

A NEW BRIDPORT STORY FOR WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Fanny Reynolds, the first Bridport woman to win an election.

The pioneering Bridport woman we are celebrating for International Women's Day and Women's History Month is Fanny Reynolds (1840-1930). She was the first woman to be elected to public office in Bridport. Uncovering her story is particularly timely as 2024 has been termed the year of elections. This year, more than half the world's population live in countries where there will be elections. So this is a very important global moment for democracy. More locally, Fanny's achievements are part of the story of how democratic rights were gradually extended and made meaningful in Bridport over the last centuries.

When Fanny Reynolds died a few days shy of her 90th birthday, the *Bridport News* spoke for many: "Bridport has lost a notable figure and one, who, throughout her long life, was ever ready to assist any movement which had for its object the social betterment of the community. [She] was imbued with a keen sense of her responsibilities, which she always faced with unflinching courage, and possessed of a kindliness that endeared her to all. Public service was one of her inherent characteristics... her most significant achievement was the distinction of being one of the first women to be elected on the Board of Guardians in Dorset, a position she held for many years until failing health compelled her to resign. In those early days the advent of women on public bodies was not regarded with any degree of favour. And only a person with courage and a believer in the utility of work from a woman's standpoint would have faced with serenity the opposition which happily no longer exists at the present time." (BN, 3.10.1930)
So who was Fanny Reynolds and how did she come to stand for election?

Opportunities for women to stand in elections in nineteenth-century Bridport

It was very difficult for a woman to participate in local government in nineteenth-century England. The first few women were elected in the 1870s but the opportunities were limited by the narrow franchise which restricted electors to the propertied; by dominant attitudes to women's role in society; and by place. Digging into nineteenth-century Bridport it becomes clear that there were fewer opportunities for women to take part in public life in Bridport than elsewhere. This makes Fanny Reynolds' achievement all the more significant.

The principle that women could stand for election to Parliament was not finally won until 1918 but some women qualified to vote and to stand as candidates for local government in the latter part of the nineteenth century. In the Victorian period there were very clear ideas about the appropriate roles for men and women summed up in the ideology of separate spheres: a female domestic world of the home and family paralleled by a male public world of work and politics. All would remain calm if each sex kept to their sphere. However, there were two areas of public work where some women were allowed to vote: School Boards and Boards of Guardians. Unlike national government these local elected bodies were thought to be somewhere that women could bring their domestic skills without compromising their femininity unlike in the rough competitive public world of national politics. Working with children was thought particularly appropriate for women. From 1870, School Boards could be created by town councils, by a petition of ratepayers, or could be imposed by the Education department, where educational provision was sparse. Their task was to oversee local elementary schools. By 1890 there were about 100 women on School Boards in England and Wales. Yet this was not an opportunity open to Bridport women as the town's leaders had decided not to have a School Board. Local schools in Bridport had governing committees but their members were selected rather than elected with all the limitations that this implied.

The other civic space that began to open up to some women (propertied and single or widowed) was the Board of Guardians. Poor Law Guardians were elected by ratepayers to oversee the provision for the poor, principally through the workhouse. The penetration of women into this all male world was even slower than it was for the School Boards. By 1890, 80 women had managed to become Poor Law Guardians in England and Wales. Patricia Hollis, historian of women in English local government in this period, says that there was an 'almost reflex hostility of many guardians and most local poor law officials to women joining their boards' (Hollis, 2009). Some boards thought it was impertinent of women to want to stand at all. Yet it was as a Guardian that Fanny Reynolds was able to make a breakthrough in Bridport. How did this come about?

Fanny Reynolds was making the case not just for herself as an individual but for her sex to be included in the oversight of the Poor Law to which she and other single and widowed women contributed as ratepayers. Despite the formality of annual elections, there was often no contest as the same limited number of elite men nominated each other. This was the first time that a woman had sought election in Bridport.

In 1891 Bridport Poor Law Union covered Bridport and most of the surrounding parishes: Allington, Askerswell, Bothenhampton, Bradpole, Burton Bradstock, Catherstone Leweston, Chideock, Chilcombe, Litton, Loders, Puncknowle, Shipton Gorge, Stanton St Gabriel, Swyre, Symondsburry, Walditch, Whitchurch Canonorum and Wootton Fitzpaine. Each parish nominated at least one Guardian, depending on its size. In most of these places there was no contest as there were never more candidates than seats. In 1891 there were only three contests: in Bridport, Bradpole and Burton Bradstock. In Bridport and Bradpole, there was a novelty - a woman candidate. Fanny Reynolds stood in Bridport and Emma Stradling in adjacent Bradpole.

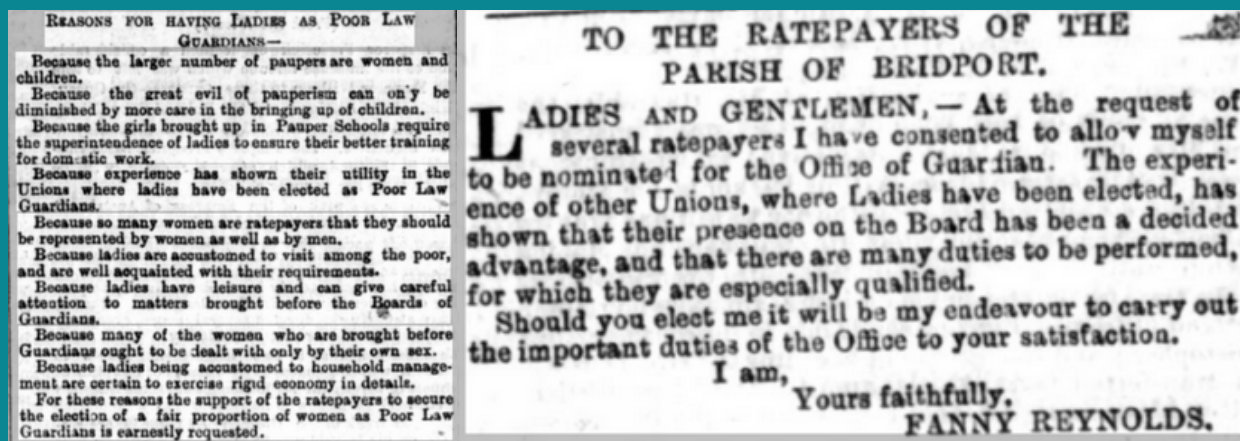
The local newspapers buzzed with articles and letters on whether the idea of what were termed lady Guardians was acceptable. In 'Why Should Not Ladies Come Forward?' in the *Western Gazette*, it was argued about the Bridport contests:

"We understand that a lady in one of the parishes in the union is willing to become a candidate if she could rely or have any likelihood of meeting a sister Guardian at the Board. Here is a grand opportunity for those ladies who have time to come forward in a public capacity and do a vast amount of good. ... Lady Guardians are not at all uncommon, and all agree that they have fulfilled their duties with exceptional ability." (WG, 3.4.1891)

In the *Bridport News*, Russell L Carpenter (1816-92), who had been minister of Bridport Unitarian Church from 1865 to 1887 and was an influential local figure, argued that there was a general feeling that electing women Guardians was desirable.

However, he wished they had been nominated with the other (male) candidates through the Vestries so that no election would have been necessary. But he also said that the times of Vestry meetings were not generally known – implying that these nominations were generally stitched up by the leading ratepayers in the parish, thus precluding the participation of any outsiders. He pointed out that there were so few women candidates because to qualify a woman had to pay rates of £25 a year 'and there are few single women or widows who are rated to that amount'. Married women were excluded from the franchise as their husbands paid any rates that were due on behalf of the household. Carpenter therefore expressed thanks to Mrs Reynolds and Mrs Stradling for coming forward. Like other advocates of women's participation, he took the view that many of the responsibilities of the Guardians (such as the sick, the young and the elderly) were areas where women would provide particular value to their male colleagues. To underline that these elections were different to national politics from which women were excluded, Carpenter continued:

"I am not aware that the election of Guardians is a political or party question. We have to consider the interests of the rate payers, and those of the poor. Women, usually, are the most conversant with matters of house economy; and no one will question the interest taken in the poor by the ladies whom I hope we may elect." (BN, 10.4.1891)



The same edition of the Bridport News also reprinted a circular from the Society for Promoting the Return of Women as Poor Law Guardians:

Board of Guardians election, 1891. The 10 April 1891 edition of Bridport News carried an unusual notice:

This all suggests that Bridport people could access the wider debate that was happening across the country on whether women should be admitted into the public world of civic life – and which women. In 1891 the electorate for the Guardians was narrow – essentially better-off ratepayers, almost entirely male. All that was being argued for at this point was that some middle-class women (single or widowed with no men to represent their interests) should be admitted as Guardians, not as charitable workhouse visitors but as fully accountable elected members of the Board.

When the 1891 results were printed in the *Bridport News* they revealed mixed success for the women candidates:

PARISH OF BRIDPORT

Hansford 474

Reynolds (Mrs) 392

Northover 365

Felstone 352

Brownsdon 335

The first four are elected. All are in favour of the Press.

PARISH OF BRADPOLE

Chard 216

Whetham 170

Stradling 151

The first two are elected. Mr Chard and Mrs Stradling are in favour of the Press, and Mr Whetham opposed.

In the reporting of this breakthrough for the representation of women within the town, the News was actually more concerned about which candidates were willing to support the admission of the press to Guardians' meetings which the current Board was unwilling to countenance. This was not an unimportant matter as it was part of a demand that the ratepayers should be able to scrutinise the decisions of the Board, as the Guardians were their representatives. This was another aspect of creating a representative democracy. Fanny Reynolds supported the admission of the press to the fortnightly meetings of the Bridport Guardians.

The election of a woman for the first time did not cause rioting in the streets. However, the failure of Mrs Stradling to be elected in Bradpole revealed another obstacle that faced the election of women candidates. Emma Stradling (1843-1917) was the widow of a coal merchant who lived at Wellington Villa, Bradpole Road. More voters had voted for Stradling (145) than for Whetham (127) but the latter received the support of several large ratepayers who had more than one vote, and that gave Whetham the majority over Mrs Stradling. The *Bridport News* argued that 'Mrs Stradling's success is considered certain next year, as several of her supporters were from home this week'. However Emma Stradling did not stand again nor did she live long enough to qualify for the parliamentary vote.

In 1892 there was another attempt to put forward a woman candidate at the Guardians election to represent Bradpole. F.W. Matterface nominated Mrs Prickham arguing that they should build on the fact that the majority of voters had supported Mrs Stradling the year before and only plural voting had denied her a seat on the Board. He argued that Mrs Prickman (1844-1912) would make a good Guardian. She was the widow of a retired farmer who lived at Devonshire Villa, Bradpole Road. On her behalf, it was argued that 'it was very necessary that women should be included on the Board of Guardians because fully two thirds of those who came under their care were women and children whose wants they particularly understood' (BN, 1.4.1892). Although Mrs Prickman did run she was not elected: 'The operation of the plural vote has, for a second time, prevented the parish of Bradpole following the excellent example given by Bridport in sending a lady representative to the Board of Guardians' (BN, 15.4.1892). Mrs Prickman would have been at the head of the poll if each voter had only had one vote. Like Emma Stradling, she does not seem to have stood again for public office. Being nominated as a woman to stand for election was a significant hurdle but at this point the chance of then being elected was often thwarted by plural voting and even prejudice. Many Boards continued to be resistant to any participation by women. This was also apparent locally. In 1893 Beaminster Board of Guardians discussed the appointment of Lady Visitors (to the workhouse). Some members took the view that 'ladies might be a little too fussy' while others made remarks of 'a humorous character' on the subject, suggesting their discomfort at the intrusion of women into the male world of the Board. Unsurprisingly the proposition was lost by a large majority (BN, 21.4.1893).

Changes and challenges

Many obstacles to women's election were removed by the Local Government Act of 1894. Property qualifications were abolished opening up Boards to working-class voters and members. Plural voting was ended and any ambiguity about women's right to be Guardians was removed. The members of the newly established Rural District Councils (including Bridport RDC) became Guardians for their areas, with poor law elections limited to urban areas. From 1894 Bridport Board of Guardians only covered the town which was divided into two wards as it was for town council elections. The term of office of a Guardian was increased to three years, with all Guardians elected, and no ex officio or nominated Board members. As a result of this the number of women Guardians across England and Wales increased to 1147 in 1900. Bridport RDC was a very male space and I have yet to find any women councillors. However in Bridport itself, 1894 saw the second woman join the Guardians - Mrs J.T. Stephens. However the character of the Board remained unchanged as essentially a middle-class institution, with few working-class candidates let alone members. As late as 1924, Violet Dering (see the Museum's IWD 2023 post) stood for Bridport Board of Guardians. Her public identification with the nascent local labour movement as a member of the newly formed Bridport Independent Labour Party meant that, despite being a local town councillor, she failed to be elected. It was traditional in Bridport in Fanny Reynold's time and beyond that candidates at local elections did not stand on a party ticket. However, in a small town it was unlikely that the party affiliations of candidates would not have been generally known. The names of the local great and good regularly appeared in reports of local political parties' political and social events.

Women candidates remained an important issue, with comparisons often drawn with Fanny Reynolds' successful election. In 1894 M.L. Bradley, a district nurse, wrote to the *Bridport News*:

"Will you kindly give me space in your next issue to call the attention of your readers to the forthcoming election of Guardians? I hope they will stir themselves and see to the election of one or more lady Guardians to work with the one we already have. Bridport has led in this matter before and I hope will do so again, for surely the care of the sick and the aged, and the clothing and the general welfare of the children, together with the domestic arrangement in the [work]house, can be better supervised by capable women than by men?" (BN, 26.10.1894)

The newspaper continued to include references to 'the advance which women are making in our public life, and nowhere is she better calculated to do than as a guardian'. It continued, 'the truth of the arguments is attested in our own case by the very good work Mrs Reynolds has done as a member of the Board of Guardians. Most of our leading men recognise the need for women's help in a sphere so peculiarly her own as the care of women, old, infirm, sick people, and children. Hence the woman Guardian is rapidly coming to the front...' (BN, 9.11.1894).

As the election approached at the end of 1894, there were several letters to the Bridport News which suggested that not everyone was as sanguine as the paper's editor about the prospect of more lady Guardians. All the correspondents were men. However, Fanny Reynolds made her own appeal to be re-elected as a woman – 'there is much for us as women still to do'.

Fanny was re-elected and was to remain a Bridport Guardian into the twentieth century.

Who was Fanny Reynolds?

Fanny Reynolds came from a Quaker family which prized public service and produced many women who were active in a range of progressive causes particularly campaigns for women's rights. She was born into what was to be a large family in Street, Somerset to James Clark (part of the Clark's shoe manufacturing family) and his wife Eleanor née Stephens, who had been born in Bridport. The 1861 Census records Fanny's father as a manufacturer of sheepskin rugs, boots and shoes in the business C & J Clark which employed 900 workers. This gives some flavour of Fanny's background together with the fact that her mother, Eleanor, was a signatory to the first big national petition to Parliament demanding women's suffrage in 1866.

Fanny started her public work while still a girl in Street. She took charge of the Penny Bank, the Band of Hope (an organisation for children that warned them of the dangers of the demon drink and urged them to sign a pledge that they would abstain from alcohol) and other organisations associated with her father's factory. When she came to Bridport in 1862 on her marriage to Arthur Reynolds, Fanny continued to be an activist in many progressive causes like many female members of the wider Clark family. This was unusual in the town yet she found others who cared about many issues which they saw as 'women's issues' and tried to find a means to bring them to wider attention. Her husband Arthur (1836-84) shared many of her political concerns. He was a Liberal and besides running his drapery business was active in the town as a councillor and then alderman. The years of her marriage were taken up with managing the household, rearing her growing family (she had 10 children, not all of whom survived to adulthood; only 6 outlived her) as well as supporting her husband in his business. Fanny became much more visible in widowhood. Many of the leading voices of the Victorian and Edwardian women's movement were also widows such as Emmeline Pankhurst, Millicent Fawcett and Charlotte Despard. This was partly because in legal terms married women did not exist in their own right so, to begin with, it was only as widows or as single women that women sought to participate in public life. In the early years of the Victorian women's movement the vote was claimed for single and widowed women but not for married women. The latter demand was regarded by many as too radical.

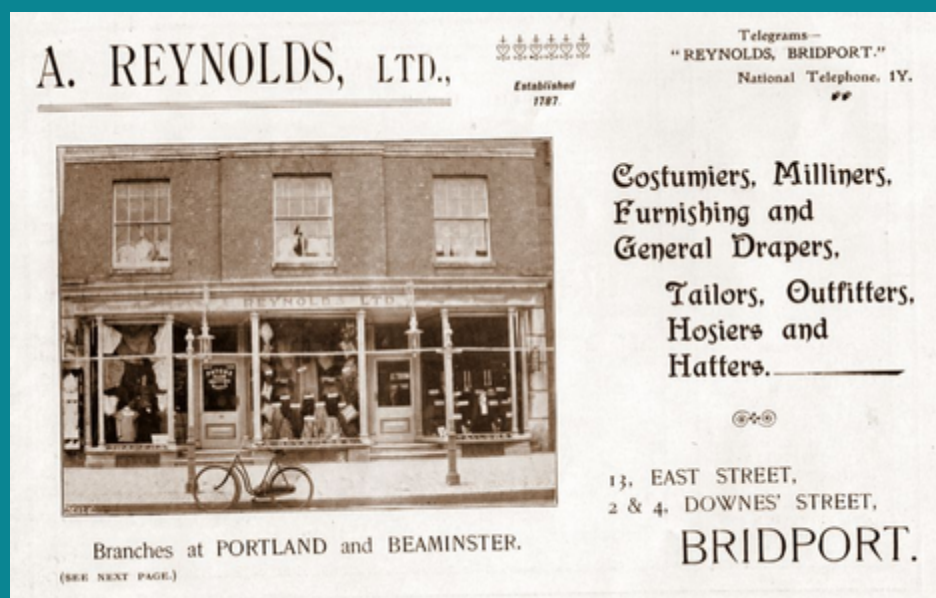
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In her own long public life in Bridport, Fanny Reynolds was a founder member of the local Women's Liberal Association in the early 1890s. One of its causes was women's suffrage for which Fanny was a prominent local advocate. She was part of a public meeting on women's suffrage organised by the local WLA in November 1893. Here connections were drawn between the opening of the door to women's participation in local government and what was seen as the necessary next step, that women become full citizens. It was argued, "politics did not change women but good women like good men might do much to change politics" (BN, 3.11.1893). The meeting backed a resolution that the parliamentary franchise should be extended to women on the same terms as it is or may be extended to men – the classic suffragist demand. The meeting also called for women to be able to vote in Parish and District Council elections on the same terms as men. There was still much to fight for.

Fanny Reynolds also supported and worked for a number of other causes and campaigns that were part of the wider Victorian and Edwardian women's movement. She was active in Bridport in temperance (joint honorary secretary of the Bridport Temperance Council and a member of the local Women's Christian Temperance Association); education (long time Hon. Sec of the Girls General School Committee); and health (member of Bridport Nursing Society and of the Ladies Committee of the Hospital). She was also part of the Society of Friends including being a member of the Central Home Mission Committee which involved meetings in various parts of the country. She also attended and spoke at national meetings such as the Women's Liberal Federation (1892) and the Peace Union (1896). Her strong pacifist convictions meant that during the South African War, she organised the distribution of 10,000 peace pamphlets in the Bridport area and lobbied so successfully that Peace Sermons were preached in all the local churches (Finch, 88).

She lived above the premises of A. Reynolds Ltd on East Street for much of her life. By 1900 she lived at Westlands on Crock Lane, finally moving to Wyndcroft on West Bay Road (now 105) in 1904. To begin with her son and his family shared this house. By 1909 Edward Reynolds and his family had moved next door to Tynrhos (107), the pair of Fanny's large semi-detached house. Fanny remained at Wyndcroft until the end of her life, accompanied by her unmarried daughter Margaret. And just another note about how democracy works in practice, although Margaret was old enough to qualify for the vote in 1918 (she was born in 1867), because she lived in a furnished room in her mother's house it seems she was one of the third of adult women not enfranchised in 1918. Moreover, Fanny's obituary noted that although she was an early supporter of women's suffrage, 'owing to infirmity she was never able to exercise the franchise at parliamentary elections'. Although postal votes were introduced for servicemen in 1918 and used again in 1945, the same facilities were not extended to civilians until 1948 – long after Fanny's death. These are reminders that there is often a considerable difference between having a right and being able to exercise it.



From Mates Guide to Bridport 1904

And what did Fanny look like? So far I have not found any images of her. She was described towards the end of her long life by her granddaughter, Frances Reynolds, as someone who 'always wore the typical black bonnet and three quarter cape of that generation of "old ladies"' (Finch, 94). She recalled 'Granny was conveyed to a Meeting in her own bath chair, with my father as pusher and possibly an older child as puller up the hill' (Finch, 97). But earlier in her life Fanny sounds remarkably energetic and engaged.

Why was Fanny Reynolds willing and able to stand as a Guardian in 1891?

When her husband died prematurely in 1884, Fanny was left with a large young family, aged 8 to 21, to support and her husband's drapery business (A. Reynolds Ltd, 13 East Street). With little previous business experience, she and the staff kept the business thriving until her sons were able to take over running the company. In the 1891 Census, having never had a declared occupation, she was described as a draper. Her son Edward Seaman Reynolds (1871-1953), who later was to be a very active citizen serving as a Bridport Town Councillor for nearly fifty years, was sent away by his mother to take a three year apprenticeship so that on his return at the age of 18 he could take over running the family business with his brothers. As a widow and a businesswoman Fanny would have paid a sufficient poor law rate to qualify as a voter and thus as a candidate for the Guardians. Moreover, by 1890 Fanny may have felt able to step back a little from day-to-day business responsibilities to increase her involvement in public work. Her Quakerism would have given her experience of participating in meetings and she does not seem to have been reluctant to preside at public meetings, give votes of thanks and to speak.

Fanny Reynolds as a lady Guardian

Fanny Reynolds was always proud to be a lady Guardian. This can be seen when in October 1894 she spoke at a public meeting in Glastonbury on the advantages of ladies becoming Poor Law Guardians. She spoke from her novel experience of having been a Guardian for three years. She told her audience that lady Guardians had been first elected fifteen years ago and even ten years ago there were few in number.

There were now", she said, "7 lady Guardians in Somerset, of which 3 were in Bath". She went on to detail:

"the advantages to be derived from the presence of ladies on the Board, and contended that the Newton Abbott scandal would never have reached such an extent if ladies had been on the Board. Some Workhouse officials objected to ladies being on the Board, but no good master or matron objected, but rather welcomed their presence. She also alluded to the question of out-relief as a difficult subject, and here again illustrated the usefulness of lady Guardians." (WG, 19.10.1894)

She must have been quite persuasive as, at the end of the meeting, a committee was set up to consider the desirability of nominating a lady to act as Guardian for the Glastonbury parish.

Fanny Reynolds was joined at the Board's fortnightly meetings by Susannah Stephens (1849-1918) in 1894. She was the wife of the local net and twine manufacturer Joseph Thompson Stephens. Like Fanny, Susannah was a Quaker and a mother (of 6 children of whom 1 died). She lived at the 14-roomed Wanderwell House. Unusually, she was a German national but this does not seem to have affected her eligibility to stand for election.

By 1899 Mrs Stephens was no longer a Guardian. Now Fanny Reynolds was joined by another woman related to Bridport's male elite, Miss Alice Colfox (1856-1936), sister of Lt Col T.A. Colfox, leading citizen of the town and resident of Coneygar. All three women came from what can be termed 'the servanted class' and were able to overcome the many obstacles to women being nominated and elected largely through their family connections to the male elite of the town.

Bridport's lady Guardians took seriously their work. The *News* produced annual attendance lists for all the local Guardians. Fanny rarely missed a meeting. When she acknowledged her re-election to the Board in 1894, she underlined why women needed to be Guardians, 'Many improvements have been made during the last few years, but I feel that there is much for us, as women, still to do in promoting the comfort of the aged and infirm, and in the care of the children whose training needs such special attention, to enable them to make a fair start in the world, and become good citizens' (BN, 14.12.1894). A surviving notebook of Fanny's where she compiled some of the key events in her life not only noted happenings in the family, visits and visitors but also the resignation of the master of the workhouse in 1907, the employment of a new Girls Caretaker at the workhouse and the deaths of fellow Guardians (Bridport Museum, BRPMG 5392.5). She continued to take an interest in the workhouse for many years.

Matriarch of a Bridport dynasty of civic activists

Fanny Reynolds was not only a pioneer herself but she was the matriarch of a dynasty of civic activists in Bridport who were inspired by her example. Her son E.S. Reynolds not only successfully ran the family business but also was very active as a Quaker, Town Councillor, twice Mayor, and Bridport's Food Controller in WW1 while also serving on a Military Service Tribunal (one of the only Conscientious Objectors in the country to do so). When he was given the Honorary Freedom of Bridport in 1948, he paid tribute to his mother, whose guidance and experience helped him on the road to public service. He was particularly proud that she was the first woman Guardian in Dorset.

Fanny's granddaughter Kathleen Reynolds (1905-53) spent her working life away from Bridport but returned to the town in 1940 when her father Edward's health started to fail. She helped manage the shop and quickly stepped into public life including becoming the first woman town councillor to chair a council committee (Public Health) (Finch, 90). Like her grandmother she thought women had a particular contribution to make. In her 1945 election manifesto, she wrote, 'I feel very strongly that women should be represented on the Town Council, and that particularly in matters dealing with health, housing, future planning and young people, they have a definite contribution to make' (Finch, 90-91). When she died prematurely, it was said in almost the same words as used to describe Fanny Reynolds, that 'Bridport lost one of its most active and conscientious workers' (Finch, 92). Kathleen's sister Frances (1902-95) also returned to live in her home town later in life. She too was extraordinarily active not just as a Quaker, as a trustee of many local charities and as honorary curator of Bridport Museum, but also was only the second woman to be the town's Mayor (1967-68).

Over the generations, several of the Reynolds family have followed the pioneering steps of Fanny Reynolds. She had been influenced by the wider Clark family into which she was born where many of the female members took part in the Victorian women's movement. Fanny's example in turn influenced her contemporaries and those that came after her. We should not forget her.

The significance of Fanny Reynold's achievement

Fanny Reynolds' achievement was considerable given the obstacles that existed for any woman to be elected to public office. Before the reforms of 1894 a woman standing to be a Guardian had to be qualified to vote, which was set at a high bar. Then she had to be nominated as a candidate in what was often a closed male world where the same elite men nominated each other. The next hurdle was to get elected when plural voting often acted against the usurper woman candidate. Even after the reforms of 1894 newly qualified working-class people and married women of all social classes did not find it easy to become Guardians. There remained resistance to women participating in equal numbers to men on Boards of Guardians. Many like Fanny Reynolds remained isolated examples, just as later when it was possible for women to stand in municipal elections it was hard for women to break into Bridport Town Council. The eschewal of party labels in Bridport's local politics which was still apparent in the interwar period may have acted against women coming forward as candidates if they were not related to the men who ran the town. Elsewhere the sponsorship of a local political party seems to have helped some women candidates, as that provided organised practical support in an election campaign. As her obituary in 1930 noted, 'only a person with courage and a believer in the utility of work from a woman's standpoint would have faced with serenity the opposition which happily no longer exists at the present time'. Maybe Fanny's example, particularly her courage to overcome opposition, can inspire the participation of the excluded and marginal in the opportunities that this year of elections presents.'

- Prof Karen Hunt, March 2024.



*Fanny Reynolds' granddaughter, Mayor Miss
Frances Reynolds, Bridport Museum*

Want to know more?

For a local study of women Poor Law Guardians before 1914, see Moira Martin, 'Guardians of the Poor: A philanthropic female elite in Bristol', *Regional Historian*, Issue 9, Summer 2002.

<https://www2.uwe.ac.uk/faculties/CAHE/Documents/Research/Regional-history/RH9Moira.pdf>

For women as Poor Law Guardians, see Patricia Hollis, *Ladies Elect. Women in English Local Government, 1865-1914*, Clarendon, 1989.

For the Reynolds family's part in the town's Quaker community, see Suzanne Finch, *A Fine Meeting There is There. 300 years of Bridport's Quaker History*, 2000.

For the longer history of the poor and the Poor Law in Bridport, see Sylvia Stafford, *Down and Out in Bridport and the Surrounding Parishes 1200-1900 : A history of the poor, sick and elderly in the local community and the development of Bridport Union Workhouse*, 2023.

The newspapers cited here have been digitised and are available at www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk.