

**TO THE BEST OF
OUR
SKILL
AND
KNOWLEDGE**

**A SHORT HISTORY OF
THE CHESHIRE CONSTABULARY
1857 ~ 1957**

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CONTENTS

PREFACE

- 1 The County and its Divisions Hundreds, Parishes or Townships
Boroughs, Police "Authorities", Police
- 2 Social Conditions, Police Problems, Military Aid, Self-protection
- 3 The 1829 Experiment, Royal Commission, Weaknesses
Opposition, Officers of Merit
- 4 1857, First Chief Constable, Divisions, Strength, Uniform
Badge, Headquarters, First Chief Clerk, Police Stations, Transport and
Communications, Training Equipments – Pistols, and Cutlasses
- 5 Discipline, Extraneous Duties, Petitions to Chief Constable, First Detectives
Inter-force Co-operation
- 6 The Cattle Plague, 1865-6, The Fenian Plot, Riots, etc, Runcorn Division
Captain Arrowsmith, Murder of a Constable,
- 7 Captain Arrowsmith Chief Constable, Military Ideas, Army Captains as
Superintendents, Courts of Inquiry, Mutual Benefit Association
- 8 Major J. H. Hamersley, Chief Constable, Standing Joint Committee as Police
Authority, O'Donnell Inquiry, First Aid, Training, Telephones, Bicycle
Winsford Watermen's Strike, New Headquarters Borough of Mossley
Borough of Hyde, Boer War, First Car, Speed Traps
- 9 The Gorse Hall Murder, Use of Bloodhounds
- 10 Retirement of Colonel Hamersley, Colonel Malcolm, 1910, King's Police Medal
Examinations, Rest Days (1910 Act), Wallasey Borough 1913, 1914 War,
Anti-German Disturbances at Crewe, First Superintendent's car, Police Ploughmen
Police in H.M. Forces, The Last Horse
- 11 War Bonus, Police Union, Police Federation, Motor Cycles, Sinn Fein Outrages
C.I.D., Policewomen, First Detective Superintendent, General Strike
Arrowe Park Scout Camp, Control of Road Traffic, Traffic Lights
- 12 Captain A. F. Hordern, 1934, New Ideas and Re-organization, Headquarters
Bromborough, First Assistant Chief Constable, Captain Hordern's Humanity
- 13 Safe Robbery, Express Message Schem, Scientific Experts, "Hot" Money Cooled
in a Grave Yard
- 14 Major J. Becke, Detective Work and Procedure, Technical, Education, "Shako"
Hat, Forensic Science, Dr. W. H. Grace, Motor Patrol Special Scheme
Wirral Divisional Headquarters, Crewe Divisional Headquarters
- 15 War Years, Army Reservists, Services, Honours and Casualties, Air Raids
- 16 Mr. G. E. Banwell, New Planning, Police Act, 1946, Municipal Borough Forces
Housing, Catering, V.H.F. Wireless, Police Dogs, Welfare,
Life-Saving Teams Training, Examinations Promotion Selection Board,
Policewomen, Royal occasions, Police Authority,
- 17 The Borough Forces - Chester City - Congleton - Macclesfield - Stalybridge -
Hyde

HONOURS LIST

PREFACE

You cannot be a member of the Cheshire Constabulary until you have declared in court that you will well and truly serve our Sovereign Lady The Queen to the best of your skill and knowledge. Part of this declaration has been taken as the title of this book because it gives some account of the way the Cheshire Constabulary has done its job in the first hundred years of its existence. Mr. James, who was the Chief Constable of Congleton until that Force was amalgamated into the Cheshire Constabulary, has now retired, but the present members of the Force are in his debt for the labour that he has put in to find out what our predecessors were like and what they did. His history will be read with interest and with some amusement in the Force and perhaps by a few members of the general public.

The vast majority of us in the Cheshire Constabulary and indeed in most Police Forces in this country are happy in that we enjoy our job and feel that we have the confidence of our employers, the folk of the country, whether they be rich or poor and whether they live in the town or in the countryside. Our work in maintaining law and order is facilitated by the fact that most people want law and order. It may be that our great strength lies in that we are controlled by the democratic representatives of the people of the country. We recruit from the people and we have few privileges or legal powers that are not possessed by those who supply our recruits.

It follows that we have tended to change as conditions changed in the country. Even as there were little changes and improvements in the country during the period of the wars, so wartime periods in the Police were just times of hard work. Since the last war there have been many changes in the Cheshire Constabulary to make us fit to continue to be of service in the changed post-war world. It is still too early to pass judgment on many of these changes.

Naturally, in an age of science and mechanization all the various scientific aids to detection and communication have been developed in the Force and the motor-car has taken the place of earlier means of locomotion with us as it has done in the country at large. This has involved some expense in the purchase of instruments and vehicles. For their use it would have been simple to train a few experts and keep them rigidly to the jobs for which they were trained, but we have chosen the harder way of trying to train the whole Force. Nowadays the policeman in his service gets the zest of variety. We hope in this way to avoid the domination of the experts in any particular branch of police work.

Bearing in mind the development in education and the change in the distribution of wealth we still get our recruits from the same sections of the community that supplied us in the past. Some 1,100 men and women are required to police Cheshire and we have never had less than 93 per cent of this number. It may be that in a humble way police work must be a vocation and not a career. If this is so, the writers of the next centenary history of the Cheshire Constabulary may decide that we did not do too badly in the face of competition from other vocations and from other careers.

It may be that future historians will think that our disciplinary methods changed more towards the end of our first hundred years than anything else connected with the Police. We have been helped in this by the vast improvement which resulted from the opening of the Home Office District Police Training Centres. No history of any Police Force in the country would be complete without recording the tremendous debt that all policemen owe to Mr. F. T. Tarry, C.B.E., one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Constabulary, who has devoted so much of his ability to the cause of training recruits. With good training it has been easy to remove the petty restrictions on a policeman's life and easy to encourage him to work without that close supervision which undoubtedly had a deadening effect in the past. It is worth recording that our existing rules on behaviour in the Cheshire Constabulary are as set out below. There are no others.

"All members of the Cheshire Constabulary will conduct themselves on duty according to Police Regulations and according to the declaration they made before a magistrate on enrolment. "Off duty they will be expected to behave as Christian respectable citizens at all times. There will be no other restrictions on their conduct or movement.

"Absence from their normal place of residence during off-duty periods will be reported to the member's immediate superior officer if the member thinks it possible that he may be required for an emergency. Whether a report is made or not will depend entirely on the judgment of the individual member of the Force."

Police Forces in Cheshire, like most others in the country were never troubled by any serious bribery or corruption. Our stalwart colleagues of early days may have been a trial to the Chief Constable of their time because they occasionally drank too much and it maybe that some of their beer was bought by other people. It maybe that in the past some of the contributions to police charities, sports and dances were accepted far too freely. Whether this was so or not we can all take pride in the fact that at the end of our first one hundred years we are free from even the breath of corruption. We occasionally run dances but the proceeds are always given to some charity which has nothing to do with the Police.

On an average about eight members of the Force are commended for outstanding work every month and perhaps some future historian will give us a good mark for the fact that it is very rare that a month goes by without one of the commendations being for work done when the policeman was supposed to be off duty.

A wise police authority has practically removed from members of the Force that anxiety about housing which the post-war population of the country has suffered. Many new police houses have been built. Canteen facilities and general material conditions of work have been made to approach those found in the best industrial concerns and it may be that this has produced one unexpected result. That is a definite flagging of interest in organized police athletics and games. Also some observers think that the policeman is less inclined than in the past to avoid social contacts. Perhaps with a job to be proud of and good conditions of service this is a natural development. It may even be that it is better for a policeman to play his cricket and his tennis at the local club rather than play for a police team, but whether it is good or not, undoubtedly our next historian will notice this development at the end of our first century.

It is too early to pass judgment on the effect that the Police College has had on the Cheshire Constabulary although we are fast approaching the stage where every officer above the rank of sergeant has been through the Police College. The writer of this preface believes that the college has improved the standards of our officers very greatly. At some date in the future one can hope that there will be a Chief Constable of Cheshire who entered a Police Force as a constable, who was trained at a District Training Centre and who had his higher training at the Police College.

This one hundred years of the history of the Cheshire Constabulary includes some thirty-eight years of the Police Federation which will soon deserve and doubtless get a history of its own. In Cheshire it has been served by a number of good officers who have fearlessly and honestly represented the grievances and difficulties of the federated ranks, and it is doubtful whether Cheshire or any other Police Force could have done without it or some similar organization. The Act of Parliament that gave birth to the Federation states that the Federation was established to enable members of Police Forces to consider and bring to the notice of police authorities and the Home Secretary all matters affecting their welfare and efficiency other than the question of discipline and promotion affecting individuals. Looking back one would say that the emphasis has been more on welfare than on efficiency, but it might be that during our next one hundred years the Federation will be able to devote more attention to this latter side of their charter.

Up to the turn of the century a policeman might expect to find one elderly female working in the building. She would be the police matron who safeguarded the interests and morals of any female prisoners. He would certainly gasp to find the number of efficient young women now coping with such a lot of our inside work. The shortage of manpower during the wars opened the doors for these ladies and it might be that at one time there was some financial advantage in employing rather underpaid females to do the work previously undertaken by a constable who tended to cost more and more. The introduction of a special office staff on reasonable pay has added greatly to our efficiency, but it has removed the number of jobs that slightly unfit elderly constables could do. In fact, after one hundred years of the Cheshire Constabulary we have reached the stage that there is no room for a man unless he is superlatively fit, both physically and mentally.

G. E. BANWELL Chief Constable of Cheshire (1946-)

HISTORY OF THE CHESHIRE CONSTABULARY

CHAPTER ONE

The County and its Divisions	Hundreds	Parishes or Townships
Boroughs	Police "Authorities"	Police

IN the early years of the nineteenth century civil administration in Cheshire was carried out as it had been for centuries. The pattern was: The Justices in Quarter Sessions, The Hundred, and the Parish (or Township). In addition there were four chartered boroughs - Chester, Congleton, Macclesfield and Stockport - all to a large extent self-governing.

The Court of Quarter Sessions was the County administrative authority (in addition to being a Court of justice) until relieved of general county business by the newly created County Council in 1889. The Hundreds of Broxton, Bucklow, Eddisbury, Macclesfield, Nantwich, Northwich and Wirral, earlier of some importance, still retained a few functions, one of which was the appointment of a High Constable. The Hundred and the High Constable were later to provide the territory of the police division and the title of the first paid officer equivalent to the superintendent.

The civil parishes, or townships, as they were sometimes called, were the smallest units of local government. Their responsibilities were wide and varied. Their officers, the most important of whom was the constable, were residents of the parish. They were chosen each year at the annual "vestry" meeting and presented to the appropriate authority, either the Court Leet or the justices, for formal appointment.

In the early 1820's there were some 450-500 parishes in Cheshire, all electing one or more constables annually. In 1828 at the Macclesfield Hundred Court Leet, forty-eight persons were "sworn-in" as constables for thirty-eight townships.

The office of High Constable was abolished in 1869, but by then it had long been little more than an empty office.

The four boroughs of the county were largely served by the same methods of vestry elections, but as in the non-borough towns some degree of "protection" came from the system of night watchman employed for a miserably small wage by the local authority or private syndicates.

One other type of "authority", often imperfectly understood, should be mentioned here. This was a sort of stop-gap authority created for special purposes. It was a system of local government by a local body of "commissioners" acting under the authority of a local Act obtained by petition to Parliament. Briefly, it provided a means whereby a district made up of a group of adjoining parishes ripe for advancement into an urban or town status but lacking the charter necessary to provide borough status (the only known municipal authority of the time) could, for special purposes, be administered by an authority having power to levy a rate.

These Acts were usually of an omnibus character and whilst providing an authority to carry out highway works, sewerage and lighting schemes, control markets and make bye-laws, only incidentally provided for the employment of a few paid constables. The district later to form the town of Stalybridge (Borough in 1857) obtained such an Act in 1828 and Birkenhead (not to become a Borough until 1877) obtained one in 1833. An example of the rapid growth of towns and the need of something more than parochial powers is to be seen in the case of Birkenhead. In 1824 it was estimated to have a population of 120 inhabitants. By 1839 it had 9,200. In this period of fifteen years building land had grown in value from one shilling a yard to twenty-five shillings and sixpence.

The Commissioners were local people (in Stalybridge twenty-one in number) annually elected at a town's meeting of ratepayers by a show of hands.

The parish constable has been so well and so often pictured that little can be added to what is generally already known. He may have been a shopkeeper, a farmer, or a superior artisan. He had no value in preventing crime and only became active after an injured party had obtained process and delivered to him the document, warrant, order or summons, together with the appropriate fee and travelling expenses, if any. It was not infrequently the case that a victim of

say, larceny, having set the law in motion eventually found himself saddled with a bill of costs much in excess of the value of the property stolen.

If he were a busy man in his private pursuits he would often employ a "deputy" to perform his duties. The "deputy" of the times may, perhaps, best be pictured as the local odd-job man who, for a small fee, would undertake a variety of tasks from clearing a drain to posting bills and acting as a bailiff to the debtors' court. The name was later commonly applied to full-time paid officers appointed under the Town Commissioners system, as at Stalybridge and other places.

If the constable did the work himself, he would give the least time possible to it. His attitude might well be considered as adequately summed up in the words of the parish constable of Taxall (then in Cheshire) who whilst at Chester Assizes - he having found the body of a murdered man - on being told on his return to his inn that the ostler had been found dead in the privy at noon, said: "Yes, I saw him dead there three hours ago, but I had had trouble enough in fording one dead man, I'll be - if I ever find another".

A surviving tattered ill-written Constable's Account Book for the parish of Astbury (1807-1840) shows the variety of tasks which fell to a constable through whose parish ran a main highway.

In the year 1821-22 for example, the constable, Charles Shaw, handled nearly £100. Of this £80 represented county and parish rates, which, it seems, the constable collected.

Over most of these years the time of successive constables was taken up with the duty of finding local transport (Astbury apparently being a staging point between Newcastle, Staffordshire, and Macclesfield) for military forces en route as shown by the entry - "Paid Robert Hargreaves for going to Newcastle with Baggesh". Frequent entries concern the payment of rewards to boys for "burds yeds" under an old Act dealing with the "Destruction of Noisome Fowl and Vermin".

Other typical entries include:

	s.	d.
Pd. Swaring Constables at Astbury Cort	2	0
Pd. Constable Staves	5	0
Pd. for Milata papers	7	0
Expenses when pricking Milita	2	0
Writing Milita papers	2	0
Expenses to Jury at Congleton	13	7
Journey to Sandbach	5	0
Pd. for a letter		6
Pd. for new gidepost at Sprint Lane	£ 1	2 0
Pd. to Passes ***	£ 1	18 9

What with the corruption of "deputies" by the swelling of expense accounts, and other dubious fee-catching tricks, and a general disinclination by the true constable to do more than absolutely necessary (with no supervision from the distant High Constable), it is understandable when a justice of the time remarked: "We have enough penal legislation for six planets. The trouble is we have no means of enforcing it."

The township constable system continued side by side with the trial of a paid constabulary established by the Cheshire Act of 1829, and in fact it seems to have survived in some parts of the county until about 1860, for in that year Quarter Sessions informed county coroners that allowances to township constables for inquest duties would be discontinued.

*** "Passes" was the term used to describe poor wayfarers; not real vagrants - often accompanied by their families to new jobs of work to whom fourpence per head would be paid as an aid to subsistence. They would be in possession of a certificate (pass) signed by a justice of the Peace showing their place of birth and other details - in a sense a passport or identity document.

CHAPTER TWO

Social Conditions Police Problems Military Aid Self protection

THE police are at all times concerned with people; therefore, the behaviour of the people at any period of time is a proper study for policemen.

The evolution of the Police Forces of Britain was influenced by, and cannot properly be understood without some knowledge of, public behaviour.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century public behaviour was deteriorating at a rapidly increasing tempo. Students of social history will not need to be reminded of this.

Cheshire, in common with the rest of the country, continued to rely for the maintenance of the "Peace" on an out-of-date and decrepit system at a time when, to quote the most eminent authorities, lawlessness was at its worst and the country was nearly in a state of civil war. This condition, in a diminishing degree, lasted until late in the century and was only slowly grasped and brought under control.

In the market towns the frequent stock and produce fairs attracted a large number of "followers", who, during the period of the fair, robbed and pilfered, and between times batted on the rural dweller. These were matched in criminal activity by the hordes of vagrants constantly on the move. Chester was said to have some 200 lodging houses (unregulated hovels), in which those with the necessary fourpence per night were crowded in circumstances of the greatest depravity. In all towns and villages beer-houses were to be found on every corner.

Poaching, in a county of large estates such as Cheshire, had long been a popular rural pursuit. Previously more or less confined to a small number of practitioners, with canal, and later railway building, it often became a major operation carried out by large gangs with whom the game-keepers frequently had violent and bloody battles. When, as occasionally happened, arrests later took place, attempts would be made to rescue the prisoners, as at Nantwich in 1828, when, following the detention of some fifteen men on poaching charges - all taken one by one when abed - it became necessary to have an escort of two companies of infantry from Chester to assist the constables in taking them to and from Court and later to Chester Castle gaol, a mob of some hundreds of navvies having made persistent efforts to rescue them. A sequel to this event is to be seen in the Chester Courant some months later in an item which reads - "We understand that the house of Burrowes, the informer, about three miles from Nantwich, is levelled to the ground and himself obliged to be sent to Knutsford House of Correction to screen him from the fury of the mob".

In 1859 Superintendent Laxton of Nantwich was presented, by a Mr. Ackroyd of Doddington Hall, with a gold watch in appreciation of his efforts in arresting for murder two of a gang of poachers, who had shot and killed two gamekeepers and had later been traced to Somerset where they were found working on the railway.

Another example of mob disorder in a quiet country setting is to be seen in the account concerning some 2,000 navvies engaged in building the Chester-Birkenhead line near Little Sutton in 1839, who, following a wage dispute went on strike and, armed with pick shafts and other implements, traversed the neighbourhood robbing and pillaging inhabitants and travellers and: "proceeded to possess themselves of the entire village of Sutton". The general disorder, mixed in with which was a certain amount of inter-gang warfare, Irish v. The rest, went on for two days and was only brought to an end on the arrival of a body of cavalry from Liverpool and other troops (complete with a "cannon") from Chester. It was reported that seven of the men injured in the gang fights were so seriously hurt that their recovery was doubtful. A large number were arrested and later convicted; and this at a time when the justices of the Wirral Hundred had just told the Royal Commission 1836-9 that a body of paid whole-time police was quite unnecessary.

Incidentally, it has been said, that the Little Sutton episode, together with a similar event at about the same time in Wiltshire, led directly to the creation of railway police.

The poaching activities of the truly rural dweller were paralleled as the century wore on by the increasing practice of urban gangs from the towns foraging out into adjoining districts for distances of anything up to ten miles in search of game. This was not to come to an end until the outbreak of the First World War. A report by Captain Smith to Quarter Sessions in January, 1867, records that under the Poaching Prevention Act about five miles of netting had been seized in the past four years; 863 head of game seized and sold, and besides sentences of imprisonment, fines amounting to £500 had been inflicted.

In addition to day to day crime, trouble arose from the looting of frequent wrecks cast ashore in fog or bad weather on the Wirral coast. It was said that this went on unchecked and in circumstances of the greatest depravity. Corpses were robbed of everything of value. A witness spoke of seeing ears being bitten off to recover earrings and fingers severed to obtain rings.

A few parish constables were, for obvious reasons, quite powerless. By the time the Lloyd's agent arrived from his district headquarters, every portable object of value had disappeared.

In the textile districts of east and north-east Cheshire, the main trouble arose from industrial disputes arising from fluctuations in trade and the struggle of the workers to obtain better conditions of work and pay. Interwoven with this, a potent influence making for mob-disorder were the political and religious issues of the day, such as Chartism, Reform, Anti-Catholicism, etc. Just one example of the troublesome times may be seen from the following account of one event in the Hyde district.

In April, 1839, the constables of the Hundred from observations at Chartist meetings in the Hyde district, obtained warrants for the arrest of the leaders and principal agitators. For reasons of discretion the warrants were not executed until June, when the two arrested men were placed in the New Bailey (police lock-ups) at Stockport.

Some days later they were conveyed to the Commercial Inn, Newton, where the petty sessional court was held. The prisoners were brought from Stockport by coach escorted by a troop of sixty cavalry and a company of the 86th Foot. The route was lined by many thousands of people. Near the Commercial Inn companies of the 86th and 10th Foot regiments were posted.

After committal proceedings, one prisoner, who had not got sureties for bail, was escorted back to Stockport by the military. At the Assizes in August, both prisoners, a Dr. McDonall and a Mr. Joseph Bradley, both well educated and highly intellectual men, were given prison sentences and bound over in £500.

The size of the problem will be seen from a report of a meeting in June of the same year when it was estimated that at one open air meeting some 13,000 people were present; and this with only about four constables in the whole district.

Even in Stalybridge the "Police" Act of 1828 had only produced one constable or at most two, who might well have said, as did the constables in Hardy's Mayor of Casterbridge - "what can we two poor lammagers do against such a multitude, 'tis tempting 'em to commit felo-de-se upon us".

The justices on whom fell the duty of preserving the peace had no civil force capable of quick mobilization and preventive work. Mob disorders matured and broke out into riots quite unimpeded and could only be brought to an end by military aid. There seems to be no evidence after the "Peterloo" affair in Manchester in 1819, of these encounters leading to fatalities. The regular military forces were by no means enough to go around and the history of the Cheshire Yeomanry for the first forty years of the nineteenth century is one of repeated mobilization for duty in aid of the civil power, mainly in the eastern parts of the County.

Measures of self-help by groups of inhabitants in towns has already been seen in the private "syndicate" watchman. In rural districts with property scattered over large areas this form of protection could not be applied. In its stead arose the system of associations providing rewards from private sources for information leading to the apprehension and conviction of persons responsible for crimes committed against the property of members. These associations were very simple in structure. The members, property-owners of one or two parishes, would

guarantee to subscribe to a fund from which rewards would be made according to an advertised scale. Horses, cattle, sheep, pigs, etc., all had their "price".

For example, the Utkinton Association Of 1829 - members Lord Alvanley, Sir Phillip Grey Egerton and twenty others- provided for rewards for information concerning crimes committed against any of the members ranging from £10 10s. 0d. for burglary and house-breaking, horse, cattle and sheep stealing, down to stealing wagons or carts - £2 2s. 0d.

As late as 1850 the Bickerton Association still continued to hold its annual meetings at the Red Lion Inn.

CHAPTER THREE

The 1829 Experiment Royal Commission
Weaknesses Opposition Officers of Merit

By an Act of Parliament dated 1st June, 1829, the Magistrates of Cheshire obtained power to appoint "Special" High Constables and "Assistant" Petty Constables and pay them. The Act might well have been the foundation of a model county Police Force to be followed by all counties, for, as the Royal Commission report said of it: "it was an experiment made with a view to the application of a general measure to other counties of England and Wales". It failed for a number of reasons. It was purely permissive and subject to too many debilitating factors and it had the fatal weakness of not providing for a coordinating head or chief executive officer. At best it provided for nine unrelated uncoordinated Police Forces. One in each Hundred, (three in Macclesfield Hundred).

Its application depended, if not legally certainly in practice, on the wish and good-will of too many factious elements.

In theory it only wanted three justices acting for any Hundred or petty sessional division to recommend that appointments be made for Quarter Sessions to adopt the recommendation. In practice it was not so simple. If the justices themselves were favourable in the matter, they would usually, on the slightest hint that they were to consider the matter, be deluged with petitions opposing the idea. An example of the magisterial opposition to paid appointments is to be seen in the answer made to the Royal Commission by the Wirral justices who, when asked if nightly patrols (paid police) were necessary said: "No, except as a coast guard to protect wrecks, and such guards should be appointed at the expense of the port of Liverpool merchants and under-writers, as entirely affecting them". The Commissioners' comment on this was, to say the least, rather sharp: "It appears to us that the opinion expressed in this answer by the magistrates is short-sighted and is founded on a misapprehension of their legal, constitutional and moral, not to speak of their Christian duties." The Commissioners went on to speak of immense losses on the coast and the depraved habits of the population of the district and referred to the ancient principle that: "the people and administrators of justice within the districts where these habits of plunder were allowed to occur would be made sensible of their duties by heavy ameracements and by other salutary punishments". The ancient principle referred to was, of course, that under which a fine (by special rate) could be imposed on all the ratepayers of the Hundred for failure to bring criminals to justice. It still survives in the Riot Damages Act under which a police authority may be ordered to pay compensation for damage done to property during riots.

That the Wirral magistrates were not alone in their thinking is to be seen in a reply of the Broxton magistrates, when, in the face of the most overwhelming evidence of lawlessness and gang outrages in the Hundred, they said, "We have power of appointing under the local constabulary act, but such appointment is unnecessary."

So much for the justices. The county newspapers of the times were largely "pro" or "anti" magistrate. The Chester Courant in 1829 spoke of the Act as one calculated to increase the already great power and patronage of the magistrates and make for jobbery and favouritism in appointments. It, no doubt, with relish, some ten years later published a long and scathing letter from a Mr. Joshua King of Woodchurch on the appointment of six paid constables in the Wirral Hundred, in which they were referred to as "the new Gendarmes forcibly quartered in the district"; "a set of lazy vagabonds"; "harpies praying on the very vitals of the community", and finally after further abuse ends, "may God defend us from all such spies and informers".

Local opposition manifested itself in various forms. The most popular was perhaps the signed petition.

Of the many cases quoted in the Royal Commission's Report it was stated that one was "hawked" about by a parish constable. One third of the signatures were those of publicans and beer-shop keepers. Other signatures were those of persons who had been charged with or convicted of offences (one was suspected of being implicated in a murder). In nearly all cases

the signatures were of people whose corrupt interests would be affected by the appointment of an efficient constabulary, or of persons who would properly be the subjects of a measure of police control. That all this had an effect on Quarter, Sessions is to be seen from the comment of the Chairman, Mr. T. Trafford, when he said: "We did it (made appointments) in small numbers in the hope of quietening people's minds. We did it! without that degree of firmness with which we ought to have acted."

At the time Mr. T. Trafford spoke (1837) the county possessed three special High Constables and about twenty-four assistant Petty Constables when the population of the County would be a little under 400,000. Incidentally, Mr. T. Trafford who lived at Outrington (Oughtrington) near Lymm, would appear to have been connected with the equivalent of the M.I.5 of the times, for papers recently discovered by the Manchester Public Libraries indicate that he was the recipient of reports (1816 -17) on the establishment of Hampden Clubs (Radical Reformers) submitted by agents working in South Lancashire and East Cheshire.

By the time this Act came to be replaced by the general County and Borough Police Act, 1856, the justices had managed to secure an increase in the size of the "force" to eight High Constables and about eighty Petty Constables. Some idea of the area of beats allotted to these constables even as late as the year 1850 will be seen from the following examples

In the Wirral Hundred, John Newton was in charge of Wallasey, Liscard, Poulton and Seacombe.

In the Broxton Hundred, Thomas Parkinson was responsible for practically the whole area west of the Whitchurch - Chester road, and in the Macclesfield Hundred, the whole of the area east of the Leek - Macclesfield road to the Stockport boundary was in charge of one constable.

An advertisement in a county newspaper of 1829 for a special High Constable for the Hundred of Bucklow specifies that "such officer shall be able-bodied, of sound constitution and under the age of 40 years, of good character for honesty, sobriety, fidelity and activity, and able to read and write. Applications, with testimonials, to Mr. Roscoe, Solicitor, Knutsford".

In the meantime some rather outstanding men came into prominence. One, a Mr. Burgess, the first special High Constable of the Macclesfield Hundred, was a renowned thief-catcher, and, having county-wide powers, he did not hesitate to use them wherever he found himself. He was sent to London on one occasion to arrest a man later charged with murder at Dunham-on-the-Hill. He is referred to by members of the Royal Commission as "the able and intelligent officer whose evidence we have before cited". An example of his activity as a "professional" policeman as compared with the methods of the parish constable is clearly shown by the following story taken from the Chester Courant (1830) relating to a case of sheep-stealing in the Kelsall district.

"A country 'dogberry' who was about to set out for the purpose of apprehending the thief, took occasion to inform the company in a public house of his intention, giving them at the same time 'a full, true and particular account' of the theft. Burgess - the terror of thieves and poachers, happened to be present, and, after 'dogberry' and his party proceeded on their expedition, at about eleven o'clock he ordered his gig and set out with a determination to be beforehand with them. He accordingly gave them the 'go by' at a public house by the roadside where they had stopped to obtain 'spiritual' comfort, repaired to the thief's house and after being refused entrance he broke open the door, secured his man after a desperate resistance and by four o'clock in the morning had him safely lodged in Chester Castle."

Another outstanding police "character" of this period was Joseph Little, who was appointed special High Constable of the Hyde Division in 1840. He became the first superintendent of the Hyde Division under

the Act of 1856, was very shortly appointed Deputy Chief Constable to Captain Smith, and continued to serve in the Hyde Division until his death in 1870.

His period of service in this district, particularly before 1857, was a testing time. With only eight constables; he was expected to keep the peace for the whole area of the county north and east of the Stockport boundary. In respect of what may be termed day to day police work, he was not unsuccessful. This ranged from troubles with the railway gangs engaged on the

Woodhead tunnel and other works; prize fights on the moors, cock-fighting, an occasional murder and burglary. If this was not enough, there were the politico religious disturbances which erupted from time to time. To meet these affairs nothing less than military forces were sufficient. Military history of the times is one long story of troops scurrying from one town to another in aid of the civil power. The preventive power of the Police was nil. The tactics adopted by the Police were to note ring-leaders (and their seditious utterances) and later - by warrant - arrest them one by one, usually in the early hours when they lay asleep.

Just one of the many instances of the Authorities' answer to the threat of mass mob disorder can be seen in the action of the Stockport magistrates during the Chartist troubles when, in 1840, they hurriedly armed a thousand Special Constables with some 500 pistols and 800 cutlasses, received from Government Stores. A little later the Court of Quarter Sessions found it necessary to levy a rate of £3,000 on the inhabitants of the Macclesfield Hundred to pay riot damage and a further £500 to meet expenses in billeting troops. This sort of thing went on year after year, but from 1857 Mr. Little was able to rely on quick reinforcement, as, when in the general election of 1868, the Chief Constable placed four Superintendents and 150 rank and file policemen armed with cutlasses and pistols at his disposal as reserves in case of trouble.

During the early years of this period, the 1830s, one sees the emergence of the career policeman. Apart from many assistant Petty Constables who were recorded as having served in borough forces (after 1835) at least three special High Constables had transferred as inspectors from the Metropolitan Police. They were - William Adamson, appointed High Constable of the Prestbury Division, 1835, Edwin Stockwin of the Bucklow Hundred, and William Harper who succeeded him. The two last-mentioned both became Chief Constables of Macclesfield: Stockwin in 1840 and Harper in 1842.

What happened to Stockwin in 1842 when he resigned is not known. Harper continued in office until his resignation in 1860. Incidentally it is said that in its first ten years the Metropolitan Force had supplied some 200 senior officers for appointment in the provinces as Chief Constables or Superintendents.

CHAPTER FOUR

"1857"	First Chief Constable	Divisions	Strength	Uniform
Badge	Headquarters	First Chief Clerk		Police Stations
Transport and Communications		Training	Equipment	-Pistols and Cutlasses

THE County and Borough Police Act of 1856 for the first time in the history of Britain obliged the justices to establish a paid Police Force for the whole of each County, and made the Forces subject to inspection. It might well have been that Cheshire could have had two separate County Forces for (for some unknown reason) Section 26 of the Act specifically allowed for the appointment of two Chief Constables if the Court of Quarter Sessions of Cheshire so decided. The "Forces" of boroughs with less than 5,000 inhabitants were given the option of consolidating with the County or paying the full cost of their Forces. No Cheshire Borough of the time came under this axe. To encourage the justices, then the County rating authority, the Government agreed to meet one quarter of the cost of pay and clothing subject to the receipt of a certificate of efficiency granted by newly created Inspectors of Constabulary.

In the autumn of 1856 the Court of Quarter Sessions set up a special Committee of justices to advise on the application of the Act. It was decided to invite applications for the office of Chief Constable in the London, Dublin and County newspapers, at a salary of £400 per annum, plus £150 for stationery, travelling and all other expenses. The Committee recommended that the strength should be one chief constable, nine superintendents, two inspectors, fifteen sergeants and 143 constables, and that the County should be divided into nine police districts or divisions. These were to be roughly the same districts as then established under the Hundred system, except that the Hundred of Macclesfield, the largest in the county, was divided into the three districts of Hyde, Stockport and Prestbury.

The areas excepted from these arrangements were the City of Chester; The Boroughs of Congleton, Macclesfield and Stockport, and the "commissioner"- administered towns of Birkenhead and Stalybridge, all maintaining their own Force and having populations exceeding 5,000 persons.

The recommended scale of pay was - superintendents, ranging from £80 -£90 -£100 per annum for Broxton, to £110 - £ 125 - £150 in the largest divisions, plus, in all cases, £60 per annum for horse and forage with the sum paid by each for horse tax.

Inspectors - £80 per annum rising to £90 then £100. Increments in all cases to be after five years and after ten years' service in the rank. Sergeants - twenty-two shillings per week, after three years twenty-five shillings per week.

Constables - eighteen shillings per week rising at discretion of chief constable after one year to second class at nineteen shillings per week or first class at twenty-one shillings.

No allowance (other than the horse allowance to superintendents) was contemplated, but on second thoughts the Committee recommended sixpence a week boot allowance to sergeants and constables.

The full Police Committee met at the Crewe Arms Hotel, Crewe, on 3rd February, 1857, under the Chairmanship of Mr. Trafford Trafford, who had been chairman of Quarter Sessions when the 1829 Act was obtained.

The first business of the meeting was to appoint Captain Thomas Johnnes Smith, late of the Bedfordshire Militia, as Chief Constable. The "new" force became officially alive on 10th April, 1857, from which date all appointments or re-appointments counted.

It was decided that "the colour of the uniform be blue". Superintendents were to have one frock coat with braid and one pair of trousers. Inspectors the same without braid. Sergeant and constables - two frock coats, two pairs trousers, one "hat", one stock. The Committee further decided that "badges of white metal with 'Prince of Wales Feathers' and the words 'Cheshire Constabulary' thereon be adopted".

The idea of one chief constable and police in uniform was quite a departure from traditional thinking in Cheshire, for as late as 1853 Mr. Edwin Corbett, vice-chairman of Quarter Sessions, giving Chester; The Boroughs of Congleton, Macclesfield and Stockport, and the "Commissioner" - administered towns of Birkenhead and Stalybridge, all maintaining their own Forces and having populations exceeding 5000 persons.

Evidence before a Select Committee of the House of Commons, said "We have no chief constable at all, nor do I think it is requisite."

With regard to police in uniform he said: "It may be useful in towns where there are a great number of police always parading about, but in the country they should pass unobserved."

The decision to adopt the Prince of Wales Feathers as an official badge was to have quite unforeseen repercussions nearly sixty years later when, in 1915, the use of the design (on letter paper) without proper authority was questioned by the Royal Warrant Holders Association. No proper authority could be found. The matter was taken up by the Home Office and in due course the Chief Constable was informed that: "H.R.H. The Prince of Wales (later Edward VIII) did not wish to interfere with such (police) user (of the design)."

Probably the idea was a natural consequence of the adoption by the Magistrates of a County coat-of-arms incorporating the "Feathers" in 1850, when, it was said they were "allusive to the title Earl of Chester, borne by the Prince of Wales".

No official mention is made of an issue of staffs and handcuffs. Leg irons and wooden handcuffs had been used in earlier days. However, the recent discovery of a pair of hand-cuffs, as used to-day, bearing a stamping "Cheshire Constabulary, No. 3 Division Eddisbury Hundred" would suggest a general issue in 1857, if not earlier.

Neither are night lamps mentioned as issued. The only clue to them being used is to be found in advice by the Chief Constable "that the light should be carefully trimmed and adjusted as it has been found that if they get too hot the reflector becomes unsoldered". This undoubtedly referred to the old oil lamp with the bull's-eye lens.

Again no direct reference to the modern instrument of alarm, the whistle, is to be found. From casual notes it is assumed that at this time it had displaced the earlier instrument, the rattle or "rick".

The Headquarters of the Force might well have been established at Crewe for the Chief Constable was asked to find a suitable residence at or near Crewe. He was unable to do this and his request to reside at Chester was granted. At the same time he was authorised to find premises for an office and to engage a clerk at a wage of £1 1s. 0d. per week. A private house, 4 Sella Street, Chester, was obtained. In 1862 this office was removed to 1 Egerton Street and remained there until 1870 when it was removed to 113 Foregate Street. Finally in 1883 the Police Committee approved the purchase of a plot of land and the erection of the present Headquarters for the sum of £2,000 This has since been somewhat extended by the incorporation of adjoining property.

Coupled with the early history of Headquarters is the name of George Oldmeadow. He began his service in February, 1857, as personal clerk to Captain Smith at a weekly wage of £1 1s. 0d., which was increased within a few months to £75 per annum. In the following October he was sworn in as a constable, and in February, 1858, he was given the rank of superintendent. In 1878 under Captain Arrowsmith he acquired the honorary rank of chief superintendent, which rank he held until his death, after thirty-two and a half years' service in 1889. In 1886 Mr. Oldmeadow was presented by members of the Force with "an elegant and valuable" silver tea service in appreciation of his services connected with the Mutual Benefit Association established mainly through his efforts.

Oldmeadow's task as chief clerk must have been, particularly in the early years of the new Force, a formidable one. Typewriters, duplicators, telephones and other technical aids were not for him.

The Chief Constable inherited a motley collection of police stations. For the whole of the Bucklow (now Altrincham) Division, there were three police stations, including the "1838" premises at Altrincham which the Chief Constable described as "a good resident station with

three cells", and which until 1866 had to serve, with "stations" at Knutsford and Lymm, the whole of the division which then had the River Weaver as its Western boundary. Lymm served for many years as Divisional Headquarters. The demise of the Eddisbury Division and the birth of the Runcorn Division were yet to come.

The Hyde Division which then was, and for many years had been, a very disturbed area, had only one police station, "containing four indifferent cells without any conveniences and no residence". This "station" in Clarendon Place, Hyde, had been built in 1839. Before that the nearest "lock-ups" were at Stockport. The premises, now used as a Lads' Club, in Beeley Street, were built in 1859, at a cost of £1,733 and served as Divisional Headquarters until 1899 when the Hyde Borough Force came into being. It was at this time that the practice of building combined police stations and courts began. The police station at Hoole (then known generally as Bishops Fields) and later to become an annexe to headquarters and the recruit depot was built in 1859.

The only form of transport specifically provided for in the Force was the divisional superintendent's horse and cart. These he had to purchase himself and maintain on the annual allowance of £60. However, for those without the capital to make an initial purchase the Committee would advance the sum required to be repaid from the annual allowance over a period of two years.

The allowance of £60 was intended for upkeep of horse and equipage and the payment of horse tax. Captain Smith did not think very highly of the judgment of some superintendents on the quality of horses. In 1861 he complains of unsuitable horses kept by some officers; "some mere ponies, others have neither action nor pace and quite unfit for emergencies", and orders that in future horses not approved by him will not qualify for an allowance.

Although the railway systems in Cheshire had, by 1857, become almost as extensive as they are to-day, railway travel, whilst officially recognized by the existence of regulations on the matter, seemed to be frowned upon. The official order book of the Hyde Division for 1858 contains a movement order for a sergeant and nine constables to march to Chester for duty in aid of the City Police at the Royal Agricultural Society's Show. As these men paraded at Hyde Police Office at 4.15 p.m. on Monday the 19th July, and were to arrive in Chester by 9 a.m. the following day, after a night march of some forty miles over indifferent roads, one wonders what their value would be, at least on the first day. As late as the end of the century it was not unknown for police officers, contrary to orders, to walk prisoners to Knutsford Prison from places of anything up to fifteen miles away, charging for and pocketing the usual transport allowance for prisoner and escort.

Little is known of early means of the passing of information, and it is probable that the postal letter services were the common means of circulation. For messages of extreme urgency the railway telegraph services were used. A Police Gazette was published by the Metropolitan Police and another (entitled *The Hue and Cry*) in Dublin by the Inspector General of Constabulary in Ireland. The Chester City Force was binding the Irish publication at least as early as 1856. The first evidence of aids in the technical production of circulars was in 1883 when headquarters orders, etc., produced by the copy-press process appear. Five years later divisions seem to have had them.

What training there was seemed to be concentrated on foot and cutlass drill. Each member of the Force received a printed instruction book capable of being carried in the pocket. It was largely a concentration of local domestic regulation and advice, together with elements of law culled from the forerunners of "Archbold", "Oke", "Stone" and "Patterson". Whilst the booklet is shown as having been compiled by Captain Smith he should not be assumed to be a pioneer in this literary field. As early as the reign of

Elizabeth I, a treatise on *The Duties of High and Petty Constables* (Will Lambard) was in general circulation, and in 1828 and again in 1836 the Cheshire Quarter Sessions ordered the issue of Instructions the first "as prepared for the London New Police", suitably adapted, and the second "as used by the police of the Bucklow Hundred". The latter might well have been the child of a "Metropolitan" publication brought to Cheshire by Stockwin or Harper.

The cutlasses and pistols issued to the small number of "Assistant Petty Constables" of Hundreds under the 1829 Act were taken over by the 1857 Force and were, together with further purchases, held in reserve for occasions when truncheons were not enough. They were kept in divisional stores. On the frequent mobilization of the Force to deal with industrial and election disorders they were always ordered to be carried in bulk and kept out of sight. There is no evidence of them ever having been used on mobs. The last time they are officially mentioned was in a mobilization order dated May, 1878, concerning anticipated disorder in the North East of the County. Pistols were also to be taken "but on no account used except in defence and then only after firing by armed mobs".

CHAPTER FIVE

Discipline Extraneous Duties Petitions to Chief Constables
First Detectives Inter force Co-operation

It must be admitted that the new Force was not particularly well behaved. The first "conduct" register proves this very convincingly. Of 214 Constables appointed to the Force in the first year (the original 169 plus replacements of those discharged or leaving under other circumstances), 112 had been discharged within three years; 65 of them in the first twelve months. Considering the times this is really not to be wondered at.

The greatest personal weakness of most members of the Force was an addiction to strong drink. This weakness was, of course, one which affected most classes of people. Some idea of the general extent of the evil can be gathered from licensing statistics of the period. Chester in 1868, with a population of 31,000 boasted 258 licensed houses, representing one public or beer-house to every

120 inhabitants, and in that year 473 persons were convicted of drunkenness offences. (in 1953 with a much greater population, drunkenness convictions numbered thirty). In the same year Stalybridge with a population of 25,000 recorded 314 convictions. Most Cheshire towns had round about the same sort of figure in proportion to their size.

Study of the entries in the conduct register of the period proves at least one thing: the policeman, if he had little "brain" at least had "brawn" and no little courage. The great majority of charges indicate a tendency of the man, when drunk, to take on "all comers"; as at Acton where James Bloyard "when drunk engaged in a wrestling bout in a field in the presence of 40 or 50 persons", or William Marsh, "Drunk and taking off his coat to fight at Hopley's Beer House, Little Budworth", or again Ralph Southern, "Drunk at Tranmere and dragging a man about by the hair of his head in the Britannia Public House".

Insubordination when in drink was not uncommon. This often manifested itself in threats of violence to senior officers. Conduct of this nature eventually led to a Chief Constable's Order to the effect that "superintendents and inspectors should keep out of the way of constables when in drink and so avoid the possibility of more serious offences being committed".

Of the entries not involving drink, one in particular stands out as somewhat unique. This concerns the case against Constable Peter Heginbotham, who, in 1859, was charged with, "concealing that he was a deserter from the 26th Regiment and that he was marked with the letter 'D' ". Apart from its interest as a practical example of the Army custom of indelibly identifying deserters, the case seems to indicate some weakness in "vetting" recruits.

The Chief Constable seemed to be most patient and tolerant with defaulters, and, as a rule, only after a man had built up a rather formidable record of misbehaviour was he dismissed.

However, from time to time, he would put on record his condemnation of certain misdeeds as when he admonished, "these cunning old officers" (pre-1857 constables) for concentrating too much on fee-catching. It was to officers such as these that Mr. Joseph Sadler, Chief of the Police in Stockport (first Chief Constable of Stalybridge, 1857), referred when he told a Select Committee of the House of Commons in 1851 : "the Constabulary and others engaged in the administration of public justice, have constantly been guilty of the most grave and serious offences, one of which is the fearful iniquity of being instrumental in obtaining the committal of innocent persons for the mere pleasure and profit of attending the sessions and assizes".

In spite of the situation in regard to personal behaviour which produced the figures given earlier, there is much evidence of good police work and gallantry in the best tradition of the Force. The order books of the period contain many entries of commendation, together with money awards, advances in pay and the award of a Merit Badge.

The Chief Constable had a motley collection of men to mould into a disciplined Force. Quite a number of men serving under the 1829 Act were re-engaged (the cunning old officers). Others had had no police experience and some had served in other police establishments. Not only the

personal appearance of his men exercised his mind; he made an official suggestion - "that moustaches should be shaved off"; or again when he complained of some members of the Force having alterations made to uniform clothing, "to suit their individual want of taste, having their trousers tightened to look like horse jockeys and other absurdities". He also commented on "the remissness of constables attending places of worship on Sundays", and he said this was much to be regretted, as "duty and pleasure can always be arranged". A subsequent order required superintendents to submit a quarterly report on any cause which may have prevented any constable attending a place of worship once each Sunday.

The County governing authority (Quarter Sessions) having no field staff to perform the duties from time to time laid upon it by parliament took the easy course of giving the work to the police.

From time immemorial the "Police" had been the only countywide organization. Under the old Hundred and Parish system, the High Constable and the parish constable were required to perform many "agency" duties on behalf of the county, as for example recruiting the county's quota of militia and collecting rates and inspecting weights and measures. To these were often added other local duties, as for example, in towns and large villages, superintendent of the fire brigade. Where these extra duties existed they were taken over by the 1857 force. All superintendents became Inspectors of Weights and Measures in the year 1862, for which they received an annual allowance of 115. Other officers in certain places became chiefs of local fire brigades, as at Nantwich where Mr. Laxton, previously a "special" High Constable and later superintendent, held command of the fire brigade for upwards of thirty years. These fire duties were, however, "sheddable" as is to be seen in a case at Lymm where, in 1878, Sergeant Hollingworth, following a conflict with the Local Board, resigned his appointment as superintendent of the brigade.

Sergeant Hollingworth had crossed swords with the local authority in the matter of the erection of stalls, booths; shooting galleries, etc., on the highway (luring the Annual Rushbearing Festival or Fair. He had threatened a week before the Fair in 1877 to prosecute the authority for permitting stall-holders to cause an obstruction on the highway. This the Local Board thought very arbitrary in view of the antiquity of the custom. In a seven page Memorial the Board, after setting out their case, petitioned the Acting Chief Constable, Captain Arrowsmith, to remove Sergeant Hollingworth and his constable and thereby ensure the return of tranquillity to the village of Lymm.

The Memorial (a fine example of the art of penmanship) failed to impress the Acting Chief Constable in the manner intended. Quite the reverse. Not only did he not remove the officers, but within a few months he had promoted Sergeant Hollingworth to the rank of acting inspector and his constable (Worth) to acting sergeant. Hollingworth later became a superintendent and, as officer in charge of the Runcorn Division, figured in the O'Donnell inquiry in 1890 (see Chapter Fight). He died as a result of an accident to his horse and cart at Otterspool Bridge, Bredbury, in June, 1891.

Other duties included those of inspectors of common lodging houses and assistant relieving officers for the issue of tickets for admission of vagrants to workhouses.

Gradually, however, by the end of the century most of these duties had been taken over by other county or local officers, particularly after 1889, when the new county council replaced Quarter Sessions in the work of county administrators.

The question of the transfer of county police officers has always been a problem. If the transfer happened to be on grounds other than promotion, invariably the Chief Constable would be petitioned to alter his decision. Petitions were rarely direct. Local magistrates were often canvassed to use their influence. Other methods included visits by the wives of officers concerned to the Chief Constable's private residence - an order dealing with this and forbidding the practice had to be issued by Captain Smith. An excellent example of the "memorial" type of petition is still in existence. It is a petition dated 1876 from prominent inhabitants of the Altrincham district praying that an order for the transfer of Superintendent Steen to the Eddisbury Division be revoked.

The Memorial has a preamble setting out the high esteem in which the Superintendent was held by the subscribers to the number of ninety-seven per cent. The memorial had no effect and the order for transfer stood. The roll of names is actually four feet in length.

The first detective was appointed in the Force in February, 1859, in the person of Constable Burgess. He was attached to Headquarters, but was available for duty elsewhere throughout the county and was to act under the direct orders of the Chief Constable. In the order publishing the appointment, Captain Smith warned all ranks that he was "not to be watched or publicly recognised", and as advice to Burgess he said: "A talkative detective is useless." No special pay or allowances were mentioned.

In January, 1860, Burgess was appointed inspector at Headquarters at a weekly wage of twenty-five shillings. In the following month Constable Brentnor of the Manchester City Police was transferred, with the approval of Captain Palin, Chief Constable of Manchester, for duty as a detective with the rank of acting sergeant.

Apart from the tactical use of bodies of policemen in aid of particular divisions or boroughs in times of trouble (dealt with in other chapters) the interchange of detectives became very common on the occasion of race meetings and other annual festivities. The Wirral Hunt and the Tarporley race meetings and the "Beeston Castle Festival", all now nearly forgotten, and the Chester Race Week always attracted large numbers of card-sharpers, pickpockets and other undesirables. To counter the activities of these people the practice of importing members of other forces for the period of the races, etc., came into being. They came from forces as far away as Leeds, Huddersfield, Wolverhampton and Birmingham, and of course, Liverpool and Manchester, etc. The results of their efforts, particularly during Chester races were to be seen year after year in the local court news when the cream of the fraternity would be shown as having been charged before the City Justices.

CHAPTER SIX

The Cattle Plague, 1865-6
Runcorn Division

The Fenian Plot
Captain Arrowsmith

Riots, etc.
Murder of a Constable

THE story of the Cheshire Constabulary would not be complete without a reference to what was known as "The Great Cattle Plague" of 1865-6.

This outbreak of rinderpest was officially noted as existing in August, 1865, when Captain Smith gave instructions to the Force on precautions to be taken to arrest the spread of the disease. It continued to develop until January, 1866, when the Chief Constable spoke of it as "the serious crisis now impending over the county from the dreadful effects of the cattle plague".

The Court of Quarter Sessions set up a "Central Cattle Plague Committee" which gave the Chief Constable a free hand in the expenditure of money to do anything necessary.

Whilst Quarter Sessions dispatched a Memorial to the Secretary of State, "Praying Her Majesty to direct that a day of Public Humiliation and Fast be set apart for the Humbling of the Whole Nation before Almighty God and for the withdrawal of this terrible, though just judgment of the Cattle Plague", Captain Smith took the practical step of sending all section sergeants for a course of instruction in the use of disinfectants. This was given at the laboratory of a Professor Stone in Manchester. Each sergeant was issued with a box containing the various crude disinfectants of the period to be used in cleansing infected premises.

Although the total of animal casualties is not clear, the fact that a special "cattle rate" of 7d. in the pound was being considered at a time when the ordinary general county rate was 2d. in the pound, as an alternative to the question of raising a loan of £,270,000 to meet expenditure arising from the outbreak, will give some idea of the seriousness of the affair.

When, in due course, the trouble subsided, the Clerk of the Peace was presented with a service of silver plate to the value of £300 for his services; his "two" clerks received the sum of £30 and £15 respectively; Superintendent Oldmeadow (Headquarters) received a gift of £30, and Divisional Superintendents £50 between them, the Chief Constable does not appear to have received any recognition.

The saying that "it's an ill wind that blows nobody any good", was certainly true at this time, for the Chief Constable was able to put through an application for an increase in pay for all members of the Force trusting, as he put it "that the liberal consideration of the Court of Quarter Sessions to the application would induce the Police to work with the utmost energy in the serious crisis now impending from the dreadful effects of the Cattle Plague". The increase amounted to about one shilling a week.

The following year (1867) saw the foiling of an alleged Fenian plot to capture the small arms of the Chester garrison. The "Fenians" were an Irish nationalist organization said to have been organized and led by ex-officers of Irish extraction who had served in the Federal Army in the American Civil War. They were responsible for bomb throwing and other outrages throughout the United Kingdom.

The so-called "Chester Castle Plot" came to the notice of the authorities in Chester late on the night of Sunday, 10th February, 1867, when, following information from an informer, the Chief Constable of Liverpool, Major J. J. Greig, dispatched two senior police officers by road to Chester with details of the plot. As a result of this the civil and military authorities took immediate action to meet the situation. The City magistrates immediately enrolled some 500 Special Constables for service under the Chief Constable - Mr. G. L. Fenwick. The military authorities took special measures to guard the armouries and the county police were alerted.

It was said that some 1,500 to 2,000 Fenians assembled in small parties in and near Chester on Tuesday, 12th February, but no arrests appear to have been made and the affair petered out. (In fact The Times and other national newspapers at the time rather scouted the idea of any plot at all.)

Whilst on the real evidence now available, there may be some doubts on the question as to whether there really was a plot, the Chester Chronicle of the 16th February, 1867, speaks of "the Fenians arriving during the day (11th February) in batches of thirty to sixty by various trains from Liverpool, Manchester and Crewe. Later arrivals were said to have brought the total up to an estimated figure of between 1,000 and 1,400." In the next 48 hours a company of regular troops was sent from Manchester and a battalion of the Scots Guards arrived by special train from London. By mid-day on the Monday, Captain Smith had reinforced the City Police by 150 county police. It seems curious that out of all the Fenians supposed to have been in Chester and its neighbourhood on the 11th and 12th February, not one appears to have been detained or even questioned. Reasonable grounds for questioning strangers certainly existed at a time when the organization was responsible for bomb outrages all over the country, the murder of a policeman and the rescue of Fenian prisoners from a "black maria" in Manchester, and the laying of a "Molotov Cocktail" type of bomb at the door of the Hyde divisional headquarters.

Whatever the truth may be the affair provided a basis for the initiation of a movement amongst a few influential persons in and about Liverpool which resulted in Lord Derby (Prime Minister) advising Her Majesty The Queen to award Major Greig with the C.B. As to Captain Smith the Court of Quarter Sessions passed a resolution of thanks "for having acted with zeal and energy in the measures he took for assisting in the defence of the Castle and City". A year later "Colt" revolvers, issued to the police at the time by the Government, were ordered to be returned to Headquarters.

The second half of Captain Smith's command of the Force was no less busy than the first. Year after year orders refer to the movement of large bodies of police for riot duty: 1861 and 1862 Birkenhead, 1863, 1864, 1866, 1868, riots in the Stalybridge, Hyde and Dukinfield districts.

The mobilization orders for these events generally followed the same pattern. On 6th December, 1861, an order detailing fifty officers and men to assist the Birkenhead Borough Force during elections requires cutlasses to be available for each man - to be carried in bulk and kept out of sight. Armlets will be issued at Headquarters "to be worn under the coat on left arm so that The bar of steel may be ready to ward off a blow of a stick or other instruments". In the same order the Chief Constable cautions the detail to exercise the utmost forbearance and even to receive much provocation and personal annoyance rather than show loss of temper or unnecessarily attempt to arrest.

On the following day all superintendents were ordered to take immediate steps to send every available man to be at Chester railway station to leave for Birkenhead.

In April, 1863, for "firmness and decision" during disturbances at Hyde in the course of which he arrested rioters "in the presence of some thousands of persons", Sergeant Heaton was commended and appointed acting inspector.

The year 1868 was a busy one for the Force. Industrial disturbances in the early part of the year in the Dukinfield, Hyde and Stalybridge districts followed by an election which, for the first time, brought in the "working man" vote, meant a great deal of what one may describe as "active service". In justice to the policeman of these times at least one event of the many calling for high personal courage and devotion to duty, should be placed on record. (Ashton-under-Lyne Reporter, 25th January, 1868 (Extract)).

One day in January, 1868, during a strike of colliers in the Ashton Dukinfield district, a mob of upwards of 1,000 strikers armed with sticks and bludgeons, came into Dukinfield from Ashton. Sergeant Leah and Constable Chivers met them at Alma Bridge and attempted to turn them back. The attempt failed and the mob proceeded to the Market ground. They damaged the Roman Catholic Church and went on to the Astley Deep Pit, with a view to turning out a number of Staffordshire "blacklegs". Sergeant Leah and Constable Chivers and three other constables who had now joined them arrived before the mob at the lamp-house of the colliery. The police held the mob at bay for some forty-five minutes with physical force, remonstrance and threats. The "blacklegs" had been brought to the lamp-house for safety. The mob pulled

the shutters down and threw stones. Some of the "blacklegs" having promises of safe conduct left the lamp-house but were set upon by the mob who struck and kicked them unmercifully. The account goes on to say that Mr. Little, the Deputy Chief Constable, arrived and with his well-known activity the law was set in motion. For their gallant action Sergeant Leah and Constable Chivers were both commended and promoted. The other constables received pay increases.

For the period of the 1868 election the chief constable set up a temporary headquarters at the Knutsford Court House. Orders included instructions for the removal of heaps of road stone from the vicinity of nomination places and polling booths. This practice was followed by succeeding Chief Constables up to the end of the century.

In the same year an adjustment of divisions took place by the splitting off of the western part of the Bucklow Division, and the creation of the Runcorn Division. The shrunken Bucklow Division became known as the Altrincham Division.

In February, 1871, Captain J. W. Arrowsmith (later foist Royal Fusiliers) who had been Chief Constable of Bedford Borough, was appointed superintendent of the Hyde division and Deputy Chief Constable succeeding Mr. Little who died in 1870.

In 1873, Constable James Green, of the County Force was murdered in circumstances indicating extreme brutality. This is the only instance known of the murder of a Cheshire police officer.

Green, who was thirty years of age and a native of Handbridge, Chester, had been a member of the County Force for a period of six years. He was stationed at Bradwall near Sandbach serving under the command of Superintendent Rowbottom of Middlewich and Inspector Hulme of Sandbach.

On a Monday evening in late February, Green expressed his intention to spend some time in plain clothes keeping observation on a James Buckley who resided at Moss Green near the hamlet of Elworth. Buckley, a farm worker, had a number of previous convictions for larceny and was believed to be still engaged in petty pilfering (it was later said that his cottage was "full of stolen property").

Inspector Hulme offered to provide a companion for Green, but the latter declined the offer. Green was not seen again until the following Friday, when, after continual inquiries, his body, grossly injured, was recovered from the Trent / Mersey canal at Moss Bridge, a quarter of a mile from Buckley's cottage. Medical evidence ascribed death to the rupture of internal organs combined with twenty-three cut wounds caused by a sharp instrument about the head.

Following inquiries by Superintendent Rowbottom, Buckley was arrested at a farm on which he was working at Elton. He was seen to be suffering from injuries to the face, two black eyes, a bruised forehead and a lacerated nose. These he accounted for by saying he had been injured by branches of a tree he had recently pruned.

Search of the prisoner's cottage revealed a number of bloodstained tools, a garden fork and other things. These were submitted for expert examination to Professors Calvert and Williamson of Owen's College, Manchester, and Dr. Taylor, Professor of the School of Medicine, Liverpool. In subsequent evidence none of the professors would say more than the stains on the implements were "animal blood stains". A Dr. Brown of Liverpool said he could not swear positively that the blood was human. "It might or might not be pig's blood." Professor Williamson said "he could not distinguish between human and pig's blood especially after it had become dry".

After a two-day trial at the Assizes, Buckley was acquitted by the jury after an absence of ten minutes.

The case is an interesting example of the advance of forensic science knowledge and methods from a state of almost total ignorance (in this particular field) to one by which, to-day, it is possible to distinguish not only as between human and base animal blood, but to distinguish as between one base animal and another.

The case also brought out another point of interest. It was revealed that the Police Committee of the Court of Quarter Sessions whilst doing all it could legally do in paying to Green's

widow (with three children) a gratuity of £66 18s. 4d. (equivalent to one year's pay), appealed to the Magistrates of the County for subscriptions to a trust fund. Other collections brought in: Residents of Sandbach and district, £44; Cheshire Constabulary, £52 ; Lancashire Constabulary, £34; what the Magistrates Subscribed is not on record.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Captain Arrowsmith, Chief Constable
Army Captains as Superintendents
Mutual Benefit Association

Military Ideas
Courts of Inquiry

CAPTAIN SMITH died at the age of 64 years on the 28th November, 1877, after a period of just over twenty years in command of the Force. A contemporary obituary notice ended with the words - "in manner he was distinctively a gentleman".

He was succeeded by Captain John William Arrowsmith (the Deputy Chief Constable) in February, 1878, who secured the appointment from a list of 108 applicants for the office.

As already mentioned in the last chapter, Captain Arrowsmith had been appointed as a superintendent and Deputy Chief Constable in 1871. He may be said to have been steeped in military traditions. He was born in the army, had joined the ranks at an early age, and had served in the Crimea War. Later, as an officer, he served in Ceylon and West Africa with native regiments, and was, from time to time, seconded for duties of a semi-civil character connected with the government of the colonies in which he served. On his departure from Bedford, it is said that his effigy was burnt on the Market Square.

On assuming command of the Force, Captain Arrowsmith decided on rather drastic methods of "disciplining" the Force which, by this time, had grown to a total strength of 314 eleven superintendents, six inspectors, forty-four sergeants, 252 constables. At this time the weekly pay scales were - constables 23s. 11d. on appointment, rising to 28s. 0d. in three years; sergeants 30s. 4d., rising in five years to 32s. 8d.

A number of the older superintendents (pre-1857) were by now due for retirement, and as they left the Force they were replaced by Army Officers. Captain the Hon. C. E. Edwards was appointed superintendent of the Hyde Division (and Deputy Chief Constable) at a total salary of £230 (£130 and £100 respectively). This appointment was shortly followed by others as follows: Captain Edward G. Lingard to Macclesfield Division; Captain Francis G. Little to Altrincham Division; Captain (later Lt. Col.) George H. Cope to Broxton.

Within about twelve months Captain Cope succeeded Captain Edwards as Deputy Chief Constable. What became of Captain Edwards is not known.

At the same time all superintendents were ordered, when in uniform, to wear regulation steel spurs, with strapped-down trousers, as they were considered to be "mounted" officers. They were also ordered to be sure their official horses were dual purpose - riding and driving - and not less than 15 hands.

For the Tarporley races, the Deputy Chief Constable and the senior superintendent were to be mounted.

A new drill manual was adopted and a Sergeant H. Clifton of the 23rd Regiment was appointed to the peculiar rank of "Sergeant Major" to the force at a weekly wage of 30s. 4d. per week. Clifton was employed as a drill instructor to recruits and occasionally visited divisions for the same purpose. Superintendents were instructed to see that he was "to be treated as a superintendent except that he was not to be saluted".

A further military feature introduced was a system of Courts of Inquiry to deal with certain disciplinary offences. These were established on regular military lines having a president and two members (all superintendents) and even an orderly sergeant to the Court. The conclusions of the courts were considered by the Chief Constable who punished or otherwise as he thought fit without any further trial.

Changes were made with a view to smartening up police uniforms and new pattern helmets for sergeants and constables were introduced (1878) for wear alternately with "caps" (the caps were the Shako type of headwear finally abolished in 1935). The new helmets were furnished with removable "spikes" and they were only worn on special occasions, the specific orders for which always included an item "with spikes" or "without spikes". Spikes were always to be worn when the wearer attended Divine Service. The helmets, which were to be of the same

material and shape as used by the Metropolitan Police, were supplied by Christy's, at a cost of 8s. 6d. each. Incidentally, at this time, a constable's greatcoat, tunic and two pairs of trousers cost £3 14s. 4d. per set. Superintendents' uniform consisting of one great-coat, one tunic, two pairs trousers and one cap, cost £8 5s. 0d. Authority was also obtained for the issue of a summer serge suit to all ranks - tunic and trousers - at a cost of - superintendents' and inspectors' £2 16s. 0d. Per suit and sergeants' and constables' at £1 per suit.

Captain Arrowsmith's military mind even went to the length of instructing superintendents to examine all constables' instruction (pocket) books and see that they are in good order, "and properly fastened with red-tape".

His methods of dealing with delinquent police officers, compared with his predecessor, were drastic. Reductions in rank, even occasionally of superintendents and inspectors, were numerous, although it must be put on record that he not infrequently, after a trial period, reinstated many of the officers in their former ranks.

To those who retired under normal circumstances he adopted a curious custom of granting honorary ranks. For example, he would grant a retirement rank to superintendents of "Honorary Chief Superintendent"; to inspectors "Honorary Chief Inspector", etc.

The honorary rank was also occasionally applied to serving officers, as when Inspector S. Williamson was appointed detective inspector at Headquarters with the honorary rank of chief inspector. Captain Arrowsmith also created the ranks of "Assistant Superintendent" and "Sub-Inspector".

At a time when everybody in a position of authority saw nothing reprehensible in the practice of nepotism, it is not to be wondered at that Captain Arrowsmith should find niches for members of his own family. He appointed one son as a divisional superintendent, and another as a deputy inspector.

Whilst it may be said that the son appointed superintendent had some measure of experience (if such it could be called), as an Inspector in the Mauritius Mounted Police, the other, so far as is known, had not even that background.

In May, 1880, the Police Committee had the task of considering certain charges against the Chief Constable, made by a discharged' sergeant named Tew. Tew had been reduced from the rank of sergeant whilst stationed at Crewe and transferred to the Birkenhead, district where he had been reinstated in his former rank and again'; transgressing was finally discharged.)

There is no record of what specific charges Tew had brought. The records, however, show that an inquiry was held by the Committee and a number of witnesses heard. The Committee decided that charges of injustice to Tew had not been proved, but went on to say - "that Captain Arrowsmith be informed that the Committee are strongly of the opinion that the appointment by him of his sons, one as a Superintendent and the other as a deputy inspector, have been injudicious and suggest to him that he should take the first opportunity of making some other arrangements".

What "other arrangements" the Chief Constable made are not known. The names of the younger Arrowsmith's, however, do not appear again in available records.

It was during the first year or so (1878) of Captain Arrowsmith's command of the Force that what was then known as The Mutual Assurance Association came into being. This was a simple scheme under which, on the death of a member, all members of the force contributed 2s. 6d. each to a fund the total of which was handed to the next-of-kin of the deceased member. In effect it was an organized form of a "whip round". In its original form it - not without difficulties - survived as a "Provident" Fund until 1946 when it was placed on a more firm basis including the payment by members of a weekly subscription.

The main architect of the scheme was Superintendent George Oldmeadow, the Chief Clerk, who for his services was later presented with a "handsome silver tea service".

Captain Arrowsmith died of a heart attack at his home at "The Elms", Hoole Road, Chester, on 18th June, 1881, at the age of forty-nine years.

From a contemporary obituary notice, one gathers that whilst his efforts to improve and smarten the Force were superficially successful the writer expresses the opinion that it had

become one of the smartest in the country both in point of physique and intelligence - the methods adopted created quite a lot of criticism. It was suggested that but for the steadying influence of a number of old reliable police officers, the process of militarizing the Force might have gone much further. Whilst some measure of hostile reaction to the "reforms" on the part of police officers would be understandable there was, it seems considerable adverse comment amongst the magistracy and public, notably in connection with some injudicious handling of crowds on peaceful public occasions.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Major J. H. Hamersley, Chief Constable
Standing Joint Committee as Police Authority O'Donnell Inquiry
First Aid Training Telephones Bicycle Winsford Watermen's Strike
New Headquarters Borough of Mossley Borough of Hyde
Boer War First Car Speed Traps

MAJOR JOHN HENRY HAMERSLEY was appointed Chief Constable in August, 1881. Lieutenant-Colonel Cope, the Deputy Chief Constable, was a near runner-up in the selection, obtaining fifty-nine votes to Major Hamersley's sixty-one.

Major Hamersley was thirty-nine years of age on his appointment, and had served over twenty years in the Cheshire Regiment; for seven and a half of which he had been adjutant to the Cheshire Volunteers Battalion.

His police "experience" (his own statement) did not extend beyond a period of some three months in London and Oxford.

By this time the Chief Constable's salary had been increased to £500 per annum, plus £150 travelling expenses and the strength of the Force had increased to a total of 390.

A change in the police authority occurred when in 1889 the Standing Joint Committee, following the creation of County Councils, took the place of the Court of Quarter Sessions. The authority, which for so many years had been composed entirely of justices, was now made up of 50 per cent justices and an equal number of elected members of the council.

The first chairman of the new authority was Colonel C. H. France Hayhurst of Bostock Hall, Northwich, whose family had provided members of Quarter Sessions for many years. Colonel France Hayhurst was a member of the Police Authority for forty-four years, twenty-five of which he was chairman. He died in 1914.

Major Hamersley took up, perhaps, a more distant attitude to the men under him. This is reflected in his orders to the Force which for the first time were briefer than those of his predecessors. He seemed a calmer man and rather more sure of himself.

The Force still possessed a number of awkward personalities and there is reason to think that there was not a great improvement in the behaviour of many of its members.

Reaction to disciplinary matters was, in the main, submission to the Chief Constable's decision. However, in 1890 what became known as the O'Donnell Inquiry caused some interest in the county.

An Inspector O'Donnell who had been "disciplined" by Major Hamersley by reprimand and transfer resigned from the Force in 1889, whether by his own free will or as an alternative to dismissal is not clear. He appeared to have harboured some resentment and as a result made various accusations against certain individual officers and, in a general way, against the police attitude to poaching prevention.

In March, 1890, a Mr. Slater Lewis of Stechford, Birmingham, having failed to move the Secretary of State to hold an inquiry into police affairs in Cheshire, communicated O'Donnell's complaints to the police authority - now the Standing Joint Committee. As a result of this a sub-committee under the chairmanship of Sir Horatio Lloyd (Chairman of Quarter Sessions) was set up to hold an inquiry. The matters under investigation were

- (1) The case of Inspector O'Donnell's resignation;
- (2) The County Police and neglect of ordinary duty in protecting game; and
- (3) The question of a fund got up by the justices and others for the purpose of rewarding constables who succeeded in capturing poachers.

Quite who Mr. Slater Lewis was is not clear. He may have been one of the type known as "Public Informers". However that may be, he expressed his opinion of the current Home Secretary in terms other than respectful, referring to him as "an ornamental official without the slightest power (over the police)".

The sub-committee constituted itself "as a court of inquiry" and went into the charges, holding eight public sittings at which sixty-seven witnesses were examined. The total cost of the inquiry came to nearly £600. The fees to the shorthand-writer alone amounted to £185 and the printing of evidence and the report came to £202. Counsel's fees came to over £100.

To put the findings of the Court shortly, it seems that the Chief Constable's attitude to Inspector O'Donnell was found to be more or less correct. As to the complaint of general neglect of duty, this all revolved around the Runcorn Division and its superintendent. The complaint was that Superintendent Hollingworth (the Sergeant at Lymm, Chapter Five), and his subordinates were frequently drunk and the Court found this to be true. That he had "denuded the town of Runcorn of police for the purpose of aiding game-keepers" was not satisfactorily proved. The Court found that on occasions police officers had been diverted from ordinary police duties for this purpose and that it was a lawful and proper purpose, but enough men were always available to provide general public protection.

As to the gratuity fund, this referred to an old-standing custom of the Magistrates of the Macclesfield County bench by which constables were rewarded by the gift of the sum of £1 on securing the conviction of a poacher. The existence of such a fund was admitted. It was managed by the Reverend Dix of Parkside, who had "taken it over from one of the Brocklehurst family".

The Court found that this allegation was proved and admitted, but as the Chief Constable had already put a stop to it, there was nothing further to do.

Having dealt with the specific charges, the Court ended by saying "we think it right to place on record our sense of the ability and devotion to duty which have characterized Colonel Hamersley's tenure of office as Chief Constable. It is gratifying to us to find the general discipline and management of the force on a satisfactory basis and that in so large a body of men a high percentage of good conduct is maintained."

During the 1890s, First Aid training was commenced, telephones were adopted (1890), a bicycle was bought "to be kept at Headquarters for the purpose of training recruits in the use of the same". Superintendents' horses and carts (four-wheeled dog-cart) were to be supplied free of charge and an allowance of £55 per annum granted for maintenance. At the beginning of the decade the strength of the Force came to exceed 400 to deal with a population (county districts) now approaching the half-million and increasing by nearly 50,000 every ten years.

To equip a constable with the following articles of clothing in 1890 it cost £3 19s. 5d. - one great-coat, one tunic, two pairs trousers, one serge jacket, one pair serge trousers.

In 1891 the Chief Constable succeeded in securing a pay increase of three shillings a week for the constables of the force. He told the police authority that no increase in pay had taken place for nearly twenty years. In putting his recommendation, the Chief Constable might well have been speaking sixty years later, when he said - "I feel the greatest difficulty in obtaining suitable men for the Cheshire police and it would be ill-judged economy to allow the high standard of the police to deteriorate."

Leave was also put on a firm foundation as a right (instead of by favour or other chance). Superintendents now had twenty-one days annually, inspectors fourteen days and sergeants and constables ten days, plus one day off a month, and rural constables one night off every fourteen days. The nine-hour day persisted.

Forensic science had not advanced much. The County Analyst, Mr. J. Carter Bell of Manchester, from time to time received a fee for examinations in connection with criminal charges. He was principally engaged in the examination of food samples for adulteration, but on occasions examined "exhibits" in criminal cases.

As to public disorder there seems to have been little to trouble the Chief Constable, apart from elections which still inclined to some measure of violence.

The most important event in Colonel Hamersley's time would appear to be the Winsford Watermen's strike of 1892 which developed into such serious, though short-lived, disorder that the Cheshire police contingent of 250 men had to be reinforced by a contingent from the Lancashire constabulary and a force of military (Hussars) who were billeted in Winsford.

The scale of operations may be judged from the following newspaper account of one event - "during an attack on the Salt Union (Employers) launch on the River Weaver damage was done to the vessel by stone throwing and officials had to lie on their faces in the cabin. The crowd was afterwards charged by about 200 policemen several of whom were injured."

Authority for the aid of troops had at first been refused to the Chief Constable by the Home Secretary who said he desired that all necessary steps to restore and maintain order should, in the first instance, be by the use of extra police from neighbouring Forces. It is possible that as the Cheshire Police Authority had not then entered into mutual aid agreement with neighbouring police authorities a request for military aid was the only method of rapidly reinforcing a rather over-stretched civil police. For feeding police and military the Salt Union Ltd. sent in a bill for £160.

Early in 1893 John R. Dodd was appointed a constable in the Force. He served until he retired as Assistant Chief Constable in 1946, with a police service of fifty-three years behind him.

In August, 1893, the Court of Quarter Sessions approved the building of a new Headquarters (then at 113 Foregate Street, Chester), to be erected near the entrance of Grosvenor Park at a cost not exceeding £2,000. This building was completed in 1886 and is still in use as such.

Up to the year 1886 the borough of Mossley presented a curious problem in police and local authority administration. At this time the town lay in parts of the counties of Cheshire, Lancashire and Yorkshire (West Riding). Each part was policed separately in the following proportions - Cheshire 2, Lancashire 6, Yorkshire 3. After considerable efforts on the part of each of the police authorities concerned to maintain its "rights", it was finally resolved that the Lancashire police take over the whole Borough.

In 1895 the Wirral Division was divided into two making North Wirral and South Wirral. About the same time the title of the Northwich Division was changed to Middlewich Division, the Northwich divisional headquarters building having collapsed owing to ground subsidence due to the salt workings.

In 1899 the Hyde Borough Council decided to have a Force of its own. This came into being on 1st April, with Mr. John Danby as its first Chief Constable. The residue of the old Hyde Division became the Dukinfield Division.

Contemporary with Mr. Dodd was Mr. Henry Sheasby, who joined the County Force in December, Mr. Sheasby ended his police service as Chief Constable of Macclesfield in 1942, to which office he was appointed in 1907 whilst serving as an inspector at Crewe, with a total of service in the two Forces of forty-nine years. In Mr. Sheasby's early days in the Wirral Division, horse trams ran from Lower Bebington to Birkenhead and he lodged well as a single man at a cost of twelve shillings per week.

In 1899 seventeen members of the Force with army reserve obligations were recalled for service in the Boer War. Five are recorded as having returned in July, 1902, and being re-sworn as constables.

About this period Eaton Hall, the seat of the Dukes of Westminster, was frequently visited by members of the British and other Royal Families. Special police arrangements for these occasions included indoor duties by police in plain clothes. Mr. Sheasby and other officers selected for their qualities of refinement of manner often performed their duties in evening dress.

Lieutenant-Colonel Cope, who had been Deputy Chief Constable for twenty-two years, died at Broxton in 1901. He was succeeded as Deputy Chief Constable by Superintendent William Leah.

In 1902 Robert J. Pearson, who later became Chief Constable of Cambridge (1919), was appointed in the Force. After service at Headquarters and in the North and South Wirral Divisions he transferred to the Wallasey Borough Police on its foundation on 1st April, 1913, being appointed detective inspector.

In 1908 the Standing Joint Committee purchased a 14 h.p. Siddeley car for the official use of the Chief Constable, whose groom-orderly was to act as chauffeur. The car "complete with acetylene lamps" cost £550. The "chauffeur" obviously would not find driving pleasant,

particularly in bad weather, as he had no protection. Some two years later the Standing Joint Committee considered "providing a shelter for the driver which will necessitate an extension of the top, and the provision of a glass screen". This car lasted until 1915 when it was replaced by a second-hand Sunbeam. The old car was then valued for part-exchange at £75.

Mr. Sykes (later Sir Alan Sykes, M.P.), a member of the Standing Joint Committee, seemed to be the expert in cars for he advised on and negotiated the purchase of the first car and subsequent replacements up to 1920 when the third car was acquired for the use of the Chief Constable. He acted in the same capacity in 1930 on the purchase of the first Road Traffic Act patrol cars.

By about this time offences of exceeding the speed-limit of twenty m.p.h. were becoming more frequent.

The system of check adopted by Colonel Hamersley was rather rough and ready. Certain main roads were kept under observation at points many miles apart. Cars entering the observed length of road would be noted as to registration numbers and timed at further intermediate points until they left the observed stretch. Each constable would note on a card particulars of any car which passed him and the time. At the end of the day cards would be sent to the superintendent and examined. If it was found that a car must have gone through the observed section of road at over twenty miles per hour, presumably the driver would be traced and summoned.

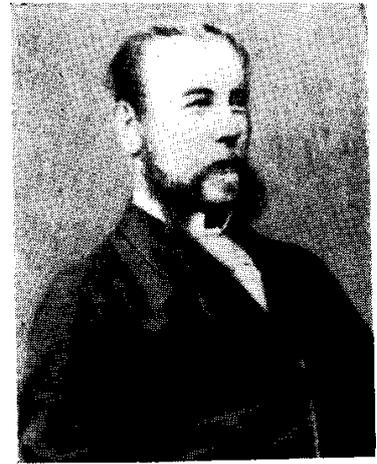
However, contrary to later practice involving the use of stopwatches and observers within sight of each other, this method involved stretches of many miles of road and the use of ordinary watches (synchronized by telephone before the check began). An example of a controlled stretch of road was the Knutsford Church Lawton road (now A50), a length of some seventeen miles. On this constables were placed at check points at Knutsford, Holmes Chapel, Arclid and the Staffordshire boundary.

In the quarter year ended 29th September, 1908, seventeen car drivers were convicted and fines ranging from £7 to 4s. 6d. were imposed. Superintendents were asked to report any cases of interference by "The Automobile Scouts".

The first police order concerning aircraft appeared in April, 1910, when instructions were issued as to careful control of road traffic on the occasion of the London-Manchester Daily Mail air race. The competitors followed the main railway line from Euston and the winner landed at Didsbury, Manchester, after an overnight stop in the Midlands.



Capt. T. J. SMITH,
5th January, 1857,
to 28th November, 1877.



Capt. J. W. ARROWSMITH,
19th February, 1878,
18th June 1881



Col. J. H. HAMERSLEY
4th August, 1881,
to 29th September, 1910.



Lt.-Col. P. MALCOLM
C.B.E., D.S.O., M.V.O
30th September, 1910
to 30th April, 1934



Capt. Sir A. HORDERN, A.F.C
C.B.E., M.C
1st May 1934
to 30th September, 1935



Major Sir J. BECKE, C.B.E
1st October, 1935
to 30th September, 1946



G. E. BANWELL,
1st October, 1946

CHAPTER NINE

The Gorse Hall Murder

Use of Bloodhounds

CHESHIRE does not seem to have provided a classic crime. The prisoners were the people who usually took a police force to headlines in the national press, and Cheshire seems to have had no practitioners in the art.

Of the many rather sordid and brutal crimes which took the perpetrators to the Crown Court of Chester Castle, one at least stands out as rather unusual. This was the case known as the Gorse Hall Murder.

Gorse Hall was a rather commodious private residence standing in its own grounds on the borders of the borough of Stalybridge and Dukinfield. The house was in the Dukinfield police division and most of the grounds in the borough police area.

In November, 1909, it was occupied by a Mr. George Henry Storrs, a well-to-do contractor who also had interests in a number of textile concerns. Living with him were his wife and an adopted daughter. The household staff consisted of a cook and general maid, together with a coachman who, with his wife and family, occupied quarters over the stables.

On the 1st November, 1909, at about 9 p.m., whilst the family were at supper, an unknown man was found in the house. On an alarm being raised by one of the maid-servants Mr. Storrs left the dining-room to investigate. He found the man and in a struggle which ensued Mr. Storrs was mortally injured by stab wounds. The intruder left the premises leaving behind him a defective revolver with which he had earlier threatened the maid-servant. Police from Stalybridge under Captain John Bates, Chief Constable, and from the Dukinfield Division under Superintendent Croghan were quickly on the scene and began inquiring and searching. They were joined in the early hours of the next morning by Colonel Hamersley, Mr. Leah, Deputy Chief Constable, and Detective Chief Inspector Pierce of the County Headquarters. It seems that the only clue left by the murderer was the revolver.

A description given by the women members of the household was very general and might have applied to many hundreds of men to be found in this region of north-east Cheshire and south-east Lancashire.

In spite of an all night search of the grounds, no trace of the intruder was to be found. The following morning some bloodhounds, owned by a Mr. Platt of Ashton-under-Lyne, were brought in with no useful result. Later the same day Major Richardson, a well-known dog breeder, having traveled over night by road from Harrow, brought two bloodhounds to work, with no better result than achieved by Mr. Platt's. Major Richardson's bill came to £20.

Inquiries followed the usual course of circulating a description of the murderer. This was followed up by the publication in the Police Reports of photographs of men whom the police wished to interview.

One of these, Cornelius Howard, was a nephew of the deceased. He had lived in Stalybridge until he joined the army some seven years or so earlier. On his discharge to the army reserve he had not settled down in Stalybridge and had been in the hands of the police on a number of occasions in various northern towns for shop-breaking and larceny. He was, in fact, arrested at Oldham some eighteen days after the murder, being found on enclosed premises in the early hours of the morning.

He was handed over to the Cheshire Police and after an identification parade was charged with the murder. The case against him was very weak indeed. As to identification all that the women witnesses would say (they had not met him previously, he being a poor relation of the family) was that of all the men on the identification parade he was "most like the one" who attacked Mr. Storrs. There was no evidence at all connecting Howard with the revolver. His defence was in the nature of an alibi which was largely corroborated by licensees and lodging house-keepers of the West Riding. Both at the inquest which, in those days, received as much "evidence" as a committal court, and at the magisterial hearing, cross-examination showed the

witnesses to be very unreliable indeed. It is little wonder, therefore, that Howard was eventually acquitted.

His defence at the Assize Court in the following March was in the hands of Mr. Trevor Lloyd and Mr. (now Mr. Justice) Austin Jones. What is amazing about the proceedings is that they ever began on nothing more than mere suspicion and that the Director of Public Prosecutions could have been induced to take charge of the prosecution.

The case looked like being relegated to the unsolved file until in the following July (1910) a Mark Wilde, a native of Stalybridge, was convicted at the Assizes of felonious wounding a month or so previously at Stalybridge. The case was one in which Wilde interfered with a courting couple on the outskirts of Stalybridge and inflicted wounds on the young man with what was described as a "bowie-knife". For this Wilde was given what was undoubtedly an arranged short sentence of two months imprisonment. There was no doubt that at the time of this trial he had come under suspicion as, whilst on remand at Knutsford, he had been interviewed and a sentence of two months would ensure he would not be transferred to a distant prison.

Whilst serving this sentence he was "put up" for identification at the prison and identified by the women of the Storrs household as the intruder on the night of the murder.

By a coincidence Wilde had also served in the army and had been discharged to the reserve. At the time of his arrest he had been employed on the railway at Stalybridge.

The case against Wilde was much stronger than that against Howard. A description and photograph of the revolver left at Gorse Hall had been circulated and three witnesses who had served with Wilde in the Army identified it as having been once owned by Wilde. The witnesses - one by now a constable in the Liverpool City Police - had known Wilde for some years in the army and had themselves handled the revolver, which, with its peculiar marks and defects, they were able to describe minutely. Wilde had been proved (in the wounding case) to carry a knife and his account of his movements, in support of an alibi, on the night of the murder was quite uncorroborated although he said he had been in public houses and had had a fight with a man he did not know in Ashton. Wilde spoke of the alleged fight as having been conducted in the Lancashire style - "hitting, kicking and everything - a proper Lancashire fight." It was this fight, he said, which had caused certain injuries and bloodstains seen by witnesses (friends and relatives) an hour after the murder had been committed, but of course never mentioned to the police at the time.

Wilde's defence, both before the magistrates and at the Assizes, was in the hands of a West Indian barrister, Mr. E. T. Nelson, who had chambers in Manchester. Amongst the expert witnesses were Dr. Herbert Wilcox, Senior Home Office Analyst, and Mr. Stensby of Manchester, an expert in firearms. Both were very well known at the time. Dr. Wilcox spoke of his examination of bloodstains found on Wilde's clothing and having used one of the "new serum" tests ascertained they were human blood. This was certainly an advance on 1873 when the Liverpool and Manchester professors were unable to distinguish between human and pig's blood. Dr. Wilcox had figured prominently a short time earlier in the famous case of "Dr." Crippen who had murdered his wife and dismembered her body.

One of the witnesses called was Cornelius Howard. His evidence was purely negative. The fact of his being indicted and acquitted in the same Court for the same crime some six months earlier no doubt influenced the jury when they arrived at their verdict of "not guilty" in favour of Wilde.

The case of the Gorse Hall murder was not a good example of police work. No motive for the murder could be found except in the imagination of the press, and public.

The investigating officers were not a little harassed by the fact that the coachman to the Storrs family committed suicide in his stables the day after the arrest of Howard and within less than three weeks of the murder of his employer. There was, however, not the slightest evidence that he was concerned in the crime.

CHAPTER TEN

Retirement of Colonel Hamersley

Colonel Malcolm, 1910	King's Police Medal	Examinations
Rest Days (1910 Act)	Wallasey Borough 1913	1914 War
Anti-German Disturbances at Crewe	First Superintendent's car	
Police Ploughmen	Police in H.M. Forces	The Last Horse

COLONEL HAMERSLEY retired in September, 1910, after having been in command of the Force for a period of twenty-nine years. He went to live in Devonshire, where, at the age of 86 years, he died in 1928. In the New Year's Honours of 1911, he was awarded the newly instituted King's Police Medal for "prolonged service distinguished by exceptional merit and ability and success in the organization of the Police Force under his charge".

A valedictory notice on his retirement said that he left with the good wishes and esteem of the entire Force, the Magistracy and the inhabitants of the County. A testimonial fund limited to Magistrate subscribers provided some £300 with which a service of plate and a monetary gift were presented to him. Members of the Force also made a presentation consisting of two solid silver rose bowls, a silver inkstand and a gold watch and bracelet for Mrs. Hamersley, together with an illuminated address and photograph.

Colonel Hamersley was succeeded by Major (later Colonel) Pulteney Malcolm, who came from Hull where he had been Chief Constable for six-and-a-half years. He, as all his predecessors, had army connections. Born in India in 1861, the son of a general, he had served in the Army until 1904. He held the Albert Medal for gallantry and the D.S.O. Later, as Chief Constable, he was awarded the M.V.O., by H.M. George V on a visit to Crewe Hall in 1913 at the end of a four day tour of Cheshire. This was followed by the award of the King's Police Medal in 1925 and the C.B.E. in 1932. Colonel Malcolm inherited, so to speak, the reigning Deputy Chief Constable, Mr. William Leah.

Mr. Leah was the second serving policeman (next after Mr. Joseph Little) to become Deputy Chief Constable of Cheshire, and later commanded the Force as Acting Chief Constable during the 1914-18 war when Colonel Malcolm was serving with the Army. He retired at the age of 65 in 1927 after forty-six years' police service. He was awarded the King's Police Medal in 1912 being the first police "ranker" in Cheshire to receive this award, and the Medal of the Royal Victorian Order (at Crewe Hall) in April, 1913.

The weekly Rest Day Act came into being in 1910. It was left to local police authorities to apply, as they thought fit, subject to a time limit of four years. At this time all forces had their own leave arrangements. In Cheshire, as we have already seen, it amounted to one day a month for all ranks below that of superintendent, plus annual leave amounting to twenty one days for superintendents, fourteen days for inspectors and ten days for sergeants and constables. To have adopted the Act in one operation would have meant an increase in the Force of some sixty constables. This was rather too much for the Standing Joint Committee which decided to spread the operation over the four years permitted when it was assumed that the Act could be fully met. As it turned out the First World War put it back to the early 1920's. Promotion examinations had been held at fitful periods under Colonel Hamersley at Crewe; Colonel Malcolm in 1911 removed the venue to Chester Castle. In an order announcing the examinations, candidates were instructed to bring with them: "a good lead pencil, a penknife (to sharpen pencil) and a sandwich or two". The order went on to say that those attending would perform their ordinary night's duty on their return to divisions. Up to this time constables had no issue of training or technical literature other than the pocket book first issued by Captain Smith in 1857.

Superintendents, inspectors and sergeants had been issued with Sir Howard Vincent's "Police Code", Bicknells Manual and a Drill Manual, and later (superintendents only) were issued with Stones Justices Manual.

In 1912 the Council of the four-year old Borough of Wallasey decided to have its own Police Force. This came into being on the 1st April, 1913. Having to create a Force from nothing the new and first Chief Constable of Wallasey naturally wanted experienced men. Of the seventy-three members of the county force then serving in the Wallasey borough area, fifty-four applied and were granted permission to transfer to the new Force. This left nineteen "county" men to be reallocated.

As the Wallasey area formed the greater part of the then North Wirral Division it was decided to merge what remained with the South Wirral Division and rename the combined area the Wirral Division with headquarters at Heswall. The only officer for whom a place could not be found was the superintendent, Mr. McHale. However, as he had long qualified to retire on pension he did this and the difficulty was solved.

The new Wallasey Force took over the main county police premises and it was proposed that the old South Wirral divisional headquarters in Abbey Street, Birkenhead, be given up on occupation of the new headquarters at Heswall. Actually the transfer from Birkenhead to Heswall did not take place until December, 1919, owing to difficulties occasioned by the First World War.

In 1912 the question of permanent reserves came to be considered by the Police Authority. This arose from a Home Office circular in connection with the prospect of a general railway strike. The circular quoted "Mr. Secretary Churchill's" opinion on a number of matters from which it is obvious that the great statesman of later days saw the coming of the 1914-18 war perhaps more clearly than most.

Colonel Malcolm could not see much prospect of the formation of a "First Police Reserve" and suggested a compromise by enrolling up to 400 Special Constables, a proportion of whom would, in emergency, become whole-time. For the latter he created the new name of "Extra Constables".

Apart from this there was little in the way of a build-up of the Force for the coming war, even in the early months of 1914. There was, of course, no need for air raid precautions as known in the Second World War, although many orders were later issued on what to do in case of Zeppelin raids. One order in 1916 advised the police that if an airship (British or enemy) signalled a desire to come to earth, the police officer seeing the signal should collect up to 100 men or women if the airship was small or 400 if large, to lay hold on a trailing rope and haul the vessel down, the rope to be fastened to a tree or other object. The picture of upwards of 400 village matrons headed by the constable chasing a skittish dirigible in a March wind is not without an element of humour.

On the outbreak of the war Colonel Malcolm received permission to strengthen the Force by the employment of supernumeraries. A large number of Special Constables served through the war. How many is not known, but the fact that £125 was spent on illuminated presentation certificates commemorating the service of each after the war would indicate a probable total of not less than about 500. They had no uniforms. Each, when on duty, wore an armlet in blue and white striped material bearing a metal badge incorporating the title of the Force and the holder's number in the Force. These cost 1s. 0d. each. The Chief Constable reported that thirty army and four naval reservists had rejoined their units and that he had lent eight ex-soldiers to the military authorities for duty, in the United Kingdom, as drill sergeants. He himself received permission to offer his services to the War Office, and in April, 1915, he left to become A.A. and G.M.G. to a division of the new army; 22nd London Division then stationed at St. Albans. He later went with the division to France where he served until late 1916 when he was invalided and discharged. He again took up office as Chief Constable in January, 1917. In the meantime the Force had been in charge of Mr. Leah.

Following the outbreak of the war in August, 1914, there were a number of cases of disorder of an "Anti-German" character. On the night of Saturday, 24th October, disturbances occurred in Crewe where there were some German pork butchers. Shops in Edleston Road, Victoria Street and Mill Street were attacked and badly damaged.

These affairs were largely spontaneous in character, initiated by a few drunks after "closing time", reinforced by others only too keen to join in. The local police had had no warning and were quite powerless to prevent damage. Reinforcements were sent from Northwich and Middlewich and the Chief Constable arrived at about 1a.m. from Chester. However, by this time all the damage had been done and the crowds had gone home. On the following Saturday fifty men from other divisions were drafted to Crewe for duty until Sunday morning, but nothing further took place.

Thirteen persons were eventually charged with breach of the peace, three of them with assaulting the police. Eleven were fined and two dismissed.

Claims for some £500 Riot Damage were later made. They were rejected on the grounds that legally there was no riot.

As the war wore on and various expedients were adopted by the Government further to strengthen the armed forces, a number of policemen resigned their appointments to join one or other of the services.

In the spring of 1917 the man-power shortage led to an arrangement by which the Chief Constable was permitted to release policemen with experience of ploughing to do work of this nature on a day to day basis for local farmers. They continued to receive full police pay and the income from the part-time employment was devoted in equal amounts to the policeman-ploughman in person and the police rate.

The first award of the M.B.E. to a member of the Cheshire Constabulary was that granted to Superintendent W. J. Naylor, Resident Chief Clerk at Headquarters, in June, 1918, in recognition of his work, particularly in connection with war emergency regulations.

By this time the Force was 135 under the normal strength of 550. In January, 1919, some seven weeks after the Armistice, the Force was 206 under strength.

The use of motor-cars was, even in the war years, growing very considerably. In the three months July-September, 1916, there were 246 motor offence convictions in the County. It is little wonder, therefore, that divisional superintendents began to toy with the idea of driving a car instead of a horse. Knowing something of the conservative bent of police authorities in these days one can imagine with what hesitation Superintendent Thomas Ennion of the Wirral Division applied for permission to use a car instead of a horse in the course of his duties in January, 1916. He got his permission and the old horse allowance of £55 per annum (and nothing more) was transferred to cover all maintenance and running expenses. The car was, of course, bought at the superintendent's own expense.

A few years later the allowance was increased to £70 per annum and in 1921 to £100. Superintendent Ennion, having started the fashion, was within a few months followed by the Superintendent of the Eddisbury Division. It was after the end of the war that superintendents on promotion were required to provide themselves with a car, and for those short of capital an advance of up to three years' standard allowance could be made.

The last horse allowance was made to the Superintendent of the Nantwich Division in 1923, and as this division was about to be absorbed by Crewe (1st February, 1923), and its superintendent retired on pension, the horse was disposed of.

Some 145 members of the Force served in the armed forces, of these a number were wounded and fourteen were killed or died of wounds. Five received awards of the Military Cross, the Distinguished Conduct Medal or the Military Medal. Five were granted commissions.

Of those killed or died of wounds, eleven were, at the time, serving in one or other of the Guards regiments; two were in County regiments and one in the Royal Naval Division.

In 1920 the Standing Joint Committee authorized the expenditure of £100 to be spent on specially designed wooden plaques recording particulars of service in H.M. Forces of members of each division to be erected at the respective Divisional Headquarters.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

War Bonus	Police Union	Police Federation	Motor Cycles
Sinn Fein Outrages	C.I. D.	Policewomen	
First Detective Superintendent		General Strike	
Arrowe Park Scout Camp	Control of Road Traffic		Traffic Lights

DURING the war the cost of living rose very considerably. With the shortage of man-power, wages, particularly of munitions workers, went up and up. The case of Government and Local Authority employees was met by a grant of a cost-of-living bonus. So far as the police were concerned the Government could only suggest that the Standing Joint Committee grant the bonus to the police. The bonus system had begun in 1916. As time went on with the rising cost of living the bonus got larger. The Standing Joint Committee was content to pay this whilst the basic police pay remained almost at the 1914 level. However, there were strong objections to paying any bonus after the adoption of the Desborough scale of pay. The final note on the matter (December, 1920) shows that the Standing Joint Committee granted nearly £,6,000 to pay the outstanding bonus and reiterated the opinion that "members of the Force are sufficiently well paid without bonus and emphatically protests against the action of the Home Secretary in forcing the hands of the Committee".

It was this and other things which gave rise to the discontent which flowered into the Police Union and (in some Forces) strike action in 1918. There is no evidence of any members of the Cheshire Force having joined the Union. In 1917 the Standing Joint Committee received a "demand" from the Crewe and District Trades Council that members of the County Police Force should be allowed to have a trade union to protect the interest of "these workers". The Standing Joint Committee decided to take no action.

It has been suggested that as the industrial unions were foreseeing a severe battle of wages after the war, if police force trade unions could be formed, they could be called upon to strike and would, therefore, be on the side of the "workers" rather than in the neutral position traditionally held by the police as keepers of the peace.

There is no doubt the country was in an unsettled state. Nationwide strikes of railwaymen, miners and others were threatened. The armed forces were chafing at being kept embodied (there were mutinous events at certain transit camps in France). Under all the circumstances it seemed short-sighted on the part of the police authorities to allow the police to continue in discontent when the situation could be relieved by the grant of a few shillings a week.

The speed with which the Desborough Committee went to work in 1919 shows something of the urgency with which the Government at long last viewed the situation. Only a few weeks after the Committee had submitted Part I of its Report the Police Act of 1919 was passed. This created the Police Federation and a Police Council to act as a consultative body for the Secretary of State who was given powers to make regulations regarding conditions of service, pay and allowances.

Before this the Home Secretary had suggested the establishment of Representative Boards in all Forces and had said that members of the Police Force may join a Union (not a Police Trade Union) "so long as it does not claim or attempt to interfere with police regulations or discipline or induce members to withhold their services". On this the Chief Constable told the Standing Joint Committee that: "there was no difficulty in the men making representations. Arrangements which had stood the test of years resulting in the best feeling between all ranks cannot be improved upon", and: "that he would not hold himself answerable for the efficiency of a Force in which the members were permitted to join a Union".

Eventually with the passing of the Police Act, 1919, the Force settled down to conditions of service and pay which were, more or less, standard for the whole country.

The first joint Branch Board in Cheshire attended the first annual central conference of the Police Federation in London in November, 1919.

The new pay scale (Desborough) having by now been adopted, the only local complaint seemed to be for payment for "rest days" and annual leave lost during the war.

The Standing Joint Committee and the Chief Constable thought this application had no merit and it was rejected. However, the Branch Boards kept pressing. In aid of the application the Chief Constable's promise of 1919 that- "if neighbouring County Forces paid he would recommend it in Cheshire" was quoted. Colonel Malcolm was in a quandary. It seemed that Lancashire and the West Riding, both neighbouring Forces, had decided to pay. Shropshire, Denbighshire and Flintshire (all neighbouring Forces) had refused to pay. The question was "who is our neighbour?" This dragged on until July, 1922, when a grant of £2,000 was made to be divided between inspectors, sergeants and constables.

The rate of increase in police pay occurring between 1914 and 1920 is to be seen from the fact that the average pay of a constable rose from £1 13s. 4d. in 1914 to £4 6s. 9d. in 1920, an increase of 160 per cent. In the same period a sergeant's pay increased by 186 per cent.

In April, 1920, the Chief Constable was authorized to purchase ex-War Department motor cycles - one per division - at a cost not exceeding £75 each. Headquarters, as befitted its exalted position, was to have a motor cycle and sidecar costing up to £110.

The immediate post-war years saw the activities of the Irish nationalist party, the Sinn Fein, becoming more and more violent. In Cheshire to counter the threat of incendiary fires the police, particularly in rural areas, were supplied with alarm rockets to be set off on the discovery of a fire. The rockets, of two kinds, were visible up to one and a half and five miles respectively at night. They were also of different colours and to prevent false alarms by the setting off of nonofficial rockets, the colours to be used were specified for particular periods.

At about the same time six automatic pistols and ammunition were issued to each division.

On a night in June, 1921, certain members of the Sinn Fein organization living in Wallasey and Liverpool committed acts of sabotage on railway signalling and communications installations in the Bromborough district. Four, all Irishmen, were arrested for this during the early hours of the morning on their way from the scene of the damage. Two were arrested at New Ferry by Sergeant Mountford on suspicion of being concerned in the railway damage. They had, a few minutes earlier, been questioned by Constable Cookson who had been assaulted by the men who got away. Both men on being searched were found to be in possession of firearms. Cookson arriving at the police station a few minutes after Sergeant Mountford and his prisoners was able to identify them as his attackers and was able to give a description of two others who had passed along about the same time.

By this time Detective Inspector Kingman, who had received information of the affair some time earlier, arrived from Chester. He had travelled by light-engine and brake-van provided by the railway officials at Chester who had received early information from a signal box at Hooton. (Why Inspector Kingman did not use the Headquarters motor cycle combination is not on record. Probably he decided that railway transport was more reliable than war-tired motor transport.)

Inspector Kingman, having Cookson's description of the other two men, set out in search of them in a car. For some reason he assumed that they would not follow the main road into Birkenhead and in this he was correct. He caught up with them at Prenton and took them back to New Ferry. One of the two men was in possession of a revolver. All bore fresh traces of having been through long grass and in contact with tarred objects such as telephone poles. All were detained and on searches of their rooms much interesting material was found; Sinn Fein papers, maps, revolvers, wire cutters and pictures of leaders of the movement and an incriminating letter written, but not posted, by one of the men describing the plan for the night. The four men were committed for trial at the Assizes in the following month and all were found guilty on an indictment brought under the Defence of the Realm Act of the period and sentenced to varying terms of imprisonment.

In 1922, all four men were released and deported to Ireland on the creation of the Irish Free State.

Extraordinary precautions were taken to safeguard the Court during the trial. In addition to the usual detail of police, twelve officers were posted about the premises armed with automatic pistols.

When it is remembered that a British Field Marshal had recently been assassinated in London and what later became known as the battle of the Four Courts was then in progress in Dublin (with naval gunboats firing at point-blank range from the River Liffey) such precautions were by no means overdone. For his part in this affair Constable Cookson received the Merit Badge and a reward of £2. Detective Inspector Kingman and Sergeant Mountford were commended. Incidentally, Inspector Kingman became the first detective superintendent in the Force (1926). However, when he left Headquarters about 1929 to take charge of the Northwich Division the appointment of detective superintendent lapsed until 1934 when it was revived by Captain Hordern by the transfer of Superintendent F. Platt from the Eddisbury Division. In 1935, Mr. Kingman was awarded the M.B.E.

In 1923, Cheshire policemen, for the first time, went away for detective training at the Metropolitan Training School at Hendon. In the same year the Nantwich Division was merged with the junior Crewe Division (created 1902) and ceased to exist as a police unit after centuries first as a Hundred and later as a police division.

In 1924, the Standing Joint Committee considered a Home Office Report on the employment of policewomen. No action was taken, the Chief Constable commenting, "there is no necessity to appoint women in this county". The question was not seriously considered again until 1946. The next outstanding event was the General Strike in May, 1926. Practically all the trade unions brought their members out on strike. It lasted a little over a week, during which the only trains, buses and other transport running were "scratch" services manned by staff employees or employers themselves. No newspapers were printed. They were, in some places, replaced by cyclostyle broadsheets produced by editorial staffs. Ships were unloaded by office workers and dock engines were manned by the same people.

In Cheshire steps were taken to protect people who were prepared to go on working and the many volunteers, mainly recruited from the professional and business classes, who undertook to run essential services.

The Chief Constable's report to the Standing Joint Committee said there were comparatively few cases of violence in the county area. Some 2,000 persons had registered as willing to become Special Constables at the commencement of the strike. Of these 1,284 persons were "sworn in". Before the strike collapsed volunteers exceeded 4,000.

In 1927, Mr. William Leah, the fifth holder of the rank of Deputy Chief Constable, retired, with a police service of over forty-six years behind him. He had held the office of deputy for twenty-six years. He was succeeded by Superintendent John R. Dodd.

In the summer of 1929, Arroe Park, in the Wirral Division (now part of Birkenhead) was the venue of the World Scout Jamboree. This first international meeting was attended by 50,000, boy scouts from many different countries. A police detachment of fifty men was quartered at Barnston Dale, under the command of Inspector A. Henderson (Assistant Chief Constable, 1946) for over a fortnight. During this time the camp was visited by H.R.H. The Prince of Wales and his brother H.R.H. Prince George. The Prince of Wales arrived and left by air from Hooton Park after living in the camp for some days.

In the following New Year's Honours List, Superintendent Thomas Ennion of the Wirral Division, was awarded the M.B.E.

The year 1930 saw a new approach by the central government to the question of motor traffic. This resulted in the Road Traffic Act, 1930. Amongst other things the Act provided a grant of 100 per cent in aid of police motor patrols, subject to approval as to numbers. To meet this a number of motor-cycle combinations were purchased. A year later these were supplemented by the purchase of three Alvis cars. Sir Alan Sykes, who had advised on the purchase of the Chief Constable's car in 1908, was again asked to give the benefit of his experience. One sergeant and twelve constables were allocated to patrol duties. By the beginning of the year 1934 the county possessed four Alvis cars (one each at Headquarters, Wirral, Macclesfield and

Northwich), eight A.J.S. combinations and six solo motor cycles. In addition the Chief Constable and each divisional superintendent kept a car for official use.

About this time automatic traffic lights began to appear on the roads. The Borough of Crewe began the fashion in Cheshire by installing a set in 1930. In the following year there were three more sets at Crewe and two at Altrincham.

In 1932 Colonel Malcolm was awarded the C.B.E., and Superintendent and Deputy Chief Constable Dodd received the M.B.E. It was at this time that the question of adopting the rank of Assistant Chief Constable came to be considered. On the grounds of economy the question was put back for further consideration.

In the meantime training in the traditional arts of "First Aid" and "Life Saving", interrupted by the first world war, had gone on apace and in 1932 the Chief Constable was able to say that 93 per cent of the Force were able to swim; 135 had the medallion of the Royal Life Saving Society; five held the Award of Merit and Instructors' Certificate. In First Aid 98 per cent qualified.

In July, 1933, Colonel Malcolm tendered his resignation, and on 10th May, 1934, after nearly twenty-four years in command of the Force handed over to his successor, Captain Archibald Hordern, A.F.C., Chief Constable of the East Riding of Yorkshire. Colonel Malcolm went to live in Kent where he passed away at the age of seventy-nine in 1940. He and others like him, steeped in military traditions, no doubt were the ideal police administrators in the formative days of the civil police forces. They possessed high qualities of courage, decision and leadership when the stone-throwing mobs were out had always revolved around the possibility of finding an existing building in Chester to which to move. Captain Hordern, however, was more realistic. He conceived the idea of a complete break-away from Chester and the establishment of a comprehensive headquarters - in fact what may be termed a police colony - at Sandiway on the Chester-Manchester road. A site of thirty-two acres was involved and the sum of £6, 000 was voted to purchase the land.

At the same time it was decided that the Wirral divisional headquarters at Heswall was both inadequate and in the wrong place. To remedy this the site of the present headquarters at Bromborough was acquired. Similar action was taken to provide for a new headquarters for the Altrincham Division. This project was later dropped and the land used for police houses. But for the war, there is little doubt that the present and future generations of Cheshire police would have been directed from a headquarters consisting of an up-to-date headquarters building, spaciouly surrounded by thirty-eight staff houses; a recruits hostel; a gymnasium; a cinema; a sports pavilion and swimming pool - all at an estimated cost (April, 1939) of £117, The question of adding the rank of Assistant Chief Constable to the establishment was first considered in January, 1932, when the Secretary of State refused to approve. It was brought up again by Captain Hordern in January, 1935, when, with the approval of the Secretary of State, Superintendent and Deputy Chief Constable John R. Dodd was appointed.

In July of the same year a contingent of the Force under Inspector (later Superintendent) S. Powell attended a Royal Review of the police of the United Kingdom held by His Majesty King George V in celebration of his Silver Jubilee. Major M. J. Egan, then Chief Constable of Southport and later well known as one of H.M. Inspectors of Constabulary, was in command of all forces from the North-west district.

At home thirty-eight members of the Force were presented with the jubilee Medal by the Lord Lieutenant, Sir William Bromley Davenport, K.C.B., C.M.G., C.B.E., D.S.O., Chairman of the Standing Joint Committee, at a special parade held at Chester Castle. Three hundred officers, sergeants and constables were on parade.

In his report Captain Hordern said, "The parade marks a record in the history of the force of which all ranks are exceedingly proud".

Of Captain Hordern it may be said that he revitalized the Cheshire Constabulary to a remarkable degree, not only in work, but in play. His interest in the promotion of athletic sports was ably reinforced by the enthusiasm and practical experience of Constable John A. Taylor (now Chief Constable of Leicestershire and Rutland) whom he had brought with him

from the East Riding and who was already a national police running champion at certain distances. In addition to his charm of manner, which affected all with whom he came into contact, Captain Hordern possessed a deep well of sympathy on which he was able to draw in his dealings with worried subordinates. Just two instances of many which could be quoted will show the man.

A constable, with some year's service, in 1914 applied for permission to volunteer for service in H.M. Forces. On this being refused by Colonel Malcolm the man resigned from the force and joined the army. On his discharge he applied for reappointment to the force and was accepted. After some time he made a request that his pre-war police and army service be allowed to count as "approved" service. This was refused by Colonel Malcolm. On Captain Hordern coming to Cheshire the constable was persuaded to apply again. Captain Hordern immediately granted the application with the remark, "If a man is patriotic enough to throw up a safe job to join the army he will have all the support I can give him".

The other case concerned a constable reported for a disciplinary offence. As Captain Hordern was visiting the man's sub-division he decided to see him there. Afterwards on the way home he said to a senior officer who was with him, "Do you know so-and-so - when I started out today I had decided to discharge that man, but when I saw him and thought of him going home to his wife and telling her that he had been 'sacked' and the misery it would have caused in his family I changed my mind. We will transfer him back to his old division".

Captain Hordern was appointed Chief Constable of Lancashire in June, 1935, taking over his new office in the following October. Here he was to receive the C.B.E. (1924), a Knighthood (1946), and to die in harness in 1950

CHAPTER TWELVE

Captain A. F. Hordern, 1934
Bromborough

New Ideas and Re-organization Headquarters
First Assistant Chief Constable

Captain Hordern's Humanity

CAPTAIN ARCHIBALD FREDERICK HORDERN took command of the Force in May, 1934. He had been Chief Constable of the East Riding of Yorkshire from 1926 and had served in the Army from 1909. During the First World War he had served for some time in the Royal Flying Corps (then a branch of the Army) as a pilot officer and was awarded the Air Force Cross.

Captain Hordern, who was forty-four years of age, had acquired quite a lot of military-civil police organizational experience during his Army service in West Africa and Ireland. In October, 1935, he was appointed a member of the Departmental Committee on Detective Work and Procedure which later made far-reaching proposals for training and organization of detectives. He was also largely responsible for the "Express Message" scheme of police communications. This he was able to try out in a practical manner on the occasion of the "Northwich Safe" case dealt with in the next chapter.

Captain Hordern did not take long to get to work. One of his first tasks was to create an adequate Criminal Investigation Department at Headquarters. With the approval of the police authority he decided to have a permanent detective superintendent at Headquarters. To achieve this without increasing the establishment he abolished the then Stockport Division and tacked it on to the Dukinfield Division. He brought in Superintendent Fred Platt from the Eddisbury Division and made him detective superintendent. He planned for an efficient records, M.O. system and an information department, and got approval for the purchase of, amongst other things, twenty-six typewriters, electrically operated duplicators, twenty new cars, and for divisions he planned to spend nearly £3,000 on new office equipment. For the first time the West Riding Police Reports were to be made available throughout the County (at a cost of £342 per annum). The Detective Department at Headquarters was supplied with a car until this time detective officers had had to use public transport and bicycles.

About this time a Report on the standardization of police uniforms was published. The general recommendations were adopted and the old officers' uniforms (smothered with black braid and fastened with dozens of hooks and eyes) were abolished and replaced by the modern suits. The unique "Shako" pattern of headwear for constables and sergeants was, however, retained.

Many allowances, recommended as standard by Police Regulations, but which - being permissible and not compulsory - had not been adopted or only partly so by the police authority, were now to be fully implemented.

Although Colonel Malcolm had sent one or two men for detective training to the Metropolitan School as early as 1923 and others had followed, there were neither tools nor workshops in the County for them to work with or in. In 1933, two photographic outfits had been purchased at a cost of less than £30 for the use of the detective department. This about covered the purchase of two roll-film folding Kodak cameras and some very amateurish dark room equipment. The naivety of Colonel Malcolm's approach to the question of the adoption of new methods and scientific aids in police work is surely to be seen here and more particularly by his comments that, "certain constables with little practice will acquire sufficient knowledge to take photographs for police purposes". The only dark room accommodation consisted of a cellar in which it was impossible to stand upright.

Captain Hordern spent £120 on new equipment and established a processing department in an outbuilding at his residence at Hartford. Police wireless communications came to Cheshire at this time. Captain Hordern obtained approval to the purchase of a small wireless van and four receiving and transmitting sets for patrol cars, all to be used in conjunction with a regional transmitting station situated at Billinge in South Lancashire.

The question of providing for a new force headquarters had long been troublesome. Colonel Malcolm's efforts to solve the problem had always revolved around the possibility of finding an existing building in Chester to which to move. Captain Hordern, however, was more

realistic. He conceived the idea of a complete break-away from Chester and the establishment of a comprehensive headquarters - in fact what may be termed a police colony - at Sandiway on the Chester-Manchester road. A site of thirty-two acres was involved and the sum of £6,000 was voted to purchase the land.

At the same time it was decided that the Wirral divisional headquarters at Heswall was both inadequate and in the wrong place. To remedy this site of the present headquarters at Bromborough was acquired. Similar action was taken to provide for a new headquarters for the Altrincham Division. This project was later dropped and the land used for police houses. But for the war, there is little doubt that the present and future generations of Cheshire police would have been directed from a headquarters consisting of an up-to-date headquarters building, spaciouly surrounded by thirty-eight staff houses; a recruits hostel; a gymnasium; a cinema; a sports pavilion and swimming pool - all at an estimated cost (April, 1939) of £117,160.

The question of adding the rank of Assistant Chief Constable to the establishment was first considered in January, 1932, when the Secretary of State refused to approve. It was brought up again by Captain Hordern in January, 1935, when, with the approval of the Secretary of State, Superintendent and Deputy Chief Constable John R. Dodd was appointed.

In July of the same year a contingent of the Force under Inspector (later Superintendent) S. Powell attended a Royal Review of the police of the United Kingdom held by His Majesty King George V in celebration of his Silver Jubilee. Major M. J. Egan, then Chief Constable of Southport and later well known as one of H.M. Inspectors of Constabulary, was in command of all forces from the North-west district.

At home thirty-eight members of the Force were presented with the jubilee Medal by the Lord Lieutenant, Sir William Bromley Davenport, K.C.B., C.M.G., C.B.E., D.S.O., Chairman of the Standing Joint Committee, at a special parade held at Chester Castle. Three hundred officers, sergeants and constables were on parade.

In his report Captain Hordern said, "The parade marks a record in the history of the force of which all ranks are exceedingly proud". Of Captain Hordern it may be said that he revitalized the Cheshire Constabulary to a remarkable degree, not only in work, but in play. His interest in the promotion of athletic sports was ably reinforced by the enthusiasm and practical experience of Constable John A. Taylor (now Chief Constable of Leicestershire and Rutland) whom he had brought with him from the East Riding and who was already a national police running champion at certain distances. In addition to his charm of manner, which affected all with whom he came into contact, Captain Hordern possessed a deep well of sympathy on which he was able to draw in his dealings with worried subordinates. Just two instances of many which could be quoted will show the man.

A constable, with some year's service, in 1914 applied for permission to volunteer for service in H.M. Forces. On this being refused by Colonel Malcolm the man resigned from the force and joined the army. On his discharge he applied for reappointment to the force and was accepted. After some time he made a request that his pre-war police and army service be allowed to count as "approved" service. This was refused by Colonel Malcolm. On Captain Hordern coming to Cheshire the constable was persuaded to apply again. Captain Hordern immediately granted the application with the remark, "If a man is patriotic enough to throw up a safe job to join the army he will have all the support I can give him".

The other case concerned a constable reported for a disciplinary offence. As Captain Hordern was visiting the man's sub-division he decided to see him there. Afterwards on the way home he said to a senior officer who was with him, "Do you know so-and-so - when I started out today I had decided to discharge that man, but when I saw him and thought of him going home to his wife and telling her that he had been 'sacked' and the misery it would have caused in his family I changed my mind. We will transfer him back to his old division".

Captain Hordern was appointed Chief Constable of Lancashire in June, 1935, taking over his new office in the following October. Here he was to receive the C.B.E. (1924), a Knighthood (1946), and to die in harness in 1950.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Safe Robbery

Express Message Scheme

Scientific Experts

"Hot" Money Cooled in a Grave Yard

WHAT became known locally as "The Northwich Safe Robbery" is included here, not because it ranks as either a classic in crime or detection, but because its prime interest lies in the fact that it marked an interesting and definite point in the development of police procedure in the practical investigation of crime in Cheshire.

It held, as it turned out, a secondary interest in its dramatic denouement. Lastly, and for the sake of some who may think that crime can be completely solved by scientists alone, it is a reminder that before the judge and jury can get to work you must first get your man and this is still a matter for the practical policeman.

At about 11 p.m. on the night of Friday, 8th March, 1935, a Northwich bookmaker returned to his residence, in which he lived alone, after his customary nightly visit to a local club. He found the house had been entered and a safe, containing about £7,500 in notes, was missing. A bureau had also been forced open and about £150 in silver and copper was also missing. He reported this to Northwich police station and Superintendent Kingman (divisional superintendent) and other officers began inquiries. The banknotes were mainly of high value (six at £1,000 ten at £100 and one at £50). Members of the staff of the bookmaker's Bank were aroused and the identification particulars of the individual large notes were ascertained. Within a short time the first of the new ideas was in operation. This was the Express Message scheme by which particulars of the stolen banknotes were expeditiously sent to the Headquarters of 147 police forces in England and Wales. Within a few hours newspaper offices in Manchester and London were asking for further details which were freely given. Incidentally, it is worthy of note that, as in many other cases, the publicity thus given to the case no doubt led to the first "break".

The second new feature brought into the investigation was the employment of high-ranking scientists at different stages. Professor Tryhorn, Head of the Chemistry Department of Hull University came in early to examine jemmy marks at the house. He later examined the safe and a jemmy found in the possession of the persons later arrested. Dr. Cooke of Wigan, a member of a national committee on harmful dusts, came in (later) to examine the recovered safe and other articles, and Mr. Neville Strange, M.sc., of Manchester, a consulting engineer, examined the car involved in the transport of the safe.

The usual police inquiries by the Northwich Division reinforced by what may be called a mobile squad from other divisions went on under Superintendents Kingman and Platt (Headquarters) directed by Captain Hordern.

The 14th March, six days after the theft of the safe, was an exciting day. First information came from the Denbighshire Police that a safe had been found by a farmer broken open and empty lying in a brook in a field off the Ruthin-Llangollen road. This was the safe. Later the same evening a message was received from the Manchester City Police that their Detective Constable Phoenix had received a hint from an informer to the effect that if he wanted to find the one who had stolen the safe at Northwich he couldn't do better than find a William Parkinson, who, he thought, now lived somewhere near Mold.

Superintendent Kingman went to Manchester and had a conference with Detective Constable Phoenix and his informer, as a result of which (Parkinson's address having by now been obtained) armed with a search-warrant obtained in the early hours by the Denbighshire Police, Kingman, Platt and others went to a bungalow at Llanferres near Mold. There after searching the premises they arrested Parkinson.

A companion of his - Violet Boothby - was, however, missing having left the bungalow the day before. Later the same day (the 15th) police officers left in charge of the premises arrested John Melia, a Liverpool man, who came to the bungalow, and sensing that all was not well, ran away and tried to hide in a nearby farmyard.

As it later transpired, the woman Boothby, when she left the bungalow on the 14th (they had probably heard of the finding of the safe only six miles away and became nervous) had practically all the money with her. The same evening she arrived at Bangor, North Wales, where she stayed until the 16th. It was during this period that she got rid of most of the £150 in coins, which, made up in packets, were found scattered along the railway line in Anglesey and near Bangor.

By the 16th when she left Bangor, Boothby was undoubtedly a very worried woman. She knew of the arrest of her accomplices and she had £7,000 in banknotes which she did not know what to do with. She was in London from the 17th to the 20th and it was here she secreted the big notes. This she did by placing them in a jam jar on a grave in a north London cemetery. There they were to remain until later collected by a solicitor's clerk, on whom half the money was found on his arrest at the Assize Court in the following June.

Boothby, knowing from the newspapers that she was wanted, went to Manchester. Here she got in touch with a firm of solicitors and after a consultation with their clerk, James Thompson, and staying with him and his wife overnight, gave herself up to the Manchester City Police on the 22nd March. Parkinson had known Thompson for some years.

By this time a plan of defence was already in process of being arranged. Briefly the idea was that John Melia would plead guilty to having stolen the safe - assisted by some "unknown" accomplices who had some sort of hold over him - and Parkinson and Boothby were to plead not guilty and try to get an acquittal on an alibi which Thompson was to produce. John Melia was to have half the proceeds of the theft for his use after serving the inevitable sentence. Thompson, who had already had an advance of some hundreds, was to get further payments later. In the meantime he held the whole of the money left in the cemetery, which he made two journeys to London to collect (he failed to find the grave on the first occasion and found it necessary to "take further instructions" from Boothby).

Thompson had two tasks: one to "produce" evidence in support of an alibi and secondly to pay over to Melia's nominee (a brother) the latter's share for "taking the rap".

On Parkinson's instructions Thompson saw quite a number of the former's acquaintances, none of whom, however, would have anything to do with the case. Finally Boothby suggested an approach to a Samuel Lazarus, a Manchester man she had known for some years.

Thompson saw Lazarus who said he would think the idea over. He told his employer and on the latter's advice informed the Manchester Police, by whom, after consultation with the Cheshire Police, he was advised to participate in the plot. Every conversation he had with Thompson from then on was overheard and recorded by Police Officers.

Briefly the "alibi" story was to be that Parkinson and Boothby had arranged to sell their car (the one used in the robbery) to Lazarus who met them by arrangement at a Birkenhead hotel on the evening of the 8th March to view the car. When he got there the car was missing, Boothby saying she had earlier loaned it to Melia for a short local journey. The car was not returned all the evening and finally, well after closing time, he left Boothby and Parkinson, they to travel to Mold by bus and he to return to Manchester by rail. This was the story to be told by Parkinson and Boothby and verified by Lazarus and a woman named Moran (also found by Thompson) from Manchester.

Parkinson and Boothby were further to say that in the early hours of the next morning Melia turned up with the car with a story that he had been persuaded to go to "the dogs" at Manchester and after drinking at a club with some of the fraternity had driven them to Northwich where the safe was stolen and taken to "somewhere" near Wrexham where he left the men and the safe.

That then was to be the story; Melia was concerned with Parkinson's car in the theft of the safe with accomplices who were not and could not have been Parkinson and Boothby as they were in Birkenhead or on their way home by bus during the whole evening.

At the Assizes the prosecution put their case, which, prima facie, had enough in it to show an intimate connection on the part of all three accused with the car and the safe. The money, except that found on the railway line, was still untraced. The first upset to the defence plan

came with an unexpected plea of "Not Guilty" by Melia. However, this did not trouble Counsel defending Parkinson and Boothby. He was, naturally, quite ignorant of the plot. His brief was clear. The sensation came when after opening for the defence and Parkinson and Boothby had told their story according to their script, Lazarus was called. He followed his proof of evidence so far as his name and address were concerned, but when asked whether he knew Parkinson and Boothby he admitted to having known Boothby but did not know Parkinson. He last saw Boothby about fifteen months ago. After one or two more questions defence Counsel finally, with the Judge's approval, retired from the case, leaving Lazarus to be examined by Counsel for the prosecution who now brought out the whole story.

Thompson, who was in court, was arrested on a warrant later granted by the judge and on being searched some £3,500 was found on him, to the delight of Superintendent Platt and his colleagues.

All three accused were found guilty and received prison sentences, Parkinson ten years, and Melia and Boothby five years each.

The question now was what had become of the rest of the money. This was to be revealed by Thompson in a confession he made after arrest. Having collected the money in London he had kept it in his possession until the opening of the Assizes when as previously arranged, he handed over £3,050 to Melia's brother.

Early on the morning after Thompson's arrest and confession Superintendent Platt and other officers went to a bungalow occupied by Melia's brother, his wife and father-in-law at Staining, Fleetwood. On their arrival they found Melia's wife in bed. The house was searched but Melia denied ever having had any money and none was found. The bed was not searched as the wife put on an act of being ill.

Melia was again seen a little later. He now admitted having received the money and said it had been in a box under his wife's bed on the first police visit. He said she had later torn up the large notes and put them down the lavatory. Fortunately the house was not on a main sewer and the torn-up notes were recovered from a drain to a septic tank. They were pieced together and after the conclusion of all proceedings they were honoured by the bank. The bookmaker's final loss was about £200.

At the Assizes in the following October, Thompson was found guilty of receiving, conspiracy, etc., and received a sentence of seven years penal servitude on the principal charge and varying sentences on other indictments.

Parkinson and Boothby were found guilty of conspiracy and, as they were already serving sentences, received nominal sentences.

So ended an episode which was to provide Captain Hordern with a practical demonstration of the value (and some weaknesses) of the new system of police communications and forensic science, which he was later to quote to the Committee on Detective work and Procedure.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Major J. Becke	Detective Work and Procedure	Technical Education
"Shako" Hat	Forensic Science	Dr. W. H. Grace
	Motor Patrol Special Scheme	
Wirral Divisional Headquarters		Crewe Divisional Headquarters

MAJOR JACK BECKE, who had been Chief Constable of Shropshire for seventeen years, succeeded Captain Hordern on the 1st October, 1935 Major Becke had served in the regular army from which, after two years at the War Office, he retired in 1918 on his appointment to Shropshire. He was called to the Bar at Gray's Inn in 1918. He was a member of the Committee on Detective Work and Procedure from its inception in 1933 and worked particularly on sub-committees dealing with Scientific Aids and Legal Questions.

The impetus of change commenced by Captain Hordern was intensified by Major Becke. His period of command fell into two distinct parts - pre-war and war-time, each calling for different treatment. In the pre-war years the emphasis was on education, scientific methods and communications. In the war years it was, naturally, on air raid precautions and war-time legislation.

One of the first things Major Becke did (1935) was to abolish the peculiar head-wear of the force - the "Shako" hat. Although the use of the shako by the Cheshire Constabulary cannot be said to be very significant in police history it deserves mention because for so long it had been familiar to generations of Cheshire policemen and a puzzle to others. When it was adopted is by no means clear. The early records of the force speak of "hats" and probably for some time this meant the old time top-hats. Later the records speak of caps and (1863) helmets. The earliest available photograph of Cheshire policemen taken at Altrincham in 1878 shows the use of a type of shako. A Macclesfield newspaper in April 18 reporting the issue of new uniform to the Borough police says, "an entirely new helmet has been adopted. It is in the form of a shako and is quite different from any style of police head-dress in the County". If the "Altrincham" head-dress of 1878 can be said to be a shako the Macclesfield claim cannot, of course, be correct.

In the three years or so available before really active preparations for war took first place, Major Becke gave a lot of attention to the task of raising the level of technical knowledge in the Force. He did this in two ways. He established a new recruit's training school under Inspector J. A. Taylor, whom he had brought with him from Shropshire. At the school, situated in Foregate Street, Chester, three monthly courses were held based on an improved and more comprehensive syllabus than hitherto used. Secondly he adopted a system involving the issue, monthly, of lecture notes on various legal and technical subjects to be given by inspectors to sergeants and sergeants to constables. He also issued monthly instructional notes and memoranda to all ranks, together with a copy of Dr. Locard's book on Criminal Investigation.

Although Major Becke's purpose was, of course, most worthy, one wonders, on wading through the mass of memoranda which accumulated during the period, whether his enthusiasm did not perhaps outrun practicability, for what could the average policeman be expected to make of Dr. Locard's thesis on say: "Criticisms of Human Testimony", or the statement: "There has been a good deal of discussion as to whether pyromania is a special psychopathological condition, etc.". However that may be, on balance, an overwhelming weight of the instruction was most practical.

Coupled with the new educational ideas was the Forensic Science Laboratory which Major Becke established at Headquarters. This was a small scheme begun in 1936, housed in a wooden hut, staffed by Sergeant William Dickin and Constable R. Pritchard and directed by Dr. W. H. Grace, who was well known as a Pathologist and acted as a consultant to the Force at an annual salary of £200 until 1946. When the laboratory was finally closed down Sergeant Dickin and the instruments went to the Home Office laboratory at Preston, where Dickin

became a technical assistant. Dickin took some training under Dr. Grace at Chester Royal Infirmary and Pritchard, who also dealt with fingerprints, was elected an Associate of the Institute of Chemistry in 1941.

During its short existence, Dr. Grace and his assistants aided in a number of investigations mainly concerned with suspicious deaths in Cheshire and adjoining districts. Amongst the more important cases were murder investigations at Runcorn, Crewe, Coedpoeth (Denbighshire) and Red Wharf Bay, Anglesey, all of which ended in trials and convictions. It is not suggested that Dr. Grace and the Laboratory solved these crimes, but their assistance was helpful in narrowing the scope of inquiries and confirming (or demolishing) theories.

In February, 1937, in pursuance of an idea to seek a remedy for the high rate of road accidents (in 1936, 147 persons were killed in road accidents in Cheshire), the Home Office selected Cheshire as one of a number of counties in which to put the idea to practical test. This was known officially as the "Special Scheme", but popularly it became better known by the title given by the public to its operators as "The Courtesy Cops".

The scheme, which was financed entirely by the Government, involved special police-driver training in which Lord Cottenham, well known as a racing driver, acted as an adviser.

To put the scheme into operation meant an increase in the strength of the force by about one hundred men. The experiment was to last one year.

A central garage was established at Crewe on the premises built in 1916 as a girls' school by the Ursuline Order and recently acquired to be adapted as a divisional headquarters for the Crewe Division. In March, 1936, to provide a superintendent to take control of the growing traffic branch the Middlewich Division had been abolished and its chief officer - Superintendent Ross - was transferred to headquarters. The new scheme was added to his responsibilities. A "skid-pan" was provided at the proposed headquarters site at Sandiway.

The estimated cost of the Special Scheme for one year was £32,853 (new cars were to cost £8,202), but as Major Becke was able to report, after only nine months, that thirty-seven fewer people had been killed as compared with the previous twelve months, and the accidents were the lowest for nine years, the return in human lives of one life per £900 was good value. Whilst the original intention was to run the scheme for one year it went on until September, 1939, when fifteen cars were taken off the road and the personnel absorbed in the Force. To add to the effectiveness of the motor patrol activities in accident prevention, Major Becke established Divisional Accident Officers who analysed all road accidents and advised the highway authorities on road improvements. At the same time intensive propaganda was carried on in schools and cinemas by lectures, films and slides. In 1940 Major Becke told the Standing Joint Committee that in an effort to reduce accidents in the "black-out" conditions he was preparing cinema slides to be known as, "Picture Parables for Pedestrians", and "Common-sense Clues for Cyclists". There is no doubt that these efforts in the saving of human life must have been amply repaid.

By October, 1937, the authorized strength of the Force had risen to a figure of 760. In the divisions it had the aid of wireless vans working in conjunction with the Home Office station at Billinge and in the Wirral and Runcorn Divisions twenty-four cycles were equipped with wireless receiving sets taking messages from a Liverpool police local transmitter. A large number of rural police stations were put on to the telephone system, and in the following year teleprinters and private telephone lines were installed linking up headquarters with divisions and giving private line communication with all neighbouring Forces. This proved an invaluable asset when later it came to be used as part of the Air Raid Precautions communication system.

In October, 1937, the divisional headquarters at Edward Street, Macclesfield was closed and transferred to Wilmslow.

Under Major Becke a considerable amount of new building went on. This was mainly concerned with smaller police stations and police houses, such as Hoylake, Neston, Holmes Chapel and Gawsworth. The only large scale building there was time to deal with was the

Wirral Divisional Headquarters scheme. This was sufficiently advanced to justify completion in spite of the war, and it was occupied on 21st October, 1940, on transfer from Heswall.

At Crewe, plans for the adaptation of "The Convent" as it is popularly known by older residents, went ahead, particularly in the provision of two courts (one previously the school chapel), a cell block, and a superintendent's residence. Ambitious plans involving the expenditure of some £1,500 on levelling and draining the sports field and making hard tennis courts, however, had to be put off. The divisional headquarters built in Edleston Road in 1876 (enlarged 1899) were vacated in September, 1939, and the present headquarters occupied.

Air Raid Precautions training commenced in a small way when in August, 1936, Sergeants J. Albert Taylor and W. Rogers, having qualified as instructors, began training the Force in six centres. In the course of time Major Becke became A.R.P. Co-ordinating Officer or County Controller under the County Council for all training and organization throughout the administrative county and the Municipal Boroughs. In September, 1938, Major Becke placed on record his appreciation of the services of the police and special constabulary for the aid they provided in the emergency issue of gas-masks to the public on the occasion of the "Munich Crisis".

Major Becke was rather partial to ceremonial parades. On Empire Day, 24th May, 1938, he arranged a big police parade including Divine Service at the Cathedral and a Review by the Lord Lieutenant, Brigadier-General Sir William Bromley Davenport, K.C.B., C.M.G., C.B.E., D.S.O., on the Castle Square, Chester. The parade was provided with appropriate music by the Salford City Police Band and police contingents from a number of Cheshire borough forces attended, together with the Chief Constables of Wallasey, Macclesfield and Congleton.

Quite what the purpose of the parade was, was never very clear. As a morale-booster to both the police and public no doubt it had some merit - remembering the contemporary trend of international affairs.

Meanwhile preparations for war went on apace. An A.R.P. (later Civil Defence) headquarters organization was established under the by now Inspector (later Superintendent) Taylor. A County Control was established in the basement of the partly erected new county offices, and each division was provided with an area training officer, later to be supplemented by War Emergency Officers and others with special functions.

In the purely police field much work had to be done in connection with the training and organization of police auxiliaries - provision was made to equip 200 First Reserves, 200 Police War Reserves and 300 (1st instalment) Special Constables, with uniform.

Major Becke created a corps-d'elite in the formation of his squad of Mobile Special Constabulary. In September (1939), 125 members of this formation with their own cars were inspected at Capesthorpe Hall by the Lord Lieutenant.

In the Coronation Honours List, 1937, Major Becke was awarded the King's Police Medal and in January, 1938, Mr. J. R. Dodd was awarded the same medal.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

War Years Army Reservists Services
Honours and Casualties Air Raids

THE County Force having recruited very heavily from men leaving the army after short-service engagements, found itself on the outbreak of the war with a considerable number of men with reserve obligations. The Government, having the particular responsibilities of the Police in mind, deferred recall to the colours until December, 1939

This recall was made the occasion of a parade at Chester Castle on the 29th November, when one hundred and four constables were inspected and addressed by Major Becke before joining their regiments. The subsequent history of all these men varied very considerably. Twelve were to lose their lives, others gained commissions, awards and high commendations.

The first of the reservists to lose his life was Constable Matthew Maher, Royal Artillery, whose death was presumed on 13th June, 1940. Whilst it is fully realized that in death there is no distinction and all have equal honour, two in particular stand out as tragic instances of that something known as fate.

Constable Thomas James Cahill, as a sergeant in the Irish Guards, was captured in the Norwegian Campaign in 1940. He gained his escape, with two others, during an air-raid and after ten days wandering over trackless country in Lapland, eventually crossed the frontier into Sweden, where he and his companions were interned. The privations undergone were, however, too much and he died in hospital in Stockholm on 5th September, 1940.

The other story concerns Constable Thomas Vincent Grogan who, as a Sergeant in the Grenadier Guards, was captured in North Africa in December, 1943, and taken to Italy as a prisoner of war. In January, 1944, when being transferred to Germany, the train in which he was travelling was bombed by allied aircraft and heavy casualties were sustained. Grogan was never heard of again and he was officially presumed to have lost his life on the occasion of the bombing.

Major Becke was very proud of these men and he faithfully kept the Standing Joint Committee aware of their progress in the various services in which they were serving.

By the end of the war he was able to report that 254 constables and thirty-one police messengers (cadets) had served in the forces. Of these, forty-six constables reached commissioned rank, twenty three in the Army (two Majors), thirteen in the Royal Air Force (one Squadron Leader), and ten in the Royal Navy. Three messengers were granted commissions: one in the Royal Navy and two in the Royal Air Force. Twenty constables and two messengers lost their lives. Decorations for Gallantry were awarded as follows:

Police Messenger A. P. Eyton Jones, Constables W. J. Sherwen and R. H. G. Weighill all received the Distinguished Flying Cross. Constables W. G. Brough, T. E. McGurren, J. Flynn, T. G. Coleman and T. Rimmer were awarded the Military Medal, and Constable J. G. Eccleston the Croix de Guerre and Bronze Star. For general good service in H.M. Forces, Constable H. Purslow (Major, Corps of Military Police) received the M.B.E., Constable J. Blenkarn, then Regimental Sergeant Major, Guards Armoured Division (later Captain) received a "Gazetted" Certificate of Good Service on the recommendation of the Commander-in-Chief, Home Forces, and Constable F. J. German, Welsh Guards, was the recipient of a Certificate of Good Service from the Commander-in-Chief Northwest Europe - Field-Marshal Montgomery - for services in the field.

At home members of the Force were not less worthily doing their duty. For gallantry in attempting to save the lives of the crew of a Royal Air Force bomber which had crashed and was on fire, Constables Frank Wiggins and Ernest Pocock, Dukinfield Division, were each awarded the B.E.M. Despite the flames and danger from exploding ammunition they managed to extricate four bodies before help arrived.

In the same year (1941) Constables Thomas Blease and William Valentine Woodall each received the Testimonial of the Royal Humane Society for saving persons from drowning.

Constable Wood all was later to lose his own life in flying operations as a member of the Royal Air Force.

In April, 1941, during an air raid on Crewe, Constable Frank Marshall was killed by the explosion of a high explosive bomb. On the same occasion, some miles away at Barbridge, Special Constable Arthur Young was injured by a high explosive bomb and had to have a leg amputated. Some time later First Police Reserve John Moores was injured during an air raid at Gawsforth.

Although it could truthfully be said to be part of police history the complete story of civil defence in Cheshire is too long to give here. In no branch of the local and national services did the police not have contact to a -varying degree. The Chief Constable (in Cheshire at least) was the accepted director of all civil defence operations, except in the case of the Fire and Regional services. Under him the superintendents of divisions and the Chief Constables of the Municipal boroughs of Macclesfield, Hyde, Stalybridge and Congleton acted as sub-controllers.

The Warden Section of some 14,000 was a direct police responsibility. The Royal Observer Corps began as an offshoot of the Special Constabulary and (later) all Home Guard units in the County were commanded by officers (in the first instance) found and recommended by the police. This, of course, detracts not at all from the work of the officers and personnel of the many services. It just happened that the Police Force possessed the quality of being ubiquitous to a greater degree than other organizations, plus the ability to do things quickly.

The first air raid reported in Cheshire occurred on the night of 29th July, 1940, when high explosive and incendiary bombs were dropped in southern suburbs of Crewe. During the same night bombs were dropped in the Neston, Heswall and Runcorn districts. Little or no damage occurred on these raids. A month later the enemy came back to Crewe on a "hit and run" night raid which, with only six bombs, was more effective in that some fifty dwelling houses in Bedford Street were damaged. There were no casualties. In the next three months (up to 28th November, 1940), a number of raids occurred in the course of which something like 1,000 high explosive bombs (121 were unexploded), and over 4,000 incendiary bombs were reported to have been dropped in the county. Up to this date thirty-one people had lost their lives and about 150 were injured.

On the night of the 28th/29th November, 1940, the heaviest raid to date took place in West Cheshire and for the first time parachute mines were used by the enemy. Fortunately lack of precision in aiming meant that most of the twenty-four mines dropped fell in open country doing no great harm. However one fell near the main building of the Barrowmore Tuberculosis Colony at Barrow, near Chester. The building was demolished, together with a number of chalets occupied by sleeping patients. Here nineteen persons were killed and thirty injured. On the same night some 475 high explosive bombs and about 350 incendiary bombs were dropped elsewhere resulting in twenty-three deaths and over forty persons being injured. The Chester City Authorities cleared up 30 tons of glass next morning. Intermittent raids causing little or no damage or casualties continued until late in December, 1940. On the two nights of 22nd and 23rd December, 1940, Manchester and adjacent Cheshire districts received very severe raids. Manchester and Salford, naturally, suffered most severely.

There was a respite until the night of 12/13th March, 1941, when a raid occurred on Liverpool and Birkenhead. Here again, neighbouring Cheshire districts suffered, particularly the borough of Bebington, Ellesmere Port, Hoylake, Heswall and Neston. In Bebington alone, sixteen parachute mines and eighty-nine high explosive bombs with a large number of "incendiaries" were dropped, resulting in twenty-four people being killed and about 110 injured. The raid left twenty-two high explosive bombs unexploded.

On the night of 7/8th April, 1941, the enemy came again to Crewe and dropping sixteen high explosive bombs and a large number of "incendiaries" killed fourteen persons, including Police Constable Frank Marshall, and demolished eleven houses and damaged over 300.

Perhaps the first week of May, 1941, will be longest remembered by residents of the Merseyside districts for on each of six successive nights the enemy came again and again.

Liverpool and the Mersey dock systems were, of course, the main target, but for one reason or another Cheshire districts adjacent to the Mersey or on the approach line of the enemy aircraft received many bombs. Each night during this series of raids a contingent of the Cheshire police, together with elements of the Municipal Borough Forces, left Northwich, where they were held as part of the Regional Police Reserve, and went into Liverpool in aid of the City Force.

On the night of the 25th October, 1941, Manchester was again visited. During this raid two parachute mines were dropped on the Broadheath district of Altrincham resulting in eight persons being killed and forty-four injured. Damage was done to eleven important factories, a railway station, a school and shops and about 600 dwelling houses, twelve being demolished. On the same night a parachute mine dropped in Northwich damaged 193 houses, eighty-one shops and two factories.

Light raids continued until January, 1942, then came a lull of nearly two years until on 24th December, 1944, five flying bombs dropped in the County at places as far apart as Knutsford (Ollerton), Hyde (Matley), Kelsall, Henbury near Macclesfield, and Macclesfield Forest (Clough House Farm). All fell in rural surroundings. Damage to farm buildings and cottages occurred in four instances and two persons were killed, three were injured at Matley and one person injured at Clough House Farm. This day saw the end of the peril from the air which, throughout the years, had seen some 3,000 high explosive bombs, 105 parachute mines, five flying bombs and an estimated total of 17,000 incendiary bombs dropped in Cheshire. One-sixth of the high explosive bombs and parachute mines dropped failed to go off. The borough of Bebington received the highest number of missiles, 393 high explosive bombs and nineteen parachute mines, and of the total killed in the County (176) and injured (639), Bebington's share was the greatest in having forty-nine persons killed and 186 injured.

In the summer of 1941, representative sections of the county Air Raid Precautions and Allied Organizations paraded at Crewe Alexandra Football ground under Major Becke for a Review by His Majesty King George VI who was accompanied by Her Majesty the Queen.

For his services as (A.R.P.) Staff Officer to Major Becke, Superintendent J. Albert Taylor was awarded the M.B.E., in the New Year's Honours list in 1941. In 1944 he left Cheshire to become Assistant Chief Constable of Somerset.

Superimposed on the latter part of the period of sleepless nights and wailing sirens came preparations to meet the threat of invasion. This meant much "conferencing" with military authorities, liaison with the Home Guard at all levels, and the reservation of roads for military convoys. On top of it all was the constant need for normal police work in the maintenance of the very much swollen law, particularly as it concerned rationing of food and petrol. Later from about 1943 with the arrival of American forces more work was added to the police in the task of finding billets. Almost every town, village and empty country house had its quota. The Headquarters of the 3rd American Army under General George S. ("Blood and Guts") Patton occupied Peover Hall near Knutsford, for some time before the Normandy landings.

In the meantime relatively small matters in police administration went on. The divisions were now less by one; the old Eddisbury Division went the way of Nantwich and was absorbed by Runcorn in October, 1939. The police school, on account of damage by incendiary bombs, moved from Foregate Street to Sandy Lane, Chester, in January, 1942. In 1943 Superintendent M. M. Thorburn of the Wirral Division received the King's Police Medal. In the same year a thousand Special Constables were doing regular police duty - all in uniform, and in 1944 Major Becke was Knighted. At the same time Detective Constable L. Cooper received the award of the B.E.M. for outstanding bravery in tackling (in company of railway police) men, one of whom was armed with a loaded double-barrelled shot-gun, engaged in the theft of foodstuffs from railway sidings at Carrington.

The still unresolved problem of a new force headquarters came up again in July, 1945, when the Standing Joint Committee considered the purchase of the ancestral home of the Delamere family, Vale Royal, to be adapted as a headquarters and surrounded by a colony of forty-three police houses. The county budget for 1945-6 included the sum of £9,200 for the purchase of

the property. In despair of getting approval to build at Sandiway, the unsullied (except for the -skid-pan") fields were to be disposed of.

The Vale Royal idea held the stage until December, 1946, when the Standing Joint Committee, persuaded that it was not a workable idea, decided to get rid of it - so the force, in this matter, was back at 1886 again.

In October, 1945, to meet the need for more spacious accommodation the police school, under Inspector J. Alfred Taylor, was moved to Crewe. This was necessary to provide refresher courses for men returning from the Armed Forces. Courses of one month's duration were arranged and two classes each of twenty men were run simultaneously. The school continued to function as a training centre for probationer constables until December, 1955.

John R. Dodd, Assistant Chief Constable (obit. 1956) retired at the age of seventy-three years on the 31st December, 1945, with a service record of over fifty-two years behind him; but for the war-time suspension of the age-limit rule he would, of course, have retired some years earlier. Mr. Dodd was succeeded by Superintendent Alexander Henderson who had joined the force in 1910.

In January, 1946, Chief Inspector J. R. Potter and Sergeant William Rogers were awarded the B.E.M. for valuable services in connection with Civil Defence.

At its highest the war-time strength of the Special Constabulary had reached 1,100, of this total 987 earned the Special Constabulary Medal and nine, the Bar. In a comprehensive report on the police in April, 1946, Major Sir Jack Becke paid tribute to the long and valuable services rendered by these men. On the same occasion he reported the observations of the Judge at the Assize trials in February, 1946, of James Palmer, ship's steward, for the murder of a woman at Neston, and Harold Berry for the murder of a Manchester moneylender's representative at Winsford, in the course of which the police generally and Superintendent Platt were highly commended for "promptitude, energy and skill", which led to the apprehension of the murderers and their subsequent conviction. The Chief Constable further made use of the occasion to speak of the value of the training and scientific facilities so fully provided by the Committee. Mr. Platt was awarded the King's Police Medal in January, 1947, and, with thirty-eight years service, retired in the following April.

Major Sir Jack Becke retired in September, 1946, at the age of sixty-eight years with over twenty-eight years of police service. His eleven years in command of the Cheshire Constabulary were years of hard work to which he brought many new ideas in police administration and practice. His qualities as an organizer and a leader in the wartime activities of the force and as head of Civil Defence in the county were of a very high standard indeed.

At his last meeting with the Standing Joint Committee a resolution of thanks for his services, supported by handsome personal tributes from members of the Committee, was adopted. In his farewell message he said, "The personal character, loyalty and devotion to duty of all ranks have been all that could be desired. In their private lives they are worthy citizens, proud of their homes and families and loyally supported by their wives. In their official capacity they are faithful public servants ready and capable of discharging all duties required of them."

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Mr. G. E. Banwell New Planning ' Police Act, 1946
Municipal Borough Forces Housing Catering V.H.F. Wireless
Police Dogs Welfare Life-Saving Teams Training - Examinations
Promotion Selection Board Policewomen Royal Occasions Police Authority

MR. GODWIN E. BANWELL, O.B.E., M.C., was appointed Chief Constable in July, 1946, and took up his duties in October. He had served in the 1914-18 War and was awarded the Military Cross and Bar. Between the years 1919 and 1938 he served in the Indian Police Service in Burma, meanwhile attending police senior officers' courses in London. He received the King's Police Medal for Gallantry in 1933. He served (1939-40) as Regional Officer with the Ministry of Home Security and Acting Inspector of Constabulary before becoming Chief Constable of the East Riding of Yorkshire from which post he came to Cheshire.

The feast of technical education, together with some minor changes emanating from the Committee on Detective Work and Procedure, begun by Captain Hordern and continued (with some personal garnishing) by Sir Jack Becke, had, by now, been largely digested - apart from minor regurgitations.

With the end of the war and the prospect of the early absorption of the Municipal Borough Forces the need for fresh planning became very urgent. A comprehensive basis for a review of the county was evolved, and Superintendent O'Sullivan, placed in charge of a Planning Wing at headquarters, was charged with the duty of collating information on which immediate and long-term planning would be based.

In a memorandum setting out the fundamentals of Post-War Planning the Chief Constable ended with the words ``- any planning will be wrong that assumes that good ideas will only flow from headquarters; ideas must come from all who have the future of the Police Force at heart, and, of course, that future is to serve the community efficiently and economically."

The statement, recognizing as it does a willingness to consider the views of the subordinate ranks, may be taken to be the theme of the final decade of the first hundred years of police administration in Cheshire. On this a number of variations later emerged.

This, probably the first county-wide review of police responsibilities since 1857, led to a large number of changes, perhaps the most profitable of which was the creation of a number of rural motor beats for which fifty small cars were to be obtained.

On the 1st April, 1947, as a result of the Police Act, 1946, the Municipal Borough Police Forces of Macclesfield, Hyde, Stalybridge and Congleton were merged with the County Constabulary. This increased the strength of the Force by 118 (July 1947) to an approved establishment of 835 plus sixteen policewomen.

Most members of the borough forces concerned transferred for service in the enlarged force. A few who had completed service for pension resigned.

Of the Chief Constables, Mr. G. Symmons of Macclesfield transferred with the rank of superintendent, but very shortly left on appointment as Chief Constable of St. Helens; Mr. S. Pickering of Stalybridge retired on pension; Mr. T. M. Skelton, B.E.M., of Hyde, at the time serving with the Allied Control Commission in Germany, decided not to enter the County Force; Mr. R. W. James, Chief Constable of Congleton, accepted the offer of appointment as a superintendent.

What might, through unwise handling, have been a painful operation to the members of the merged forces, turned out to be, what may perhaps be described as a "twilight sleep" occasion. The understanding attitude of the Chief Constable and Superintendents Durnell, Pleavin and Taylor into whose Divisions the Boroughs were absorbed ensured an amiable transition.

The position with regard to the Police Force of the City of Chester was rather different to those of the Municipal Boroughs which were abolished outright. Chester being a county borough with a population of less than 100,000 could only, under the 1946 Act, be amalgamated, if not voluntarily, then by an order of the Secretary of State after a public

inquiry. Chester did not choose voluntary amalgamation. The Secretary of State, therefore, ordered a local public inquiry, which was held in July, 1948, and resulted in the making of a compulsory scheme of amalgamation by the Secretary of State as from 1st April, 1949. From this date members of the Chester City Force became members of the Cheshire Constabulary and both the Standing Joint Committee of the County and the Watch Committee of the City had no further interest in police administration. However, the Chester City Council had the right to nominate two members to the new Combined Police Authority, a privilege not given to the Municipal Borough Authorities.

This amalgamation added sixty-two policemen and four policewomen to the County Force. Mr. Thomas Griffiths, the last Chief Constable of Chester, retired from the service. The City area was renamed the Chester City Division and itself absorbed the neighbouring Broxton Division, which, under the hundred system, had been a police district for many centuries, the whole of the new division coming under the command of Superintendent B. O'Sullivan, who did much to secure a harmonious welding of the two Forces.

By 1948 the approved establishment of the Force had risen to a total of 1,016 policemen, thirty-four policewomen and sixty-seven civilians (including cadets).

With the 1949 amalgamation the geographical reorganization of the Force was ended. At divisional level it altered the look of the Force mainly by the creation of the North-East Division out of the fragmentary police areas earlier known as Hyde, Stalybridge and Dukinfield and, earlier still, known as the Hyde and Stockport Divisions and Stalybridge Borough. In the west, for the first time, a chief officer sitting in Chester had responsibility for territory having a common boundary with Shropshire.

Simultaneously, with the reorganization referred to above, plans were prepared and developed in the field of welfare. These included proposals for the building of 274 police dwelling houses, later raised to over 400, and the establishment of canteens and a catering department.

Whilst the size of new houses had to conform to limitations set by the Home Office, every care was exercised to ensure the interiors were designed and equipped to please the most important person concerned - the housewife. Nor were the wives living in older property forgotten, for approval was obtained to equip (where necessary) every existing police owned or rented house with a gas, electric or calor gas cooker. For outside the house the Chief Constable was able to obtain approval to a grant of up to £5 for the purchase of trees and shrubs and making-up gardens.

The first canteen was established at Crewe in 1948. This was followed in 1949 by similar installations at Altrincham, Macclesfield and Chester. In 1950 the canteen service was supplemented by two especially constructed mobile canteens.

The first adviser on catering was Mr. P. L. S. Mussell, the County Council Catering Officer. When he left Cheshire to take up a new appointment in 1949, he was succeeded by Mr. D. W. H. Robinson, who was appointed as a full-time Catering Officer to the Force.

The new canteen service, which has now spread to all divisions, undoubtedly filled a long felt want in the police service. No longer have duty policemen to prepare a frying-pan meal in holes and corners of ancient police stations or carry a pocket size meal of sandwiches to all-day examinations. They may now have prepared meals served and taken in nicely furnished surroundings, whilst their gaze rests upon a collection of pictures loaned by well-known public art galleries.

For outdoor events the mobile canteens provide an efficient and adequate meal service. One canteen and staff was sent to Sutton-on Sea, Lincolnshire, on the occasion of the disastrous floods in 1953. In a letter of thanks the Chief Constable of Lincolnshire (Mr. R. H. Fooks) later spoke very highly of the cooks and drivers, who, "within an hour of arrival were serving much needed hot meals much better than private caterers gave to our men in a neighbouring town." High praise was also given to the organizing ability of the Catering Officer, Mr. Robinson, in chaotic conditions.

The question of a new system of police radio communication came to be considered again in 1946. Hitherto dependence had been on a joint sub-regional scheme by which messages had

been received from a transmitter commonly used by a number of neighbouring forces situated at Billinge in South Lancashire. The idea now was for the establishment of two-way "V.H.F." system of communications entirely within the county with a central information room at headquarters.

When the idea was being considered in 1946 a suggestion to include the police forces of Flintshire and Denbighshire was not approved by the Home Office, as it was considered that, as Cheshire had enough crime and accidents to deal with, to include the two Welsh counties would gravely impair the efficiency of the scheme. However, this decision did not prevent the eventual inclusion of the County Fire Brigade in 1953 when, after a trial period, it was found that room could be made for it subject to the number of fire service mobile stations not exceeding twenty.

In due course sites for transmitters (remote controlled) were selected and acquired at Kelsall and Hyde. The initial cost of the scheme was to be £7,600. Forty police cars were equipped with two-way radio equipment and the service opened in September, 1952.

Since that date it has given excellent, if not spectacular, service. Linked as it is in immediate contact with an information room where a completely up-to-date. "wanted persons" register is maintained at all times, it has been the cause of many persons wanted by other Forces being brought off night transport or picked up in night cafes when they thought they would find a safe haven many miles from the scene of their misdemeanour. It also provided an almost immediate service to worried householders who after telephoning their local police station and reporting something unusual are often surprised to find a policeman on their doorstep within minutes.

The question of the use of dogs by policemen in Cheshire has been viewed in different ways by different Chief Constables. Captain Smith published an order forbidding policemen on night duty being accompanied on their beats by dogs. There is reason to think that the sole reason for the order was the partiality of the rural policeman, in particular, for dogs which could catch a rabbit. Colonel Hamersley had a short-lived interest in bloodhounds which probably arose through his association with Major Richardson during the Gorse Hall murder inquiries. Colonel Malcolm got the Standing Joint Committee in 1920 to authorize an allowance of four pence per day (later increased to seven pence) for the upkeep of a limited number of dogs, to be handled by selected police officers. Actually only one (a bloodhound) was obtained. This was kept at Oakmere, then headquarters of the Eddisbury division, in charge of Mr. G. H. Durnell (then acting sergeant).

In the course of its short police career of nine months (before it died of distemper) it was tried out, without any particular success, in various parts of the County. Perhaps the fact that its only means of transport to the more distant scenes of crime were by rail or the Superintendent's horse and cart, a proceeding likely to lead to delay and, therefore, "cold" trails, was a handicap to its effectiveness. On the death of this dog nothing further was done.

Sir Jack Becke obtained authority in 1938 to purchase two dogs at £12 each. However, nothing further seems to have been done. Incidentally many police officers will remember "Alice", the Golden Labrador, and constant companion of Sir Jack during the war years, which came into his possession as an unclaimed stray.

The next chapter was opened in 1951 when the Chief Constable obtained authority to spend £380 to be spread over two years, on the acquisition of police dogs and the training of handlers. Eventually a number of dogs were obtained and handlers trained at the Surrey police establishment where the emphasis has been on the production of good tracker dogs of the Alsatian and Doberman Pinscher breeds. From this beginning, under the Chief Constable and Detective Chief Superintendent H. J. Bentley, a dog section, with main kennels at Crewe, with a number of trained "handlers" equipped with specially adapted cars for transport, and under the immediate control of Sergeant Wadcock, is being built up. At the time of writing the Constabulary operates nine dogs from various places in the County.

In this age of welfare the Cheshire policeman has not been forgotten. Reference has already been made to catering and housing. In the realm of recreation the emphasis has been to make it

easy and pleasant for all ranks to engage in sport both indoor and out. The Chief Constable has done much to further this part of a policeman's life by getting the police authority to make a per capita annual grant in aid of sporting activities and other forms of welfare.

Under the expert advice of Chief Inspector Robert Murray, and assisted by Inspector H. Hanson, a Cheshire Life-Saving team captained by Constable M. J. Carter won the National Police Life Saving Championship organized by the Royal Life-Saving Society in 1953, and repeated this feat in 1954 under the captaincy of Sergeant T. Coleman. In June, 1956, Chief Inspector Murray received the Royal Life-Saving Society's Recognition Badge and Citation at the hands of Earl Mountbatten, President of the Society.

In addition to these special events the Force enjoys other relaxations in the annual sports and horticultural show; the annual swimming gala and inter-divisional competitions in football, cricket and bowls, not to speak of golf and fishing competitions and occasional friendly matches with our neighbours.

In the field of technical education and general police training, the post-war years have seen the fullest use being made of the Police College and the long established detective training centres at Wakefield, Birmingham and Hendon.

Recruits joining the Force take their full courses of training as recommended by the Police Post-War Committee at the District Training Centre at Bruche, near Warrington.

On the completion of refresher training for men returning from war service in the armed forces a number of short courses for officers holding rank were held at Crewe. These were in the nature of general interest courses at which lectures were given by a number of eminent gentlemen on subjects of current interest. In addition, from time to time, members of the Force are allowed to attend, in official time with fees paid, courses on a variety of subjects given at Burton Manor Residential College for Adult Education.

The young police officer having a bent for investigation is given a chance to prove his ability by the occasional junior detective training and photograph and fingerprint courses held, from time to time, at Crewe.

Since 1947 "promotion" examinations have been conducted by the Union of Educational Institutes on papers based on the requirements of Police Regulations and marked by examiners selected by the Institute.

In the same year (1947) the system of selection of persons for recommendation to the Chief Constable as suitable for promotion was adopted by the creation of a Selection Board of senior officers having the current Assistant Chief Constable as a permanent chairman.

These two new features in police administration removed, at once, the old suspicion held (rightly or wrongly) by some that local examiners were not quite impartial and promotion came to the sycophant or those having someone near the Chief Constable.

The question of the employment of women police, a controversial issue for many years, was first considered by the Standing Joint Committee in 1924, when it was decided to do nothing. This was in conformity with the attitude adopted by most police authorities then and for some years afterwards. Following the creation of the Women's Auxiliary Police Corps in 1939 the Cheshire Authority did nothing until January, 1944, when it decided to seek Home Office approval to an establishment of twelve policewomen (W.P.A.C.). This was forthcoming and the first appointments were made in July of the same year. On the disbandment of the Corps in March, 1946, the police authority decided on the policy of having permanent policewomen, the establishment of which has increased with the years until (at the time of writing) it provides for a strength of forty. Of the original Auxiliary Corps Sergeants E. Allen and E. Durkin and W.P.C. Beatty are still serving.

The Driving School, providing Advanced, Elementary and Instructor training courses, reopened at Crewe in March, 1948, under Superintendent C. Fryer, who had succeeded Superintendent Ross on the latter's retirement in 1947. The enlarged maintenance department was placed under Chief Inspector J. L. Hodson in 1947 on transfer from the East Riding Constabulary. This department, with a staff of two police sergeants and six civilian mechanics, now looks after 199 motor vehicles and one motor boat (for use on the River Dee at Chester).

In January, 1950, Mr. Alexander Henderson was appointed a Member of the Order of the British Empire. Mr. Henderson retired in January, 1953, and was succeeded by Mr. George H. Durnell, who at the time was chief superintendent in charge of the Altrincham Division. Mr. Durnell was awarded the Queen's Police Medal in January, 1956.

In June, 1955, the Chief Constable was honoured by promotion to the rank of Commander of the Order of the British Empire. Throughout the years Cheshire had been highly favoured by the presence in the county, from time to time, of the Sovereign and other members of the Royal Family and members of foreign Royal Families, including a Shah of Persia and the last King and Queen of Spain, not to speak of members of central European dynasties. These events have always been occasions calling for special police arrangements which, without exception, have always worked well giving, at the same time, facilities for the Royal progress and pleasurable opportunities to the people to greet the Royal Guests without irksome restraint.

Outside the county the principal duties on Royal occasions have been the sadly remembered funeral of His Late Majesty King George VI in 1952 when sixty of the Cheshire police did duty in London; the joyous occasion of the Coronation of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in 1953, when a contingent of over 100 did duty in the Mall, and the Royal Review of the Police Forces of the United Kingdom in Hyde Park in 1954, when over a hundred Cheshire policemen formed part of the 10,000 on parade.

These were outstanding occasions which will live long in the memory of those attending.

Whilst this has been intended as a history of the police service in Cheshire in the last hundred years it would, indeed, be ungrateful not to refer to at least some of the many gentlemen who have given of their time and ability as members of the police authority. Reference has already been made to Mr. Trafford Trafford, chairman of the 1856 police committee, and Colonel C. H. France-Hayhurst. It now remains to refer, in particular, to two others of the long succession of chairmen.

The first is Sir Alan Sykes, who has been mentioned as adviser to successive Chief Constables on questions of mechanical transport. He advised on the purchase of the first car in 1908 and continued to do so until 1930. On his death in 1950 he had been a member of the police authority for forty-three years, for eight of which he was chairman. Sir Otho Glover was a worthy public servant in many spheres in his county of Cheshire. He was chairman of the Cheshire Police Authority from 1950 until his death in 1956. His very wise advice and kindness were invaluable both, to the police authority and to the Chief Constable. He was also a very valued governor of the Police College.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

The Borough Forces
Macclesfield

Chester City
Stalybridge

Congleton
Hyde

PREVIOUS to the Police Act, 1946, Cheshire contained eight independent Borough Police Forces. The Act reduced the number to three. The five extinguished forces were Chester City (1949), Congleton, Hyde, Macclesfield and Stalybridge. Each of these forces had a police history of some local interest. That concerning Macclesfield was put on record in 1947 by the last of its Chief Constables - Mr. W. G. Symmons - now Chief Constable of St. Helens. The others, in detail, remain to be written. What follows here must, of necessity, be brief.

Each of the forces, except that of Hyde, may be said to have begun as such in the year 1836 when police administration, was to some extent, tidied up by the Municipal Corporations Act of the year before which, amongst other things, created Watch Committees having the duty of employing a sufficient number of constables and administering the force.

The 1835 Act made no provision for an Exchequer grant and, of course, no system of inspection with its concomitant of standardized administration and procedure which came only in 1856. It is in this light, therefore, that the pre-1856 days of the Borough Forces should be looked at.

CHESTER CITY

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Chester had a body of Commissioners to administer the very elementary needs of local government. This body, under an Act of 1762 had power, amongst other things, to employ and pay watchmen. Some few constables existed elected by parishes or wards and appointed formally by the City Court of Quarter Sessions.

A register of watchmen of 1806 shows that eighteen men were employed on this duty. One was over sixty-nine years of age and eleven of them are shown as being "old soldiers". In 1815 it is recorded that during the months October to March the Watch was increased by ten, giving a total of twenty-eight. At the same time wages were reduced from twelve shillings to ten shillings per week.

The Commissioners met at The Exchange. This was a public building occupying the site on which the present Town Hall was built in 1862. The only police station house in the City was in this building. On the erection of the present Town Hall a police station was included and it has been the city police headquarters until to-day.

In addition to the Watch, a certain number of constables were serving; quite how many is by no means clear. A report of a special committee of the Council dated 1839 says: "It appears to the Committee that previous to January, 1836, the Constabulary and Police Force of the City consisted of- Mr. Hill, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Haswell, The Mayor's Porter, The Beadle, Thomas Worrall. Three row constables from six to nine o'clock at night, and about fifty ward constables. That the 'Police Force' consisted of thirty-two watchmen, twenty-one firemen, viz., one superintendent, four captains and sixteen firemen. That the present establishment consists of Mr. Hill, Mr. Haswell, The Mayor's Porter, Thomas Worrall and twenty-six constables. That Mr. Hill and Mr. Haswell be prepared by the next meeting with information relative to the salaries and emoluments as connected with their respective offices."

From this rather confused picture it is possible to guess that probably Messrs. Hill, Dawson and Haswell, and maybe Thomas Worrall, were full-time policemen in the period immediately preceding 1836. It seemed that Haswell had a special responsibility as "superintendent of the Watch", and Hill as "superintendent of Police", for each was respectively so described in 1839. The three row constables were probably part-time and the fifty ward constables probably annual vestry or parish constables.

Before 1835 the only disciplinary authority rested with the Magistrates for in 1829 the Chester Courant reported: "Four parish constables were brought up on a summons for neglect of duty on the Sabbath. They were all discharged on excuse and promise of being punctual in future.

One had a pain in his knee; another didn't know; a third was away from home; and the fourth blamed his wife."

In 1844 a Watch Committee report stated that the force consisted of one superintendent, two sergeants and sixteen constables, and that they were each furnished with a staff, cutlass and handcuffs. They were issued with a greatcoat, a coat with embroidery to collar, trousers, hat, stock, badge, cape, boots and gloves, the issue being a greatcoat every two years, and other articles yearly. The "hats" were undoubtedly of the common style of top-hats of the period varnished or otherwise weather-proofed, for a correspondent to a local newspaper spoke of "the glazed-hatted policemen" of the City.

The wages were recorded as being: superintendent £120 per annum; sergeants £1 per week and constables fourteen shillings per week.

In the same year it was ordered that Mr. Hill "be authorized to produce a book to be called The Prisoner's Property Book for use at the police station."

That the policemen's lot was not without occupational hazards is to be seen in the frequent references to damage to uniforms or personal injury, as for example in May, 1844, when the Watch Committee ordered a new pair of trousers for Abraham Price and a new shirt for Henry Johnson, "their own having been destroyed in the execution of their duty in apprehending Robert Edwards for breach of the peace," and that the Council be recommended to allow Peter Gillan ten days wages, he having been disabled in consequence of injuries received in an affray in Steven Street.

In addition to policing the city it seems the Watch Committee had a responsibility for managing the local prison, for in 1839 it was reported that "this establishment was ill-managed, and owing to the illness of the Governor the chairman had appointed Constable Capper to assist him." It was further reported by the chairman that, but for the exertions of Holmes (a policeman in gaol for three months for assault), a prisoner named Jackson, under sentence of transportation, would certainly have escaped.

Holmes had been sentenced a few weeks earlier for what was described by the Recorder "as a most brutal assault." The City prison went out of use in 1872.

In September of the same year (1844) it is recorded that the cells at the police station were to be heated with hot water.

In 1850 Mr. Hill was authorized to procure a bed for the use of the constable on night duty at the police office with two brown holland covers for the same.

Chester being a garrison town and a cross-road for English, Welsh and Irish traffic, was always a busy place for the police. The earliest statistical information available (1865) shows that of 2,081 persons proceeded against in the Courts, 927 were unable to read or write. As to nationality 1,401 were English, 606 Irish, fifty-five Welsh, sixteen Scots and foreigners three. The labour and political troubles which continued for so long to affect the peace of East Cheshire seemed not to have affected Chester, except occasionally when, as in 1839, to meet threats of rescue attempts of some Chartists for trial at the Assizes some 300 to 400 local inhabitants were enrolled as Special Constables and armed with cutlasses supplied from government stores.

John Hill served as Head of the City Force until 1864. He was the first of the only four Chief Constables the City ever had in its 113 years lifetime as an independent force (1836-1949). He commenced service as Superintendent of the Watch in 1824. He gave evidence before the Royal Commission (1836-9) on the state of the lawlessness in the country surrounding Chester, and in particular in the Hundred of Broxton. He was then described as High Constable of Chester.

The second Chief Constable was George Lee Fenwick, who commanded the City Force for a period of thirty-four years (1864-98). Fenwick was a well educated man. He is believed to have been a schoolmaster for a time before taking up police service. His annual reports and comments were most complete and illuminating. In 1897 he produced a graph showing the movement of annual proceedings for drunkenness offences covering the thirty-five years up to

1897. This shows nearly 1000 cases in 1865 and a general gradual decline to about 250 in the last year recorded in this fashion.

His comments on the life of the under-privileged no doubt provided much food for thought, as: "When I inform you (the Watch Committee) that in one entry containing thirty-eight dwellings I lately found upwards of 230 persons, that the width of the entry is only four yards, and that the sanitary arrangements are not a model of completeness, I think you will be of the opinion that if working men or even women who inhabit such a place occasionally seek a change elsewhere that there is not much cause for astonishment. "

Probably the outstanding event of Mr. Fenwick's tenure of office was the "Fenian Plot" of 1867, already referred to. This, as we know, came to nothing.

Mr. Fenwick retired in 1898 when he was succeeded by Mr. John H. Laybourne, who came from Liverpool where he had been a chief inspector. By this time the strength of the force was fifty, made up of the Chief Constable, five inspectors, three sergeants and forty-one constables.

Mr. Laybourne retired in 1920 after twenty-two years as Chief Constable. He later became a member of the City Council and was Mayor 1934-5. He later went to reside in Canada.

Thomas C. Griffiths, the fourth and last Chief Constable of the City, began his police service in St. Helens, in 1903. He later transferred to the Police Force of Southend-on-Sea from which place he came to Chester. He retired on the amalgamation of the County and City Forces in 1949 with a total police service of forty-six years, for twenty-nine of which he was Chief Constable of Chester, commanding a force which had grown to an establishment of seventy.

Throughout the whole of its history the City Police Force had a busy time. Perhaps the busiest week of the year was race-week. Year after year a succession of police officers, imported from as far a field as Doncaster and Birmingham, followed each other into the witness box at the City magistrates' court to speak of the misdeeds of the pickpocket, the card sharper and the welsher. In one race-week before the turn of the century it was recorded that seventy-seven race-meeting "followers" appeared before the justices.

Reference has already been made to the behaviour of the denizens of the alleys, entries and slums of Chester. Whilst public personal behaviour has continually improved one police problem still remains; this concerns the question of traffic. It must always have been a problem even in the pre-railway times when all road traffic carrying passengers or goods to or from Ireland via Holyhead passed through Chester using the only existing bridge - Handbridge - to cross the river. The problem could hardly have been eased by the comparatively short life of the local tram-car system which operated from the late nineteenth century until the 1920s.

The visit of Barnum and Bailey's Circus to the Roodee in October, 1898, was the cause of a suspension of tram traffic and the employment of the whole force for some hours to keep the way clear for the traditional procession through the principal streets.

The personal behaviour and habits of the rank and file of the force, it seems, was no better and no worse than were to be found generally amongst their contemporaries in other forces. However, the latitude given to some offenders is rather difficult to understand. During the middle third period of the nineteenth century it is noted that some constables would be "allowed" up to as many as twenty convictions for drunkenness on duty before the Watch Committee finally decided they were "not likely to make efficient constables" and discharged them from the force.

Of course the force had its element of good men, hard-working and reliable, without whom it could never have earned (in time) and held the good will of the public. Whilst a drunken policeman might well set back public trust to a considerable degree; the work of the good men always more than offset the losses.

Occasionally the prestige of the force would acquire an extra bonus of public favour as in 1932, when Sergeant Capper and Constable (later Inspector) Alfred Cleaver rescued persons from a blazing house in Trinity Street. Both officers were later awarded the medal of the Royal Humane Society and Cleaver, for additional risk, received the King's Police Medal for Gallantry and the Bronze Medal of the Society for the Protection of Life from Fire.

Before terminating this short and somewhat inadequate sketch of the Chester City Police, mention should be made of a gentleman who, although not of the force, was intimately connected with it for many years. This was Dr. George Harrison who was doctor to the City Force and examiner of recruits to the Cheshire police. Such was the esteem in which he was held that in 1895 he was presented with a large photograph of the force in which he occupied the place of honour. In 1900, he entertained the whole force to dinner at the Town Hall in celebration of twenty years service as Police Surgeon.

CONGLETON BOROUGH

A newspaper report of a meeting of the Council of the Borough in February, 1836 (when the new Municipal Corporations Act was being discussed), proves that until this time Congleton had never had a paid policeman; a member referring to a committee recommendation said, "we are recommended to appoint an officer such as we have not, hitherto, possessed in the borough; I mean a regular paid officer."

In the course of this meeting it seems that the general idea was to appoint one regular constable at a weekly wage of one guinea and two special or part-time constables, to be employed only when wanted at three shillings and sixpence a day when so employed.

This particular meeting ended inconclusively but from other sources of information it seems clear that this was to be the pattern for the "force" for a number of years. In fact, even in 1889 the strength was only one superintendent and four constables. For most of these years the strength was one plus two regular Saturday night paid Special Constables, reinforced on special occasions by upwards of six firemen sworn in for particular occasions, such as the annual fairs and "wakes" weeks.

Whilst the natural disinclination of the borough council to add to the rate burden is understandable, it is difficult to reconcile a position in which the ratio of police to population was one to 9,000 for many years.

The antipathy of members of the local authority to the idea of a police force stemmed from a number of roots; political, financial and social. To all this was added the violent and intemperate opposition of a Mr. John Wilson, the Town Clerk for many years (1850-94). This gentleman, a Cambridge LL.D. was also for many years Clerk to the Borough Justices. He domineered over all, not least the local council and magistrates. He was a regular guest of the local Licensed Victuallers Association at their annual banquets at which he would rave against the police whom he described on one occasion as "Officious and glib swearing and corroborating officers". He not infrequently accused the police of "oppression and corruption". As early as 1842 the Mayor spoke of him as having "kept the town in a state of perpetual ferment" by his incessant attacks on the Mayor and Council. He even went so far as to sue the Mayor at the County Assizes for neglect of some statutory duty.

Under the provisions of the Police Act of 1856 the "force" (a superintendent and four constables) became subject to inspection by H.M. Inspectors of Constabulary. Year by year until 1890 the Council was informed that the force was inefficient for want of sufficient strength and no grant would be forthcoming. In a letter written to the Council in November, 1889, the Secretary of State, after referring to the inefficient state of the force said, "it is now the only borough in England and Wales having a separate force that does not maintain its police in a state of efficiency."

In 1890, the Watch Committee on the advice of the Chief Constable decided to comply with the minimum requirements of H.M. Inspector and earn the grant in aid. It was decided to double the strength of the force and put it (for the first time) in uniform. This actually meant a small saving in the local police rate. Wilson thereupon capitulated saying, "I have given up my contest against Mr. Jonathan Hall's (the Chief Constable) scheme of surrounding himself with a small regiment of drilled and uniformed policemen". The force now consisted of one Chief Constable, two sergeants and eight constables.

So far as the administration of justice was concerned it is clear that both the Town Clerk and the Watch Committee took a very great part in placing obstacles in the path of the police in

their task of impartially administering the law. In 1886 the local press referring to the withdrawal of summonses against four unnamed "respectable" young men for drunkenness ended its comments with the lines: "The voice is the voice of Jonathan (Hall) but the hand is the hand of John (Wilson)."

The general attitude of the Watch Committee may be clearly seen from an examination of the committee minutes. In 1899, on the Chief Constable reporting having taken out a summons against a licensee and asking approval for legal aid, the Town Clerk said that as he was being called as a "witness" for the defendant he could not, therefore, represent the police. A proposal that a solicitor be engaged was defeated.

At about the same time the Chief Constable was required to inform the chairman and Town Clerk of all reports against licensees and he was not to take out a summons until three days had elapsed.

One can well imagine the canvassing and lobbying that would go on during the three day standstill period. For a period the Watch Committee attempted to usurp the authority of the Magistrates in dealing with minor offences. The Magistrates, of course, won in the end.

The first police station consisted of a room (part of a shop) belonging to the Corporation and adjoining the old Town Hall. The lockups or cells were in the cellars. Although a New Town Hall was built in 1866, the police station remained until 1870 when the present building was erected.

The police station included living accommodation for the Chief Constable which was later adapted for offices and used jointly by the police and Corporation.

From 1914 the Special Constabulary formed a permanent and most useful supplementary force. Before this time Special Constables were sworn in and did duty for special occasions and when no longer required they reverted to a non-police status.

The earliest record of the employment of Special Constables now available speaks of one hundred respectable inhabitants being sworn in to aid the police when, in 1842, some 600 colliers on strike marched from North Staffordshire to Poynton with the intention of bringing miners employed there out on strike. The strikers assaulted the "Chief Constable" and made "a great noise and tumult" and later left the town.

The Knutsford and Tabley troop of the Cheshire Yeomanry and a party of the 1st Royal Dragoons arrived next morning. Later in the same year it is recorded that "Turnouts" (strikers) to the number of about 6,000 came to the town from Macclesfield.

There were many occasions of excitement during the nineteenth century particularly during elections. The extent to which participants would go is to be seen in the case of the prominent inhabitant who, towards the end of the century, was indicted at Assizes on a charge of bribery and corruption and sentenced to a term of imprisonment at Knutsford. He went around the town on Election Day with supporters carrying buckets full of half-crowns which were distributed to the poorer electors and in public houses.

On his release from prison the would-be councillor was met and escorted by a cavalcade of supporters in triumph back to Congleton where, it is said, a great crowd welcomed him back.

Generally speaking, crime and offences were all of a minor character. Up to 1945, no charge of murder had been made since 1776. The Chiefs of the Police in Congleton between 1836 and 1947 numbered twelve, five of whom left on transfer to other forces. Up to 1876 when Jonathan Hall, then serving in Macclesfield, was appointed, all had been local men. He served until 1902 when he was succeeded by Mr. J. H. Watson (from Hyde) who, in 1908, left to become Chief Constable of Devonport and later of Bristol. Succeeding Chief Constables were Henry Ingles, 1908-12 (died); Thomas Danby, 1912-14 (to Peterborough) ; Thomas Nuttal, 1915-23 (died) ; E. N. Christie, 1923-30 (to Bedford); G. S. Lowe, 1930-2 (to Newcastle-under-Lyme, Plymouth and Sheffield); J. A. Kelsall (Acting Chief Constable) 1932-4; R. W. James, 1934-47

The force came to an end as an independent entity on 31st March, 1947, and was incorporated in the Northwich Division of the Cheshire Constabulary then under the command of Mr. G. H. Durnell.

MACCLESFIELD BOROUGH

Previous to 1836, Macclesfield had power under Commissioners to appoint and pay "beadles and watchmen".

In January, 1836, the first Chief Constable in the person of William Lockett was appointed, together with six constables; four for duty by day and two for night. These were supplemented by four part-time Special Constables doing duty on Saturday nights and on special occasions for a small fee.

The regular constables were issued with the uniform of the period. These consisted of tall hats, the crowns of which were covered with patent leather, double-breasted swallow-tail coats and white-grey trousers. The swallow-tail coat was shortly to be replaced by a knee-length blue frock coat and the trousers by blue ones.

Lockett served only four years as Chief Constable and was succeeded in 1840 by Edward Stockwin. Stockwin had come to Cheshire from London (Where he had been an inspector in the Metropolitan force) on appointment as Special High Constable of the Hundred of Bucklow. He remained in Macclesfield only two years and was succeeded in 1842 by William Harper. Harper was another product of the new Metropolitan force and having succeeded Stockwin in the Bucklow Hundred now followed him as Chief Constable of Macclesfield. He served in the office for eighteen years (to 1860) when he was succeeded by James Etchells. The latter originally a "Turn-Key" at Knutsford Prison had been appointed a constable in Macclesfield and had been promoted to the rank of inspector in 1847. Successors in the office were William Sheasby, 1874-1903 (from Coventry) John Berry, 1903-08; (to Barrow) ; . Henry Sheasby, 1907-42 (from Cheshire Police); Ronald Alderson, 1942-4 (from Lancaster, then to Luton and Monmouthshire); Tom Bramwell, 1944-5 (Acting Chief Constable), William G. Symmons, 1945-7 (from Bedford, then to St. Helens).

The only test of the efficiency of the force before 1857 would appear to be on its record of prevention and detection of crime. Records and statistics were practically unknown at the time but it does appear that during the first six months of 1843, there were at least five cases of transportation sentences. This would, if average, appear to show some measure of efficiency. The first official return of offences published in 1846, shows that in 1845 the following offences were committed in the Borough: Drunkenness 236; Assaults on police 23; Common Assaults 205; Damage 40; Other offences, chiefly larcenies 386; total 890; and those were dealt with by ten constables.

As with all other forces, the Macclesfield force became subject to inspection in 1857. However, it had to wait until 1875 before it earned a certificate of efficiency and the concomitant grant. This had probably been withheld for one of the reasons which applied to neighbouring Congleton (but not for so long) for in this year the strength of the force was doubled from a total of eighteen to thirty-six including an establishment for the first time of two inspectors. It is not unlikely that the advent of William Sheasby only the year before had some influence in the matter.

In the matter of uniforms, the Macclesfield Police seemed generally to follow the national trends. However, for a time, about 1880, head-dress of the shako pattern was in use.

In 1888, the first telephone was installed. A year later an electric alarm bell was installed in the house of the captain of the volunteer fire brigade and connected to the police station. In 1890, a mechanical correspondence duplicator was purchased. In 1892, electric bells were connected with the cells at the police station. In 1902, the first typewriter was obtained and in 1904, a set of "appliances" for taking fingerprints came into use; and so throughout the following years every new aid was freely provided by the police authority.

From 1926 recruits went for training to the Manchester City Police Training School.

The strength of the force at its greatest (during the Second World War) consisted of: Regular Police, 47; First Reserve and Police War Reserve, 21; Women's Auxiliary Police Corps, 8. In due course the reserves and women auxiliaries were disbanded and two regular policewomen appointed.

Perhaps the most outstanding feature of police administration in Macclesfield was the fact that the force was commanded for sixty-four years of its history of 111 years by William and Henry Sheasby (father and son). The total police service of the two Sheasbys, in the case of the former, in Coventry and Macclesfield, and in the case of the latter in Cheshire and Macclesfield, amounted to over ninety years. In 1939, Mr. Henry Sheasby was awarded the King's Police Medal for outstanding police service.

At midnight on the 31st March, 1947, the Borough Force became part of the Cheshire Constabulary under the control of Superintendent J. A. Taylor.

STALYBRIDGE

"The people of Stalybridge have immortalized themselves in the way of strikes or turnouts", so wrote, in 1899, a competent observer in the person of William Chadwick, a native of the district and a police officer for nearly fifty years, of which, for thirty-seven years, he was Chief Constable of Stalybridge. His *Reminiscences*, published about the end of the nineteenth century gives a graphic picture of life in Stalybridge as he saw it at close quarters.

Police history peculiar to Stalybridge began with an Act of 1828 authorizing the election of a body of local Commissioners to administer a rather elementary form of local government, including the appointment of paid police officers. No "establishment" of police officers was fixed. It began with about two officers and ended, in 1857, with about ten.

The first evidence of the number employed is to be found in a tattered "log" book of 1830. In this, largely devoted to records concerning the duties of a body of some thirty Special Constables during what was known as the "four and two pence - or swing" strike or lock-out, reference is made to: "our two constables" Hellawell and Wood, "the noble guardians of the public peace", who had been found drinking and in a tipsy state at half past one o'clock in the morning at a local hostelry.

In 1844, the "officers" probably numbered about four or five. By 1857, when the Commissioners were replaced by the first Borough Council and Watch Committee (Borough Charter, June, 1857), the old "force" probably numbered about ten men. An inventory of accoutrements handed over to the new Watch Committee seems to indicate sufficient to equip ten men (some of whom may have been Watchmen).

There were, of course, no ranks, although the term "deputy" or "superintendent constable" would seem to have been used frequently to indicate the senior member of the force.

One such was a John Gatley. He had been appointed by the Hyde Vestry as a paid police officer in 1835 "to do all the constabulary business of the township for his annual salary of £50".

He probably left Hyde about 1840 and became a sort of head constable in Stalybridge. In 1844 his official conduct became the subject of an inquiry by the local Commissioners and he lost his job. The Gatley inquiry was fully reported in a series of scurrilous pamphlets published under the title "The Looking Glass" by a local printer. The principal allegation against Gatley concerned his use of an agent provocateur named James Swann (a member of a notorious local criminal family), as a result of which four local men were charged with burglary and sentenced to fifteen years transportation each.

The newly created Watch Committee took over police responsibilities in August, 1857, when the first Chief Constable, Joseph Sadler, was appointed and the Commissioner held property was taken over.

Some members of the old police body joined the new force which for the first time was probably attired in the usual uniform of the period, top-hat, blue knee-length frock coat with stand-up collar, and blue trousers. Helmets were adopted in 1863. Amongst the accoutrements inherited from the Commissioners were rattles or "ricks" (shortly to be discarded for whistles) and six cutlasses. In April, 1863, twenty-four more cutlasses and belts were purchased at a cost of £26 1 5s. 0d.

The establishment and pay was fixed as follows: one Chief Constable at £120 per annum; two inspectors, one at twenty-four shillings and sixpence per week, with free quarters, the other at

twenty-four shillings per week; eight constables at eighteen shillings per week. The first inspectors were Wright Broadbent, (a colleague of John Gatley in 1844) and William Dyson, with responsibilities for "day police" and "night police" respectively. Each constable was required to deposit the sum of £1 10s. 0d. with the Committee in earnest of proper performance of duty.

Joseph Sadler resigned in 1862. It was this gentleman who, as superintendent of the Stockport police in 1851, when giving evidence before a Select Committee of the House of Commons had stated that the "Constabulary and others engaged in the administration of public justice, have constantly been guilty of the most grave and serious offences", one of which is "the fearful iniquity of being instrumental in obtaining the committal of innocent persons for the mere pleasure and profit of attending the sessions and assizes". A meeting of the Cheshire County Magistrates called upon Mr. Sadler to prove his words. He, however, declined; on the grounds that the Court of Quarter Sessions was not a proper tribunal to investigate his charges and also that what he had said to the Select Committee was under privilege. If the records of the Gatley case of 1844 are true, Sadler certainly had some substance for his accusations.

William Chadwick, then an inspector in the Ashton-u-Lyne Borough Force and earlier a Petty Constable in the Dukinfield district under Joseph Little, was appointed to succeed Sadler. He was to serve Stalybridge for thirty-seven years at the end of which, in his retirement in 1899 (when he made the dubious claim to be the "oldest Borough Chief Constable in England") he published his Reminiscences.

The following years, as their forerunners had been, were years of constant alarms on account of the frequent outbreaks of public disorder. To begin with nothing less than military aid was sufficient to restore order and tranquillity. In time, however, the place of the military came to be taken by bodies of civil police imported as and when required from other districts.

For the first time the year 1863 saw contingents of police from Lancashire and Cheshire brought into the borough to help maintain law and order during what were known as the "Bread Riots". The Chief Constable subsequently reported that of 360 persons apprehended during the year, eighty-three were charged with rioting. The nationalities of persons charged were given as - English 146; Irish 212 ; Welsh 1 and Scots 1 Cavalry and Infantry were present in the town on this occasion and also during the "Murphy" Riots of 1868, but their presence became less and less necessary as the years went on.

With the progressive extension of the right to vote, elections, both parliamentary and local, came in time to be occasions for disorder, in anticipation of which the Mayor was usually given authority to negotiate with the Chief Constable of Cheshire, Derbyshire or Lancashire for police reinforcements. Fortunately for those responsible for keeping order the custom of fixing the polls on different days over a period of time enabled police contingents to be used to the best advantage.

The new force took some time to settle down and become "efficient". It was some years before the Watch Committee could be persuaded to agree to an "establishment" sufficient to satisfy H.M. Inspector of Constabulary and to inaugurate a superannuation fund, both of which, in the opinion of the Home Secretary, were necessary to an efficient force.

By April, 1863, the force had grown to a total of thirteen. It was now increased by a further ten men. By June, 1863, the strength had been further increased to twenty-five by the appointment (for the first time) of two sergeants. In September of the same year the Watch Committee recommended the establishment of a superannuation fund. This led, in October, to the Inspector of Constabulary expressing his satisfaction at the efficiency of the force.

In addition to normal police duty the Chief Constable was in charge of the local fire brigade and one sergeant and eight constables did part-time fire duties.

The turn-over of constables for many years was extremely rapid. In 1867 at one meeting of the Watch Committee, six men (25 per cent of the force) were found guilty of drunkenness on duty.

In 1894, on the suggestion of the then Inspector of Constabulary, a number of men were trained in horsemanship for possible use as mounted police. The horses were to be hired as

and when required. The only evidence of them having been put to any use would seem to be when in 1898, on the suggestion of H.M. Inspector (Sir Herbert Croft), a number of them met him on his arrival at the railway station and escorted him to the Town Hall, "as had been done in Ashton and other Boroughs".

By the end of the century the total establishment of the force had increased to thirty-two, and (1898) Chadwick had been succeeded by Captain John Bates. Captain Bates returned to military duty, during both the South African and First World Wars.

In 1898 the rank of detective officer appears for the first time. He was to be issued with one plain coat, two trousers, one vest and one: bat. The rank of detective sergeant followed in 1899. In 1895 a telephone was installed at the police station to be available for all corporation departments. A note about this time records that "the surveyor, who has to be fetched to take calls, uses it more than the police." In 1903 the first police "mechanical" form of transport was obtained - a bicycle.

Captain Bates retired in 1924 and was succeeded as Chief Constable by "Captain" Roland Y. Parker, whose police experience was twelve months service as a constable in the Salford City Force. He resigned in 1927 and was followed by Frank J. May, who came with thirteen years service in the Tynemouth Force. He left in 1929 to become a superintendent in the Sheffield Force and later went on to become Chief Constable of Swansea, and after service as a Fire Force (N.F.S.) Commander during the war became Chief of the Air Ministry Constabulary.

Mr. May was followed by Mr. Stanley Pickering, who had previous service in Sunderland. He was the last Chief Constable of Stalybridge and retired in 1947 after two years war service overseas with the Army Civil Affairs Commission. Mr. Pickering had the distinction of being made an Officer Brother of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem during his service and was awarded the King's Police Medal in 1946.

During Mr. Pickering's absence, the force, now comprising a regular establishment of thirty-five (plus war auxiliaries) was in charge of Inspector Robert Cooke. The Force ceased to exist as an independent body on 31st March, 1947, when it was absorbed into the North-East Cheshire Division of the Cheshire Constabulary.

HYDE

Hyde was the junior member of the group of Cheshire police boroughs absorbed into the County Force in 1947.

As an independent Force it really has no history. By the time of its birth the cutlasses had been put away for ever (except for use as ornaments) and all members of the Force were "conformists". In other words, all more or less, followed a discreet pattern of behaviour.

Hyde became a municipal borough in 1881. The Council began toying with the idea of having its own Police Force in 1887. By the 1st April, 1899, the idea had become a reality.

At the time the Borough area, with a population of something over 32,000 was policed by the County Force with a local establishment of one inspector, five sergeants, and seventeen constables, all under the command of Superintendent E. G. Lingard, (one of Captain Arrowsmith's army captains, appointed as superintendent in 1878), who was responsible for the surrounding division. Lingard, however, died about this time and Superintendent E. G. Cooper was divisional superintendent in April, 1899, when he moved his headquarters to Dukinfield.

A number of ideas were considered to ensure that the change over would not leave Hyde with too immature a force. However, in the end the new Chief Constable (appointed in December, 1898) managed to recruit sufficient experienced officers and men to enable the Force to take over on the 1st April, 1899. On 29th April, Colonel Hamersley reported that the whole of the County Police from Hyde Borough had been withdrawn.

The new Borough Force took over, at an annual rental of £150, the County Police premises and Court in Beeley Street. It remained there until moved to the Town Hall in 1914.

The first borough Chief Constable was Mr. J. W. A. Danby, who had previous police service in Rotherham and Barnsley. He also undertook duties as head of the municipal fire brigade and as inspector under the Acts relating to Weights and Measures and Food and Drugs, etc.

Study of the minutes of the Watch Committee reveals little of general interest. There were a few strikes but they were mild affairs so far as the police were concerned.

Towards the end of his period of service as Chief Constable, Mr. Danby, who was well liked by all sections of the community, achieved some measure of distinction as the initiator of a Boys' Club Movement. A very successful club came into being, meeting first at the Town Hall and later at the old police premises in Beeley Street.

The latter premises were officially opened as a club by H.R.H. The Duke of Gloucester. Mr. Danby was awarded the King's Police Medal in 1928. He died in 1931, after occupying the position of Chief Constable for thirty-three years.

Mr. Danby was succeeded by Inspector William H. Smith, M.M., who retired in 1943, after thirty-six years service in the Hyde force. The third and last Chief Constable of the Borough was Mr. Thomas M. Skelton, B.E.M., who came from Liverpool where he had been an Inspector.

Mr. Skelton was seconded for duty with the Civil Control Commission in Germany in January, 1946, and did not return to Hyde. The Force, until March, 1947, was commanded by Inspector Brightmore and Inspector Dunn respectively.

The final authorized establishment of the force was one Chief Constable, two Inspectors, seven sergeants and thirty constables, making a total of forty.

HONOURS AWARDED TO MEMBERS OF THE CHESHIRE CONSTABULARY
AND CONSTITUENT FORCES

Knighthood

1943 Major JACK BECKE. Chief Constable

M. V.O.

1913 Lt.-Col. PULTENEY MALCOLM Chief Constable

1913 WILLIAM LEAH Superintendent and Deputy Chief Constable

C.B.E

1932 Lt.-Col. PULTENEY MALCOLM Chief Constable

1941 Major JACK BECKE. Chief Constable

1955 GODWIN E. BANWELL Chief Constable

M.B.E.

1918 WILLIAM J. NAYLOR Superintendent

1930 THOMAS ENNION Superintendent

1932 JOHN R. DODD Superintendent and Deputy Chief Constable

1935 GEORGE KINGMAN Superintendent

1941 J. ALBERT TAYLOR Superintendent

1950 ALEXANDER HENDERSON Assistant Chief Constable

King's Police Medal. for Gallantry

1932 ALFRED CLEAVER Inspector

King's or Queen's Police Medal

1911 Col. JOHN HENRY HAMERSLEY , Chief Constable

1912 WILLIAM LEAH Superintendent and Deputy Chief Constable

1920 GEORGE ENNION Superintendent

1925 Lt.-Col. PULTENEY MALCOLM Chief Constable

1928 JOHN W. A. DANBY Chief Constable, Hyde

1938 JOHN R. DODD Superintendent and Deputy Chief Constable

1939 HENRY SHEASBY Chief Constable, Macclesfield

1943 MURDOCH M. THORBURN Superintendent

1946 STANLEY PICKERING Chief Constable, Stalybridge

1947 FRED PLATT Detective Superintendent

1956 GEORGE H. DURNELL Assistant Chief Constable

B.E.M.

For gallantry as serving policemen during war

1941 FRANK WIGGINS Constable

1941 ERNEST POCOCK Constable

1944 LEONARD COOPER Detective Constable

1946 THOMAS M. SKELTON Chief Constable, Hyde

1946 JOHN R. POTTER Chief Inspector

1946 WILLIAM ROGERS Sergeant

Armed Forces, 1914-18

Constable J. WILSON	..	..	..	..		M.C.
Constable S. HULL	..	..	..	..		D. C. M
Constable F. BIRTLES	..	..	..	..		D. C. M
Chief Constable WILLIAM SMITH, Hyde						M.M
Constable C. WELCH	..	..	..			M.M
Constable G. OAKES	..	..	..	..		M.M
Constable J. H. COLLIER	..	..	..	..		M.M
Constable T. G. HALL	..	..	..	..		M.M

Armed Forces, 1939-45

Police Messenger A. P. EYTON-JONES	..	,,	,,	,,	,,	D.F.C.
Constable W. J. SHERWEN	..	..	..	..	,,	D.F.C.
Constable R. H. G. WEIGHILL	..	..	,,	,,	,,	D.F.C.
Constable W. G. BROUGH	..	..	,,	,,	,,	M.M.
Constable T. E. MCGURREN	..	..	..	..	..	M.M.
Constable J. FLYNN	..	,,	..	..	,,	M.M.
Constable T. G. COLEMAN	..	..	..	..	..	M.M.
Constable T. RIMMER	..	..	..	,,	,,	M.M.
Constable J. G. ECCLESTON	..	..				Croix-de-Guerre and Bronze Star
Constable H. PURSLOW	..	..	..	..	,,	M.B.E. (Military)
Constable J. BLENKHARN	..					Commander in Chief's Certificate of Good Service
Constable F. J. GERMAN	..					Commander in Chief's Certificate of Good Service

Mentioned in Dispatches

Police Messenger HORACE TUSHINGHAM (R.N.)
 Constable D. W. BUTT
 Constable J. K. WALKER