

**COLONEL HUGH AINSWORTH
(1871-1952)
OF THE INDIAN MEDICAL SERVICE**



Peshawar, 1916

**HUGH AINSWORTH (1841-1904) AND MARY WRIGHT JOYNSON (1841-1873):
HUGH AINSWORTH (1871-1952) AND LAURA DELAFORCE (1876-1962)**

Hugh Ainsworth and Mary Wright Joynson married on September 14th 1870 in Marple, Stockport. Mary embarked on married life from the house of her sister, Libby Leech, since by this time both of her parents were dead. It is likely, however, that they had met in Broughton. Hugh's family's business had been there and it was close to where Mary lived for some time with her other sister, Hannah Holt Joynson.

The couple lived initially at Monton Terrace, Slack Lane, Monton, Eccles, from where Hugh could no doubt conveniently travel into central Manchester. Mary, called Minnie by her husband, seemed delighted: 'My little house is perfect in its way & we are very happy – too happy almost – it makes me tremble' and she turns down an invitation to visit her sister Hannie: 'As to my coming to stay, Hugh would never part with me I am sure – unless I were ill or really needed change'.¹ While lamenting that Hugh has to work so hard 'what with book keeping and foreign mails' Minnie loyally wants him to work hard so that he can be a success in business. The 1871 census tells us that Hugh was a commission clerk and they are prosperous enough to have a servant living in.² Hugh was born there on 28th September 1871, the couple's first child. Hugh Senior was by then working as a shipping agent, and the baby arrived only a fortnight after their first wedding anniversary. When he was eighteen months old a sister, Winifred Mary, was born on 26th March 1873 at the same address, by which time Hugh senior had become a salesman.

Little Hugh might have gone on to become the eldest of a large family, but, not long after his second birthday, on November 13th 1873, his mother died of gastric fever and septicaemia, leaving behind two children far too young to have retained any memory of her. At this point the family was living at Higher Albert Street, Eccles, and Hugh was working as a clerk. There are hints in Minnie's correspondence that the idea of Hugh marrying was not entirely welcome to Hugh's female relatives and he did not in fact find another wife until after their death.

The 1881 census [RG11/3509/108/49] finds the family living out of town at Pepper Street, Lymm. Hugh is a buyer to a commission agent and it is likely that he was trading in textiles, making use of the knowledge and contacts possessed by his family. His brother John Cable Ainsworth was a greycloth agent, supplying woven but unbleached and undyed cloth to mills where it would be printed. Hugh and Winifred were schoolchildren aged 9 and 8 and the household now also contains Hugh's sister Elizabeth aged 42, and his mother, now 71. The older Elizabeth was more commonly called Betsy. They have the help of a general servant living in: Margaret Hulme, aged 29. A letter written by Hugh and seen at Cheshire CRO³ suggests that Hugh attended Foxley Mount School, Lymm.

By the time of the 1891 census⁴ the family had moved much closer to Manchester and Hugh was a medical student. His aunt Elizabeth who, with the help of her own mother,

¹ Cheshire Record Office Acc 2253/2/22

² RG 10/3969/13/19

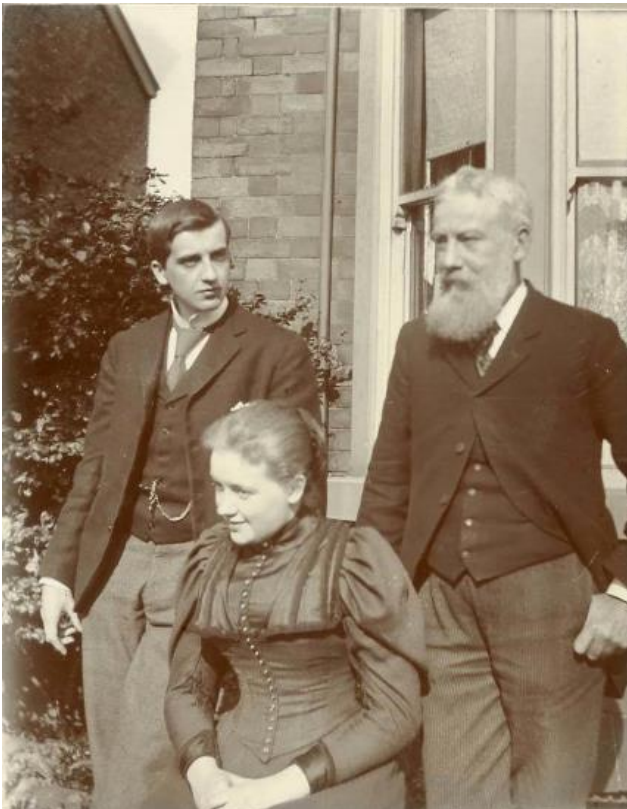
³ Acc 2253/2/20

⁴ RG12/3157/83/12

must largely have been responsible for bringing up the children, had died the previous January aged 51 after many bouts of ill-health and the death certificate cites retroversion of the uterus lasting several years with spinal paralysis for the final six months. As Betsy senior was 80 when her daughter died much of the dual burden of taking over the domestic duties which the younger Betsy could no longer fulfil plus the heavy nursing care necessary must have devolved upon Winnie, although she had the help of Annie Thursley, a servant living with them. John Cable Ainsworth (Hugh senior's brother) died of cancer in the same year, leaving Hugh the last survivor of the four.

They were living at this time at 4 Albert Terrace, alias 565 Stretford Road, on the corner where Cornbrook Street meets Stretford Road. Hugh is a buyer of cotton cloths and both he and his son probably found the tramway running along Stretford Road very convenient indeed for reaching the commercial centre of Manchester and the Medical School.

A further death took place in this house when 82-year-old Betsy, having endured the misery of seeing not only her husband but three of her four children predecease her, died of *morbus cordis*, heart disease, which allowed influenza to carry her off on March 27th 1892. Winnie was now 19, not the best age to be left without a chaperone. During their time at 4 Albert Terrace Hugh and Winnie had lost both the women who had stepped into the breach and brought them up and who would have been constant



Hugh Ainsworth Junior,
Hugh Ainsworth Senior
and Winifred Mary
Ainsworth

presences in their lives. Hugh must have been fully engaged in equipping himself for his chosen career, but such a path was not open to Winnie at that date. However of her four children, one daughter and one son would graduate from Manchester Medical School.

In April 1894 Hannah Holt Joynson addressed a letter to Winnie at 'Summerville, Prestwich, Nr Manchester'. This is a most attractive house which still stands at 1 Guest Road, Prestwich, and the train station (now serving the Metro) is only a short walk away, so again it would have been handy for the male Ainsworths to commute in and out of Manchester. Most families lived in rented accommodation at that time, so it was easy to move around, and it would not have been surprising if the family had wanted a fresh start after the sad events associated with Albert Terrace.

Hugh had gained his first qualifications as Member of the Royal College of Surgeons and Licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians of London in November 1893. Thirty years later these exams were still regarded as easier to pass than the Medical School's own finals and indeed it was not until April 1895 that Hugh added MB, Bac Surg to his MRCS, LRCP, becoming a graduate of the Victoria University of Manchester and gaining First Class Honours according to the Medical Directory of 1932. Family tradition has it that he won a gold medal in his Finals.

Before passing his University Finals Hugh worked as House Physician at Manchester Royal Infirmary and as acting Assistant Medical Officer in 1894 at the Monsall Fever Hospital, Monsall Road, before being formally appointed to that post in January 1895. A cutting about this and some photographs of him, as a student and in military uniform, can be seen at the Rylands Library in the Manchester Medical Collection, MMC/2/AinsworthH. This experience in treating fevers and infectious diseases must have been a useful preparation for a career in India.

In January 1896, while living at 32 Calthorpe St, Grays Inn Road, London, close to many specialised hospitals, Hugh filled in an application form to join the Indian Medical Service, notifying the Military Secretary at the India Office that his usual address was Guest Road and that he wished to take voluntary examinations in French, Physical Geography, Natural Philosophy and Botany. While it is reasonably evident that competence in language-learning and knowledge of the physical world would be useful in his chosen career, it may be less obvious now that natural philosophy covered the sciences in general and that botany was still of practical help at a time when medical students were supposed to study the pharmacopoeia and be able to make up prescriptions using herbs and other organic materials. This application, with a copy of his birth certificate, medical qualifications, and character references from the Vicar of Sale and the Rector of St Bride's, Old Trafford, can be seen in the Oriental and India Office Collections, now known as the Asia Pacific and Africa Collections, in the British Library at L/MIL/9/419 ff 314-320.

In February 1896 he took exams in Medicine, Surgery, Anatomy & Physiology and in Chemistry, Pharmacy & Drugs, as well as papers in French and Natural History. He was placed second out of 27 and probably joined the IMS in May. In preparation for the hazards of his future life two months earlier he had made his Will, leaving everything to his sister Winifred and appointing her his sole executrix. In July 1896, with 16 other surgeons on probation, he took a further four papers, all marked out of 900. His marks were 575 for Military Surgery, 706 for Military Medicine, 605 for Hygiene and 710 for Pathology.⁵ With a total of 2596 marks he was again second overall and was appointed Surgeon Lieutenant on July 29th.

⁵ OIOC, Military Cadet papers L/MIL/9/358-429

William Wilfrid Webb wrote a guide, published in 1890, for doctors contemplating joining the IMS. This laid emphasis on knowledge of diseases of the eye, calculus in the bladder, disorders of the bowel and fevers. He warned that an officer of the IMS could expect to perform many cataract operations and a great deal of instrumental midwifery and needed a good knowledge of childhood diseases. He would have to be prepared to act on his own decisions, as second opinions could not be obtained.

While under training at Netley, pay would amount to 8 shillings a day which, with care, would cover basic outgoings. The trainee officers would be responsible for cases on the wards. After passing the exams, pay would increase to 10 shillings a day, and those who had attained the best marks usually opted to be posted to Bengal, rather than Bombay or Madras, as it offered the widest experience. Furthermore the highest rank in the Service, that of Surgeon General to the Government of India, was only open to Bengal officers. This rigid division of medical services between the three presidencies was, however, soon to end.

When leaving for India, officers were advised to take a shooting-suit, morning suits, lounge coat, flannel shirts, thin and thick flannel sleeping suits and flannel cummerbunds as well as their 'Kharkee' uniform and white Mess suits with the red Departmental cummerbund. If they could afford to, they were advised also to bring their hunting saddle, guns and fishing-rods.

Normally an officer would serve with the Army for at least two years, working with English troops and families at a station until a vacancy with a native regiment arose. During this time they would be expected to attend hospital twice daily, visit officers and their families in their bungalows and native officers in their accommodation, examine recruits, conduct medical boards, attend parades and field days and supervise sanitary conditions in the Lines.

After two years a medical officer could apply for military or civil employment, military postings being regarded as the softer option. The functions of a civil surgeon in India, while broadly comparable to those of a GP in England, included a number of extra duties spelt out by Amil Kumar in *Medicine and the Raj: British Medical Policy in India 1835-1911*. He would have to attend all difficult medical and surgical cases at the hospital, routine cases being dealt with by Indian sub-assistant surgeons. He would have to visit the jail daily.⁶ At the police hospital he would perform medico-legal post-mortems. As chief medical officer, he would inspect all dispensaries in the district four times a year, superintend vaccinations and inspect factories. His administrative burden would include correspondence with the Inspector general of Hospitals, the Sanitary Commission, heads of the dispensaries and other civil surgeons and preparing the annual return on all these activities for the Inspector General.

Kumar agrees with Webb that a surgeon opting to remain with the army has a more exciting and less exacting life, with slightly better pay. While principally treating fever, dysentery and blistered feet, he would also dispose of more time for research than a civil surgeon. In many cases one suspects that time available for research was commuted into time available for a good social and sporting life.

⁶ It is evident from other surgeons' accounts that jail duties could involve certifying that prisoners were fit to be executed, witnessing the execution and certifying life extinct thereafter.

For those who were of an academic bent Webb reveals that there were 14 appointments in the Medical Colleges of the Bengal Presidency, of which 4 were in Lahore. As these had to cover Medicine, Surgery, Anatomy and Chemistry, specialities remained necessarily fairly broad.

EJ O'Meara in his memoir *I'd Live It Again* published in 1935 entered the IMS in 1897, a year later than Hugh, when there were 96 candidates for 18 places. He felt India offered 'opportunities to learn in every branch of medicine and surgery under conditions that give unique opportunities for all-round knowledge' (p 24).

A Surgeon's India, the diaries of Lt Col Alexander Cameron of the IMS, who was in India from 1905 to 1932, makes it clear that 'in those days both the IMS and the Indian Civil Service demanded a high standard of excellence in its recruits. They were to be entrusted with the lives and wellbeing of countless and diverse peoples, needing to be self-sufficient, courageous and just.' They had to be prepared to learn several languages (p iii-iv).

Hugh's career is briefly summarised by Lt-Col DG Crawford in his *Roll of the Indian Medical Service*, London, 1936, p 234, entry no 2400, and can be followed in more detail through the Indian Army Lists, which show that by January 1897 he was in Lucknow and by July 1897 at Guntok on detachment. In January 1898 he was with no 43 Native Field Hospital. He was involved in the Tirah campaign of 1897-8 on the North-West Frontier during the actions of Chagru Kotal, Dargai, Sampagha and Arhanga Passes, and in operations around Dwatoi and in the Bara Valley. This earned him a medal with two clasps. After this he must have been either wounded or ill, for he was granted a medical certificate for six months leave out of India from March 25th 1898.

At home considerable changes had taken place. His father, at the age of 55, had remarried. The wedding took place in Prestwich Register Office on May 2nd 1896, just as Hugh was joining the IMS. Hugh senior was still at Guest Road and working as a merchant's clerk. His bride, Alice Rainford, was the daughter of James Rainford, hotel proprietor. The earlier decision to move to Guest Road may have affected Hugh's choice of bride as in 1894 James Rainford was at the Exchange Hotel and luncheon bar at 12 & 14 Half Street, Cathedral Yard, Manchester, according to the Slater's Directory for that year. Half Street connected Hanging Ditch and Fennel Street and Exchange Hotel must have been an extremely handy place to call in for a drink or two before catching the train home to Prestwich. The Rainfords were still there in 1896, but by 1898 James had moved to the Granville Hotel at 41 Fennel Street. In 1899 a James Rainford, commission agent, is listed at 34 Fennel Street.

I only became aware of this marriage because it was listed in the family Bible with the birth and death of a daughter, Elizabeth Alice Ainsworth, born on July 2nd 1897. The child was a spina bifida baby and survived for only 4 days. The address on the death certificate was 326 Great Cheetham Street East. Rather oddly the death is declared by the child's grandfather, of the same address, and not by Hugh, who is described as 'a Manchester warehouseman'. This generally meant someone who rented space and sold goods in one of the many large and ornate warehouses. Warehousemen were essentially concerned with selling, not storage.

On Hugh's return to India he was attached on October 31st 1898 to the 4th Regiment of Punjabi Infantry as Officiating Medical Officer and passed the first of his language exams, in Pushtu.

On May 7th 1899, having gained his higher-level qualification in Pushtu, he was with the Kohat-Kurram Force, returning in January 1900 to the 4th Punjabis. On 29th July 1899 he was promoted to Captain and a year later was on plague duty at Jullundur. Apart from the hazards of the disease itself, army doctors were at risk from the violent reactions of some of the civilian population to the measures imposed to contain it. Lawrence James in *Raj: The Making and Unmaking of British India*, London, 1999, pp 357-358, states that, while the exact means of transmission were not yet understood, the authorities strove to halt progress of the disease by imposing strict quarantine, isolating victims, and disinfecting homes with limewash. All of these measures were extremely difficult to execute in densely populated areas and the examination of women for swollen glands was felt to be shocking. Two army officers responsible for enforcing them in 1896 were shot in Poona by Hindus and in Calcutta in October a crowd of Muslim mill-workers burned down a hospital after attacking an army doctor and killing two soldiers. Rumours were rife that patients were tortured in hospitals and that inoculations would deprive Muslims of their faith. In Cawnpore in 1900, 43 years after the Indian Mutiny, a mob destroyed a hospital, killing several attendants in the process. In this atmosphere of suspicion and resentment, it was far from simple for the Indian Medical Service to implement what they saw as essential public health measures.

On September 3rd Hugh was appointed Senior Medical Officer of Bundelkhand District, which had its headquarters at Agra, and continued to work as a civilian medical officer in Bengal being appointed to Multan on Dec 9th 1901, the year which had seen the end of Queen Victoria's long reign. On September 23rd 1902 he was sent to tackle an outbreak of plague in Lahore and from November was on deputation to Chamba and Medical Adviser to the Rajah of Chamba. He may have been functioning more as a public health adviser than as a personal physician.

On March 19th 1904 he moved to Shahpur with responsibility both for the civilian population and the jail and by this time has added the higher qualification in Urdu to his skills in Pushtu. He held this appointment until May 6th 1906, when he was on deputation to Patiala State. It is not easy to interpret the cryptic entries, but it is possible that he was now responsible for a large district rather than a town.

In his first 10 years with the IMS he seems to have moved from looking after a regiment on active service to organising public health measures on a large scale. However on November 12th 1906 he was granted 7 months leave and this was extended by a further 7 months and 10 days.

Presumably when he went home on leave he would normally visit his sister Winnie, by now married to Thomas Davies, the Vicar of St Catherine's, Barton upon Irwell, and meet his nephews Henry and Humphrey and his niece Gwyneth⁷ and we know that this time he was planning to join the family briefly during their holiday in Pwllheli. He could not visit his father, who had died in October 1904 in Cranage, Cheshire, of gastritis and cirrhosis of the liver, conditions indicative of chronic alcoholism. What happened to Hugh senior's second marriage, or his wife, is still a mystery as although Hugh was

⁷ And later a further son, Philip.

eventually tracked to Irishpad Cottage, Cranage in the 1901 census,⁸ described as a widower and living on his own in this small hamlet mainly populated by agricultural workers, his second wife's demise has not so far been traced in the registers. Winifred is thought to have lived for a little while on Cheetham Hill and to have been 'handed round the family'. Certainly there is no trace of father or stepmother in the photograph of her wedding in 1900. Hugh Senior appears to have died intestate and his affairs would have been complicated by the existence of a second wife, if she was still alive. It is possible, but looks rather unlikely, that at this point Hugh may have received a small inheritance.

This long spell of home leave was a turning point in both his professional and (perhaps) his personal life. While in England he took his FRCS, thus ensuring that he was very well qualified and able to hope for promotion. At about this time he married Laura Delaforce, known and fondly remembered as Aunt Laurie, in Bombay on 16 January 1909. Laurie had been born in Oporto on Feb 7th 1876, the only girl in a family of seven children and a member of a well-established port-producing family.



Laurie
Ainsworth,
née
Delaforce
In 1912

Hugh and 14 others were promoted to the rank of Major on January 29th 1908. By April he was back in India and on plague duty in the Punjab and in July was again officiating as medical officer for Patiala State and was 7th from the bottom in seniority among his fellow Majors.

His daughter Betty was born on October 27th 1909 and christened in Lahore Cathedral on November 22nd.⁹ Very difficult decisions had to be faced by British families in India.

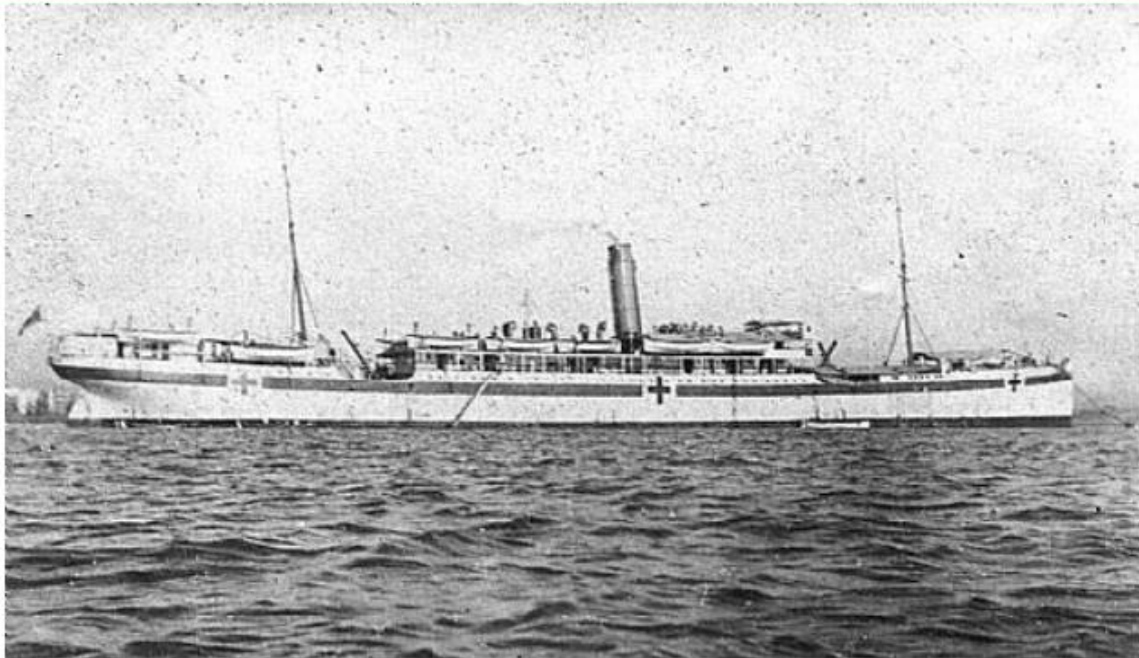
⁸ RG 13/3347/30/18

⁹ OIOC N/1 vol 360, folio 175

Infant mortality was much higher on the sub-continent, but parents who sent their youngsters back to Britain for their schooling might spend years separated from their children or choose to accept whatever problems ensued from sending the mother back with them.

The efforts which went into gaining his FRCS resulted in Hugh being appointed Professor of Ophthalmic Surgery at the Medical College in Lahore by January 1910 at the age of 38, a post he held until 1916. Their second daughter Nancy Laurie was born on August 16th 1915 and christened in Lahore Cathedral on October 27th, her older sister's sixth birthday.¹⁰ By this time Britain had been at war with Germany for a year. In January 1916 Hugh became Lieutenant-Colonel Ainsworth and went to Peshawar as specialist in ophthalmology.¹¹

By 1917 he had been posted to HMHS *Syria*,¹² one of six hospital ships provided to ferry the Indian troops who fought in the First World War across to England for treatment at hospitals in Brockenhurst, Brighton, Bournemouth or Netley.¹³



ss SYRIA

Syria was 450 feet in length and had been built in 1901 for P&O. Converted, she carried 109 cots and 214 berths for the wounded and had a top speed of 14 knots.

¹⁰ OIOC, N/1 vol 408, folio 275.

¹¹ DG Crawford, *A History of the Indian Medical Service 1600-1913*, London, 1914, pp 213-214.

¹² Picture reproduced by kind permission of <http://www.clydesite.co.uk>.

¹³ Donald McDonald, *Surgeons Twoe & a Barber, Being Some Account of the Life & Work of the IMS (1600-1947)*, 1950, p 172

Trench warfare resulted in many wounds to the head and eyes and Colonel Ainsworth's specialised skills and versatility were no doubt very much in demand. This tour of duty continued until October 1918, when he became Senior Medical Officer to the Nepalese Contingent in Kakool, which sounds as though it may have been a temporary posting, filling in while waiting for the right slot.

In April 1919 he is back in Lahore as Professor of Ophthalmology and officiating Principal at the King Edward Medical College there. A year later he is listed as being its Principal. Founded in 1860, this is the oldest Medical School in what is now Pakistan and the second oldest in the entire subcontinent.

Starting on April 18th 1922 he had 3 months and 27 days leave, long enough perhaps to have visited England, before returning to his post again.

Promotion to full Colonel came on May 3rd 1923 and with it a new posting, as IG [Inspector General] of the civil hospitals in Bihar and Orissa. Just over a year later, on August 27th 1924, he was appointed King's Honorary Surgeon. This honour had been granted by Royal Warrant to the IMS by Queen Victoria in 1859: 'Six of the most meritorious medical officers of the Army shall be appointed My Honorary Physicians and six, My Honorary Surgeons'. A further Warrant of 1911 restricted the title to officers on the active list and made it clear that it had to be relinquished upon retirement. Hugh Ainsworth had certainly climbed to the top of his chosen professional tree.

An 8-month spell of leave was granted from March 13th 1925 and he remained in the same post, rising to be second in seniority amongst the IMS Colonels. Retirement, however, was looming and he would complete his 30 years of pensionable service on May 2nd 1927. One last spell of leave was granted, 1 month and 23 days from March 10th 1927 'ex l, p r' – out of India, pre-retirement? In the pension records at L/AG/21/15/48 (1825-1956) it is noted that 'leave cannot be prolonged beyond 3/5/27. Retirement to take effect from 4/5/27.' His establishment number was 3719. At first his pension paid £191 per quarter, which had risen to £246 by 1932. Betty once told me that they took a very long time to come back from India, and mentioned passing through Egypt. It is believed that Hugh was for a time head of the Medical School at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and acting President of the University. The pension ledger notes PO Box 730 Jerusalem as his address and adds that in July 1929 he was probably returning to Britain for permanent residence. The same source gives Pakoy, Ellasdale Road, Bognor Regis as his address from April 1931.

1 Ellasdale Road, now extended and divided into 4 flats, was their home for the remainder of their lives. Hugh was a member of the RAC Club in London and, despite his age, is thought to have been active during the Second World War. He died on Feb 13th 1952, aged 80, and Laurie's death followed ten years and one day after his.

Their elder daughter Betty married in 1929 Edgar Vernon Whitcombe, son of the Right Reverend Robert Henry Whitcombe DD, Suffragan Bishop of Colchester, and Annie Maria Vernon Evans, and they had two children, a boy and a girl. Edgar, always known as Eggs, worked for Barclays Bank DCO and consequently the couple spent much of their life abroad, latterly in Nairobi. Betty was a noted horsewoman and showjumper. Their time in Kenya encompassed the Mau Mau uprising, during which many white settlers were attacked and killed in a manner designed to fill others with fear. Betty was out riding in the bush with a girl who had claimed to be a thoroughly competent rider, but

who proved incapable of controlling a skittish mount. Her horse ran backwards into the side of Betty's and lashed out, breaking Betty's leg just below the knee. Betty was lying on the ground in great pain hoping that the girl would manage to reach home and bring help when she saw a tall native emerge from the bush. He came slowly towards her swinging a sharp panga and she assumed that it was now her turn to be slaughtered. Instead he squatted down and kept her company until the rescuers were seen approaching, at which point he melted back into the bush. It was later discovered that the Mau Mau had a camp close by and Betty assumed she had been spared in order not to draw attention to its existence. In 1960 Eggs was appointed CBE 'for public services in Kenya'. Renowned for their kindness and hospitality, they retired to Haslemere where Eggs died in 1993 and Betty in 1997.

Nancy married a naval officer, Stafford Radcliffe White¹⁴, in Malta on March 16th 1936, when she was 20 and he 26. Two girls were born of this marriage. Before war broke out, SR White had specialised in submarine warfare and in July 1940, promoted to Lieutenant Commander, he was aboard the mine-laying submarine HMS *Narwhal*, commanded by Lt.Cdr. James Burch, who had just been awarded a DSO. *Narwhal*, a Porpoise-Class submarine launched in August 1935, had already been on several mine-laying expeditions in the North Sea and her mines and torpedoes had already proved effective during the Norwegian campaign. Capable of carrying 50 mines and with a crew of 59, *Narwhal* offered a large target and in northern waters in summer, could not count on many hours of darkness for recharging her batteries. On July 23rd a Dornier 17, piloted by Leutnant Karl Müller, reported attacking a submarine about 125 nautical miles east of Aberdeen. It is believed that this was *Narwhal*, as nothing more was ever heard of her and the loss of the submarine and her crew was announced in *The Times* of Oct 5th 1940. A letter written by Ethel Priestley Ainsworth in November recounts how devastating Nancy found the death of her husband.

Towards the end of the war Nancy remarried, becoming the wife of Philip Antony Fiennes Colvile on April 26th 1944 at Holy Trinity Church, Sloane Square, London. He was the son of Commander Mansel Brabazon Fiennes Colvile, RN, and Helen Marion Withers. Educated at Shrewsbury, he joined the Oxford & Buckinghamshire Light

¹⁴ Starting in September 1926, aged 17, he had served as a Cadet aboard two battleships. *Royal Sovereign & Benbow*. He then joined a cruiser, *HMS Lowestoft*, as midshipman in 1929. In 1930 he was on a course in Portsmouth to qualify for promotion to Lieutenant. As Sub-Lieutenant from March 1930 he then attended a submarine course before being appointed to L19, then, promoted Lieutenant on Feb 1st 1932, joined L26, both of these being part of the 2nd Submarine Flotilla with the Home Fleet. He was posted in 1933 to L53 based in Portsmouth as part of the 5th Submarine Flotilla. By September 1936 he was second-in-command of *Oswald*, at 1,475 tons twice the size of the 'L' Class subs and part of the 4th Flotilla. 13 months later he was grappling with 'perisher', an immensely tough course for would-be submarine commanders. This major hurdle successfully negotiated, he became commander of H33, 410 tons, and was back with the 5th Submarine Flotilla. Promotion in the peacetime navy was very slow. In wartime officers with such a thorough training in submarines must have been very much in demand and yet he apparently began the war with a spell in the battleship *Rodney*, possibly advising on anti-submarine tactics? In February he was promoted Lieutenant Commander and sometime after May he became Staff Officer Operations. Perhaps he was aboard *Narwhal* in this capacity. As a small child, playing with a toy submarine in my bath, I remember being told that 2 submarines had been sent out on a mission and that Lt-Cdr White, accompanying a boffin [scientist] had been detailed to go out in the one thought to have the less dangerous role. The son of Stafford Charles & Beatrix Eliza White, Stafford Radclyffe White is commemorated on the Naval Memorial at Portsmouth.

Infantry in 1937 and had taken part in the Battle of France and Dunkirk evacuation. Less than three months after they married, on July 16th 1944, aged 26, Captain Colville was killed in action in Normandy and lies buried at Brouay War Cemetery.¹⁵ It looks as though they may have been able to set up house together as the National Probate Calendar (1945) gives his address as 45 West Drive Bay Estate, Bognor Regis.

Five years later, and only after the end of the war, Nancy married for the third time, becoming in 1949 the wife of John Piers Dutton, son of the Reverend Alfred John McMichael Dutton of Creaton in Northants, by whom she had a son and daughter. For a time they lived at Shane's Castle in Northern Ireland, where he was a land agent. Nancy died in 2000.

During the 130 years which separated the birth of Colonel Hugh Ainsworth and the death of his younger daughter, the family moved far from its Lancashire roots, setting up homes in India, Palestine and Africa, where they excelled in their different roles in which there was a strong element of public service, and also felt the impact of two World Wars.

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¹⁵ ref III.G.8.