgment of the Secretary of State, sent to a prison or penitentiary in the Isle of Wight," (now called Parkhurst Prison.)

'This establishment, which externally resembles a large suite of barracks for soldiers, enclosed with a lofty wall, is situated on the face of a rising piece of ground, about a mile and a half north from Newport, on the road to Cowes; and is, therefore, favourably placed, as respects both salubrity and convenience ... On entering by the gate-way in the outer wall, we find ourselves in a spacious open quadrangle, surrounded by suites of brick edifices two storeys in height, with the house and offices of the governor in the centre; behind, or farther up the very gentle slope, is a tract of enclosed land, disposed as fields for manual culture.

All the prisoners are boys from nine to sixteen years of age, the greater proportion apparently, being from about eleven to thirteen ... Each boy on entering is dressed in a coarse grey suit, with his number, and the letters P.P. strongly marked on the breast.'

A considerable amount of money was spent on Parkhurst in the early years to make it fit for purpose. An *Illustrated London News* article written in 1847 listed the extensive additions made at that time: 'a ward in the rear, a Chapel, a Probationary Ward, Schools etc, together with the entire Junior Ward. There were also built at this time residences for the Surgeon, Assistant-Chaplain, Steward, Schoolmasters etc; houses for Warders; besides two Lodges and an Infirmary: and there were then completed road and other works connected therewith. These additions were executed at a cost of about £30,000'.

Governor Woollcombe may have been well-meaning but the regime at Parkhurst was nonetheless a very strict one. According to the 1840 government report, 'the penal discipline ... consists of deprivation of liberty, wearing an iron on the leg, a strongly marked prison dress, and a regular diet reduced to its minimum'. On top of this, there was the psychological pressure arising from 'the enforcement of silence on all occasions of instruction and duty, and an uninterrupted surveillance by officers'. The wardens routinely resorted to straitjackets and the imposition of solitary confinement.

On the plus side, the inmates were supposed to benefit from being away from the grime and smoke of the cities, and the author of the *Illustrated London News* article found the inmates' health to be 'remarkably good'.

By the time of Woollcombe's retirement in 1843 it was already becoming clear that the Parkhurst system (or 'experiment' as some called it) was not working as had been hoped. Moreover, it was now called a Prison rather than a Reformatory, reflecting a new reality.

Queen Victoria, though, had a 'most interesting experience' when she visited Parkhurst in 1845 and appeared cautiously optimistic about it in the comments she recorded in her journal. She even pardoned two boys who were released next day.

A Royal Visit

On 2 August 1845, Queen Victoria was taken by carriage to Parkhurst from Osborne House: '[a]fter luncheon we set off in closed carriages for Parkhurst Prison, which is beyond Newport, on the Cowes side. Lady Charlemont, Sir James Graham (who stays over Sunday) & the Equerries went with us. Parkhurst is a prison for Juvenile offenders, all boys, to the number of 600, & it is divided into 2 completely separate Wards. The buildings are of red brick, cased with stone & are very capacious. We 1rst went into the ward, in which are the boys from the ages of 12 to 18, & visited the Dining Hall, in which all the poor boys were ranged in rows, who sang 'God save the Queen'. From here we went to the Chapel & School & saw the cells where the boys are kept in solitary confinement – very lonely, without any look out. Here they are placed for the 1rst month or 2 after their arrival, & these cells are recurred to whenever the boys behave ill. It was a most interesting experience, & I earnestly hope that the Institution may continue to do very beneficial work'.

A growing band of increasingly vocal prison reformers, though, thought that a lot more should be done to improve prison conditions. In 1846, Caroline Sheridan Norton (a granddaughter of the playwright) published a poem entitled 'The Child of the Islands' which called for the rich to pay greater heed to the condition of the working classes. 'The Child' of the title is the Queen's own son, the Prince of Wales (later Edward VII), who was five at the time, and verse XXXVII of the poem refers to Parkhurst Prison:

'A mournful memory in my bosom stirs!
A recollection of the lovely isle
Where, in the purple shadow of thy firs
Parkhurst! and gloomy in the summer smile,
Stands the CHILD'S PRISON: (since we must defile
So blest a refuge, with so curst a name)
The home of those whose former home was vile;
Who, dogged, sullen, scoffing, hither came,
Tender in growth and years, but long confirmed in shame.'

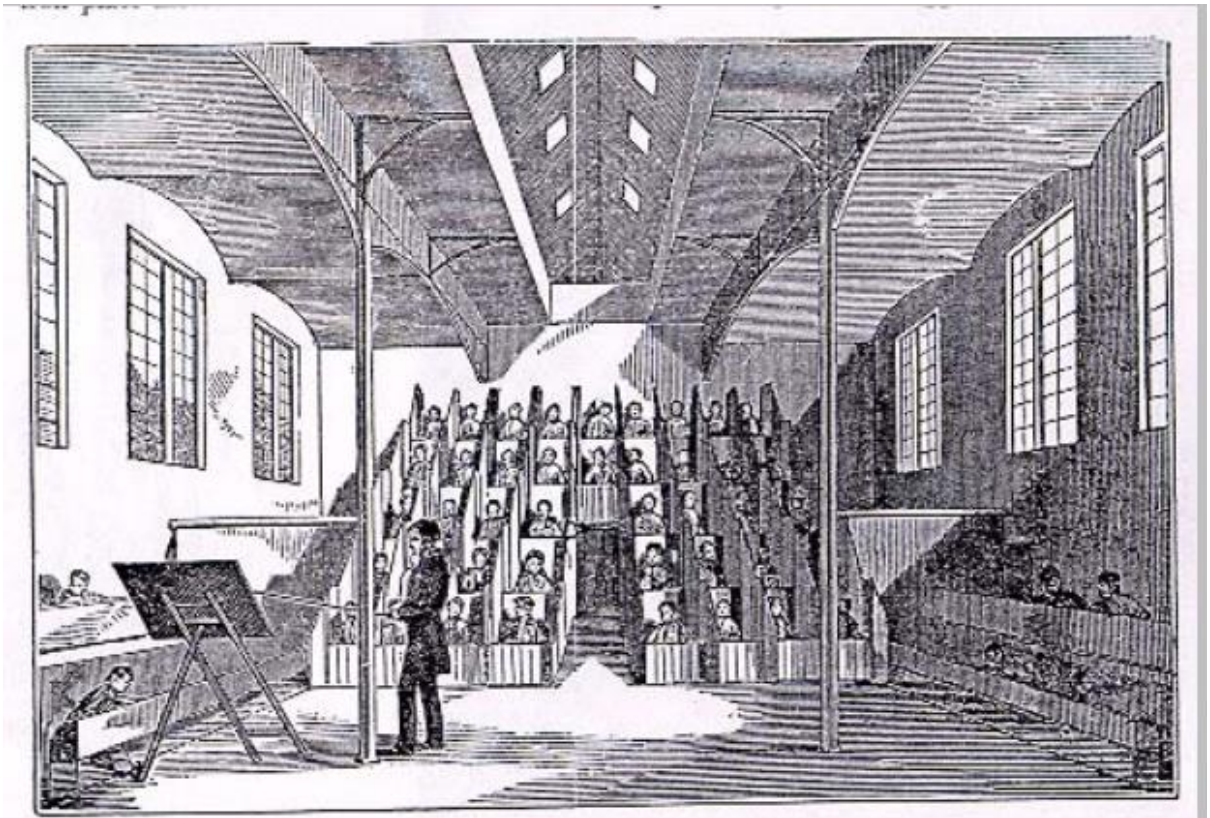
Criticisms of the increasingly 'coercive' regime at Parkhurst were heard more frequently, and in 1847 Lieutenant Colonel Joshua Jebb, the Surveyor-General of Prisons, was stung into making a robust defence of the institution: 'Parkhurst being delivered over to us as a Prison and not simply a school, has to be governed on a combined system … approximately seven hundred and fifty prisoners who … in point of age and precocity [are] far beyond the limits of the classes usually entrusted to the management of a schoolmaster'. He emphasised the need for 'strict discipline … carried out with the greatest kindness', not 'penal discipline'. He also thought that the boys at Parkhurst should spend less time in the classroom and more on 'labour and industrial training' – training which would prevent ex-offenders from relapsing into their former state. Nonetheless, Jebb (and his boss, the Home Secretary Sir George Grey) continued to come under pressure to do something to improve the system - not only at Parkhurst but at other prisons too.

The writer of the 1847 *Illustrated London News* article on Parkhurst referred to earlier, however, found much to admire: 'it presents altogether an imposing appearance; and, a proportion of the buildings being placed upon a rising ground, it is visible for several miles around'. The Prison was situated in eighty acres of land, surrounded on three sides by a belt of trees. About fifty acres were devoted to 'spade-husbandry' and twenty to twenty-five acres were laid to pasture. There was also a farmhouse, with cows and pigs.

The boys received two and a half hours of mainly religious and moral instruction every other day, this being dispensed in the School Room which was fitted with fifty compartments: 'each of the latter holds but one Prisoner, and is so planned, that the Schoolmaster can inspect and instruct without the possibility of the Boys communicating with or seeing each other' – this so-called 'separate system' was one of the pillars not only of the Parkhurst system but of the prison system generally.

The article ended by saying that 'a visit to Parkhurst Prison – there to witness the exertions of philanthropic enlightenment to reclaim the juvenile offender from the ways of error to the paths of virtue and peace – is one of the most gratifying scenes of philanthropy to be enjoyed in this great Christian country.'

Be that as it may, in 1849, thirty-four boys escaped from Parkhurst, finding the regime too irksome and a little freedom to be better than none. In effect, they voted with their feet. This was a not uncommon occurrence and was increasingly a matter of concern, especially to the wealthier local residents.



The Probationary Ward School Room.



INTERIOR OF THE COURT.

View from the gateway of the interior court of Parkhurst Prison in the 1840s.
The Governor's House and the Steward's office are in the centre.
(both images from the *Illustrated London News*)

The Steward of Parkhurst

Henry resigned his post at St Mark's in July 1849, and he presumably commenced his duties as Steward at Parkhurst not long afterwards. His duties were not very different from those he had had at St Mark's, though there was certainly a considerable difference in scale. The prison steward was a senior staff member 'responsible for ordering, receiving and arranging payment for all supplies and stores, both domestic and industrial; and for such matters as the receipt and safe-keeping of convicts' money and property, the replacement of the prison's furniture and equipment and the maintenance of staff quarters. The gardens and the produce thereof came under his charge, together with the general superintendence of the kitchens. His overall duty was to promote economy, and to prevent wastage, misuse and theft of articles and supplies … The steward was resident at the prison, could follow no other occupation, and was required to provide sureties for the due performance of his duties. He was forbidden to have any interest in any contract for the supply of the prison and could not accept any fee or gratuity from any supplier or prisoner'.[11]

A baptism of fire?

In the summer of 1850, an unfortunate event took place. Henry had barely been in his new job one year when '[o]n 30/31 July there was a destructive fire at the Juvenile Prison in one of the dormitories called C Ward which broke out at midnight and raged until four o'clock in the morning', reported the *Morning Standard* of 2 August: 'the roof of the whole part of this building (200 feet long) fell in. The building was three stories high and 25 feet wide. There were 200 of the boys sleeping in it when the fire broke out, who were all safely removed to the parade ground, where they were guarded by the troops from Albany Barracks, who were sent immediately on the fire being discovered. The building, which is completely destroyed, was directly at the back of the governor's house. Great fears were entertained that that and the range of the adjacent buildings would be destroyed, but fortunately there was plenty of water, and the engines from the poor-house, the barracks, and Newport were soon on the spot, and there was no lack of assistance. The governor of the prison was absent on leave. It is not known how the fire originated; fortunately, there was no wind.'

[11] *A History of English Prison Administration* by S. McConville, (1981) pp.453-4.

In addition to the debate over prison conditions, there were also arguments over the whole system of transportation. In 1839, the Colonial Office had secured the agreement of the authorities in Western Australia to being sent around thirty juvenile prisoners a year. Already by 1845, it was clear that many of the Parkhurst boys sent out to the southern hemisphere did not thrive there - being badly treated or reverting to criminal behaviour. Moreover, neither the Australian states nor New Zealand wanted to be treated by Britain as a penal colony; the latter was especially vociferous in its objections to 'Parkhurst apprentices' and succeeded quite early on in putting a stop to them being sent.

Parkhurst inmates were still being transported in 1849 when Henry arrived on the Island. On 18 January 1851 the *Hampshire Advertiser* reported that 'a fresh importation of juvenile convicts, from Millbank, landed here on Thursday, and were severally conveyed to the Reformatory at Parkhurst. To balance this lot, a large number of the *reformed (?)* left the prison the same morning, and were forwarded by the steamer to Portsmouth, for embarkation to a more congenial climate, but more probably to make room for the newcomers'.

But a radical change in policy was in the air and the transportation of convicts to Australia more or less ceased in1853. Almost 1500 Parkhurst boys had been transported during the previous decade.[12] The ending of the scheme meant that the boys were no longer packed off to distant shores but unconditionally released in England once they had completed their time. The prison's intake was now widened to include all boys sentenced to imprisonment for more than one year. For the prison's officers, including Henry, this would have meant a major change not only in their working conditions but also in their manner of dealing with the detainees.

Henry and Evelina

Amid all this upheaval, there was an alteration to Henry's domestic circumstances: on 25 September 1851 he got married. His bride was Evelina Travers, the twenty-seven-year-old daughter of the master of Albany Barracks (which were next door to Parkhurst).[13] Henry's old boss, the Reverend Derwent Coleridge, came down specially from London to marry the couple in Carisbrooke Parish Church, and was assisted at the ceremony by the Reverend J Maude, curate of St Thomas's, Newport. The marriage was reported in the *Hampshire Advertiser* of 27 September and even in *The Gentleman's Magazine*. Henry had arrived.

[12] By 1853, over 150 000 men, women and children had been transported to Australia as convicts. Western Australia, though, needing the labour, continued to take convicts until 1868.

[13] Evelina's father was Captain Nicholas Travers, formerly of the 95th (Rifle) Regiment and a veteran of the Peninsular War. He was descended from a respectable Anglo-Irish family: his father had been Mayor of Cork; he had a brother who was a Rear Admiral and he was cousin to a baronet.

New regulations were introduced on 1 Apr 1851 and were set out in the following year's *Report of the Directors of Convict Prisons on the Discipline and Management of Parkhurst Prison*. Once the prisoners at Parkhurst had completed their probation (usually after four months), those under fourteen years of age were sent to the junior wards and those older to the general ward. 'In these wards industrial training in the workshops and on the farm in a great measure supersedes instruction in school, not much more of the latter being given than is sufficient to enable the boy to read with fluency and to comprehend elementary books of history or travel, to write a legible hand, and to be competent in arithmetic to the casting of such accounts as are kept by small tradesmen or farmers.' In other words, more labour and less school instruction. 'Concurrently with the increase in labour, it became necessary to extend the farming operations. Some of the pasture land has been consequently broken up and brought under tillage. A portion of the land has been drained, and three additional fields … have been rented … Instead of the boys being excluded from the farmyard they are now employed in tending the cows, pigs etc and doing all other work required there.'

These changes were commented on at the time by Joseph Kingsmill, a prison chaplain who wrote a book on prisons which was published in 1854. The book contains a chapter on Parkhurst which mentions Henry by name: 'Less time here is now devoted to intellectual advancement - more to the formation of industrious habits by manual labour, in the management of the land, brick and tile-making etc. The work done, and the distribution of the boys' labour on the farm, reflect great credit on the skill and judgment of the steward, Mr. Strickland, to whom this province is assigned. He is what everyone engaged in arduous work ought to be, to ensure success, almost an enthusiast in his line'.[14] This comment reflects the growing agreement among prison reformers that training children in the habits of industrious labour was the best way of turning them into useful members of society.

The wind was gradually changing again, however, and during the 1850s, 'the reformatory objective in penal policy underwent an almost total eclipse' (McConville). The consensus was that it was almost impossible to rehabilitate criminals and so prisons should not even try to do so. Nonetheless, facilities for educating prisoners continued to be delivered, in tandem with efforts to introduce elementary schools across the country.[15]

Escapes continued to occur frequently. Following yet another one in October 1855 the *Hampshire Advertiser* lamented that 'these frequent excursions and midnight voyages

[14] Joseph Kingsmill, *Chapters on Prisons and Prisoners, and the Prevention of Crime*, (London) 1854, p. 185.

[15] The Elementary Education Act was finally introduced in 1870.

cause considerable uneasiness to the householders, many of whom, in the outskirts of the town, are precluded from retiring to rest at night.'

A touch of continental glamour was in evidence in August 1857 when, according to the *Hampshire Advertiser*, Parkhurst received the visit of the Inspector-General of French Prisons, and the Inspector of the French Imperial Palaces who were shown round by the Governor, Mr Hall, an ex-army officer who had succeeded Woollcombe. Henry would certainly have been there to explain his role and Evelina may have been on hand too as her family had lived in France when she was young. The visitors pronounced themselves much satisfied concerning 'the mode of treatment of the prisoners, - their various occupations, their diet, the discipline and sanitary condition of the prison, and the system of religious and moral training pursued. After being in the schoolrooms for some time, and hearing the schoolboys sing some pieces, they visited all the trades' shops and went about the farm'. This inspection seems to have been arranged as part of the visit of the French Emperor Napoleon III to Queen Victoria at Osborne House.

A growing family

The 1861 Census recorded Henry Strickland, aged 38, Steward of Parkhurst Prison, with his wife Evelina (38), born in Ireland, and four children – Henry (8), Travers (5), Herbert (3) and Charles (2), all born at Parkhurst - and two local young women employed as house servants.

Against what we hope was a happy domestic background for Henry and Evelina, clouds began to gather over Parkhurst again. The rise of reformatory and industrial schools meant that Parkhurst was no longer an exception. Its scale was reduced and its very function began to be questioned.

Henry reacted to this worrying situation by looking for another job, as can be seen by this report in the *Coventry Standard* of 6 Jan 1860: ‘At the Warwickshire Quarter Sessions, the Court elected a new Governor of the County Gaol, to replace Mr Harry Adkins, resigned. The Chairman stated that the committee appointed to inquire into the qualifications of the candidates had received seventy-four applications, and after careful enquiry had reduced the number in the first instance to five and subsequently to the three now submitted to the Court, namely Mr James Mills Anderson, Governor of the House of Correction of Ilford, Essex; Mr William Ingram, Governor of Devonport Borough Prison; and Mr Henry Strickland, Steward and Industrial Superintendent of Parkhurst Prison, Isle of Wight. After the testimonials had been read, the votes of the Magistrates present were recorded by the Clerk of the Peace, the result being - for Mr Anderson, 24;

for Mr Strickland, 24; and for Mr Ingram, 11. The Magistrates then voted for the two first-named candidates only, when Mr Anderson was elected, the numbers being - for Mr Anderson, 34, for Mr Strickland, 25.' Henry had done well, but not well enough (he had been up against two prison governors).

The situation at Parkhurst continued to worsen. On 6 April 1861, the *Hampshire Telegraph* carried the following piece: 'The upper prison at Parkhurst, and which has hitherto been known as the Juvenile Reformatory on Horse-Bridge hill, and was erected in some years after the lower prison at an enormous expense to the country, was altogether closed on Saturday last, the few boys who were in it being transferred to the other portion of the establishment. The chaplain, the Rev. Smith Warleigh, and nine of the oldest warders and tradesmen warders, some few of whom were appointed soon after the buildings were erected, have been pensioned off, according to the years they have served the public in that situation. It is not known as yet to what purpose the new prison is to be devoted, but we believe that it has been satisfactorily ascertained that it never answered the purpose for which it was intended.'

On 23 November 1861, the *Hampshire Telegraph* carried another piece: 'A great reduction in the staff at Parkhurst Prison is contemplated, the Governor (Captain Hall), the Medical Attendant (Dr. Dabbs), and the Farm Bailiff (Mr. Muncey), the Steward [confirmation of why Henry had been seeking other employment] and many of the Warders having received official notice that their services will be dispensed with in March next, not that crime is diminishing in the country but that the numerous Reformatories lately established have so lessened the number of convicts at Parkhurst, that it will be found very unprofitable to carry it on much longer. The convicts now only muster 200, and as these are unable to cultivate the extensive farm attached to the prison, it is probable that the whole of it will be let off by tender at a very early period.'

As it turned out, it would be another two to three years before anything major happened and Henry succeeded in holding onto his job. But between 1863 and 1864, all the boys were removed from the prison (there were only 185 inmates in 1864) and it was closed forever as an institution for young offenders and the last juveniles sent to Dartmoor.

What next? It turned out that Parkhurst was to be converted into a temporary *female* convict establishment. On 14 Feb 1863, the *Hampshire Telegraph* reported: 'The upper prison at Parkhurst, now unoccupied, has at last been selected as a place of confinement for our female convicts, about four hundred of whom are expected in the beginning of April next. The warders in the adjoining cottages have received notice to quit at the latter end of March, to make room for the persons in charge of the new importation.' Henry, though, was still in place.

A Family Tragedy

On 28 January 1863, Henry and Evelina's second son Travers, then seven years old, was killed when the East Cowes gasometer exploded. The accident was widely reported and was even mentioned by the *Illustrated London News*. Young Travers and his elder brother Henry were being shown round the gas works when the explosion occurred. The manager, George Billowes, was also killed. The two boys had walked all the way from Newport with a Mr Watts, the engineer at Parkhurst, for the purpose of visiting the gas works.

From the *Hampshire Telegraph* of 31 January: 'COWES. - FATAL ACCIDENT. - The quiet town of East Cowes was painfully excited on Wednesday afternoon by an accident which occurred at the gas works. It appears that Mr. Billowes, the manager of the East Cowes Gas Works, accompanied by Mr. Watts, manager of the Parkhurst Gas Works, and two sons of Mr. Strickland, of Parkhurst, were standing by the side of the station meter, which Mr. Billowes was showing to them, when an explosion took place - killing Mr. Billowes and the eldest son of Mr. Strickland, and seriously injuring the younger son [in fact, it was the other way round], as well as Mr. Watts and a mechanic present, named Guy, whose jaw was broken. An inquest was held on the bodies on Thursday last, and the jury returned a verdict of Accidental Death.'

In March 1863, the expected large contingent of female prisoners arrived at Parkhurst. (This may not have been legal as the original Parkhurst Act establishing a prison for boys had not been repealed.) Most of the prisoners had been sent from Millbank Penitentiary in London. Anyway, it was not long before there was trouble: on 21-22 August there was a riot of the female prisoners at precisely the time when Queen Victoria was making another visit to the prison! The riot was hushed up, although it was mentioned in an article that appeared in the *Isle of Wight Observer* on 12 September. 'How came it to pass', exclaimed the writer, 'that so many as 200 such desperate characters were … guarded by only 12 female warders?' Apparently, the women broke loose 'and nothing short of a quotation from Paradise Lost, of hell broke loose, would describe the scene. We have heard that, on the Sunday following, the Priest, who has the thankless and onerous duty of endeavouring to reform these fallen daughters of Eve, cursed them from the Altar, and that the denunciation was treated with derision'. The writer's conclusion was that the treatment they had received at Parkhurst had been too humane and considerate, and that 'these pampered wretches' deserved to be flogged.

The only detailed report I have found of this incident is in Brian Manser's short book on Parkhurst Prison (*Behind the Small Wooden Door*), but he does not provide a source. In his description, he says that as soon as Queen Victoria approached the female compound, she was greeted with catcalls and the women turned their backs on her,

refusing to sing the National Anthem. The Queen was so affronted that she terminated her visit there and then. The women, on the other hand, went on the rampage, smashing everything they could find, and order was only re-established after the fire hoses had been turned on them.

In 1869 all women prisoners were removed to the new Female Prison at Woking in Surrey and Parkhurst became a prison for male convicts (at first for invalids and imbeciles, but the intake was soon broadened to other categories of convict).

Another death in the family

Only three and a half years after the death of their son Travers, Henry's wife Evelina died of tuberculosis. In addition to being reported in all the local newspapers, her death even made *The Pall Mall Gazette* (a London evening newspaper). She was only forty-two. She was buried at Northwood Parish Church besides her son, the inscription on her grave reading 'Sacred to the memory of Evelina Strickland, wife of Henry Strickland Esq of Parkhurst in this parish and daughter of Capt NC Travers, late of the Rifle Brigade, who died on September 6, 1866. RIP.'



A photograph of Evelina Strickland, taken in the early 1860s.

Later Years

In 1871, Henry was still Steward of Parkhurst. Evelina's father, Captain Travers, had recently died and left him £50 in compensation for 'all the trouble and anxiety that my late sister Hester Keightly caused to my son in law Henry Strickland Esq', as well as half of a small estate in Ireland, located at Ballyorban, south-east of Cork, though it is not sure that Henry ever visited Ireland. That year's census records him as a widower, aged 48, living at Parkhurst with his son Henry (18), a medical student, and a servant, Mary Simmons. Frederick Travers, his brother-in-law and a former Colonel in the Royal Artillery, was visiting. Sons Herbert and Charles were at school in Ryde – their headmaster, the Reverend John Spear, was a former chaplain at Parkhurst and a friend of Henry's.[16]

The 1873 Governor's Report showed that the number of inmates at Parkhurst had returned to normal levels (545 convicts as at 1 January 1873). Problems were being caused by members of the 'weak-minded' class who tried 'to evade work by feigning mental derangement', while the numerous attempts at escape could be explained by men seeking to get out of open-air work during the winter. Otherwise, the number of offences committed by prisoners was no higher than would normally be expected.

The Report presents the prison as a hive of industry. Eighty acres of land were under cultivation, a large sewage tank had been constructed, as had a new distributing tank for the supply of water, and six hundred thousand bricks had been made (there was a proper brick factory on site). Clothing for 300 officers and 800 prisoners had been made, along with 3420 pairs of boots and 1410 pairs of leggings for the Metropolitan Police.

But Parkhurst was no longer the place it had been a quarter of a century earlier. In his book *The Isle of Wight*, WH Davenport Adams lamented the many changes at Parkhurst since it had become a prison for adult males: 'It is now subject to the same strict regulations as the prison at Portland or Dartmoor, and admission can be obtained only by special order and under exceptional circumstances … It may be regarded as hyper-sentimental to object to the location of such an establishment in the immediate vicinity of some of the finest scenery and most interesting places in the island, yet the visitor certainly feels a disagreeable impression when the gloomy pile rises before him … and he finds it impossible to suppress a strong desire that the Government would relieve the Isle of Wight from the heavy shadow of a criminal prison.'

[16] On 12 February 1867, Henry had attended a presentation of a silver tea service to the Reverend JJ Spear, the departing chaplain of the prison. Spear 'thanked Mr Strickland for all the kindness he had received from him during a period of uninterrupted friendship of eighteen years'.

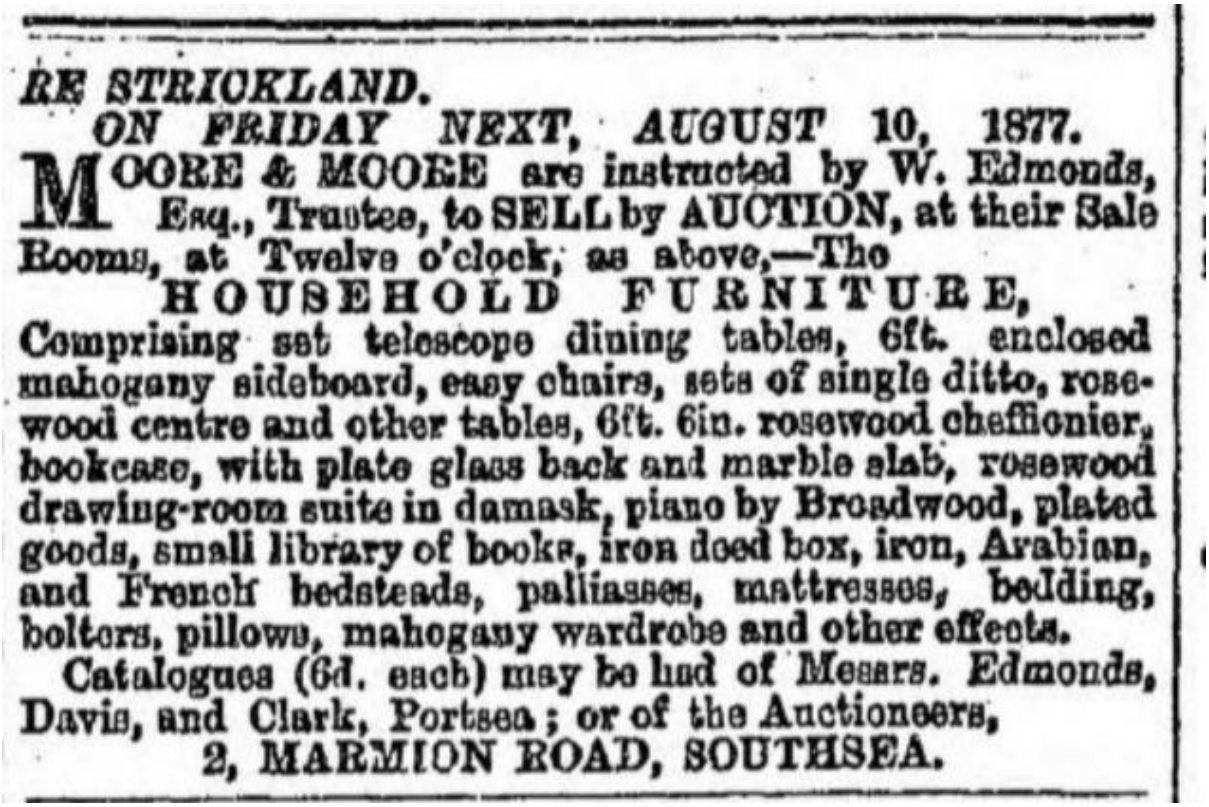
Another domestic tragedy

Although Henry was still working, his mind was on other matters – he was courting. The lady in question was Emily Jane Seaman, and on 6 May 1875 he married her in nearby Northwood Church (where Emily's half-brother Charles was curate). Emily was a forty-one-year-old spinster and her father, the Reverend Shadrach Seaman, had been curate of Northwood until his death three years earlier. Henry would have known the family well.

Unfortunately, things did not turn out as planned. Although Emily gave birth to a healthy baby girl called Maud Eva in November that year (six months after her marriage), she developed epileptic convulsions after the birth and died shortly afterwards. Henry seems to have taken the decision to retire around this time – he is described as 'Steward' (of Parkhurst Prison) on his wife's death certificate but as a 'gentleman' on daughter Maud Eva's birth certificate. So, after a quarter of a century as Steward, Henry said farewell to Parkhurst and moved to Rookley, a quiet village about four miles south of Newport.

Henry had retired but problems – financial ones – were mounting up and on 19 March 1877, he filed a petition of liquidation. He was bankrupt! The *Commercial Gazette* of 29 March lists a Bill of Sale executed by one Henry Strickland of Richmond Villa, Rookley, Arreton, Isle of Wight, a 'retired government officer', in favour of the Lombard Deposit Bank, registered on 14 Mar 1877 and filed on 20 Mar 1877, in the sum of £2190, this sum being the amount he had borrowed from the Bank. This would be the equivalent of at least £250 000 in 2026!

That June, a case ('Ex Parte Lombard Deposit Bank, Re Strickland'), was heard at the London Bankruptcy Court before Sir James Bacon (Chief Judge). The case was reported at length in the *Hampshire Telegraph* of 20 June. It involved an appeal by the Lombard Deposit Bank ('a money-lending society') against an order made by the Hampshire County Court consequent upon Henry's bankruptcy to the effect that the trustee of the debtor's estate (William Edmonds, a Newport accountant) was entitled to 'certain furniture and effects' comprised in a bill of sale executed by the debtor in favour of the Bank. Henry owed nearly £2200 in unsecured debts against assets (furniture and effects) of only £200. He was in receipt of a 'retiring allowance' of £147 as steward of Parkhurst Prison. Living as a 'gentleman' since inheriting from his father-in-law seems to have gone to his head! The Bank's appeal against the trustee was dismissed, Henry having already been adjudged bankrupt before the bill of sale was filed, and the judge made some derogatory remarks about the bank's being unable to produce the relevant books, describing as 'farcical' the bank's having several times renewed the loan as soon as it was paid off. None of this, though, changed the fact that Henry was still bankrupt and there was no putting off the inevitable sale of all his possessions:



RE STRICKLAND.

ON FRIDAY NEXT, AUGUST 10, 1877.

MOORE & MOORE are instructed by W. Edmonds, Esq., Trustee, to SELL by AUCTION, at their Sale Rooms, at Twelve o'clock, as above,—The

HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE,

Comprising set telescope dining tables, 6ft. enclosed mahogany sideboard, easy chairs, sets of single ditto, rosewood centre and other tables, 6ft. 6in. rosewood cheffonier, bookcase, with plate glass back and marble slab, rosewood drawing-room suite in damask, piano by Broadwood, plated goods, small library of books, iron deed box, iron, Arabian, and French bedsteads, palliasses, mattresses, bedding, bolters, pillows, mahogany wardrobe and other effects.

Catalogues (6d. each) may be had of Messrs. Edmonds, Davis, and Clark, Portsea; or of the Auctioneers,

2, MARMION ROAD, SOUTHSEA.

From the *Hampshire Telegraph* of 4 August 1877

What did Henry do next? There is no further trace of him until 1881 by which time Henry's youngest son Charles appears to have taken him under his wing. In that year's Census (taken on 3 April), Henry is described as having 'no employment' and was lodging in London with Charles (then a young government clerk) at 22, Akerman Rd, Lambeth. Charles and Henry must have moved to Kew soon afterwards because Henry died there on 10 July 1881 at 62, Gloucester Road. His death certificate stated that he was a gentleman of fifty-nine years of age who had died of apoplexy. His eldest son Henry (a naval surgeon) was present and must have been on shore leave at the time. Henry was buried at nearby St Anne's Church. No stone survives (if there ever was one), but his name figures in the church's burial records (see next page).

It was rather a sad end for a man who had worked so hard to rise from such humble origins but he left a fine legacy in his children: Henry was a naval surgeon, Herbert a coffee planter and timber contractor in India, and Charles a colonial administrator in Zanzibar and Egypt. I am inclined to believe that part of the reason for Henry's financial distress can be ascribed to the efforts he made to educate them and to turn them into young gentlemen. As for Maud, I'm afraid she ended up being adopted – Henry was in no position to look after her – but she was well cared for by her adoptive family and turned into a beautiful young woman who married a Suffolk farmer by whom she had seven children and died at the age of ninety.



Judging by the dates on the gravestones, it was in this part of the graveyard of St Anne's, Kew, where Henry was buried by the Reverend Percy Nott on a warm sunny day in July.

BURIALS in the Parish of St. Anne. Kew
in the County of Surrey in the Year 18L

Name.	Abode.	When buried.	Age.	By whom the Ceremony was performed.
Henry Strickland.	Kew.	July 13th	5 y.	Percy N. Nott. Vicar

No. 673