

A History of Policing in Warrington

By Peter Wroe

In writing about one particular part of Policing history, we should look further back in time, to understand how the laws of the land came about and then developed over time to give us the police force that we have today. The police force did not just happen over night; it has been part of a long evolved programme of change. In writing this book, I wish to be guided only by two subjects, Warrington and its Borough Police Force, but we will stray from this path from time to time for reasons of explanation or interest.

Warrington is without question an ancient town, there are many details of early settlements date back to Roman Times and beyond. Rome ruled this land for 500 years; in fact, there was a sizeable Roman Garrison here called 'Verantium'. Following the Romans departure, the Anglo-Saxon became dominant. The Anglo-Saxons called the town Walintane or Wallintun meaning a fortified town. They recorded quite a lot of their achievements and built on the basic layout left by their predecessors. It is therefore a convenient place to start with the history of policing. The settlements of the time were small; people lived as a community. The Saxons brought with them their own customs and laws, according to Anglo-Saxon custom if someone broke the rules it was not just a crime against one but also a crime against all. Any crime was a '*crime against the peace*'. Everyone was expected to live in peace so any crime was said to be against the King's Peace.

Families, about ten to fifteen, were grouped together, these groups were called '*Tything*' and each group would have a headman (*Tythingman*). It was the duty of each and every citizen to see that the laws were not broken. When an offence had been committed and witnessed by a citizen, it was his responsibility for the *HUE and CRY*. Shouting, and chasing the

offender, everyone, no matter what they were doing, had to join in and catch the offender. It was an offence not to. Every male in the group from the age of twelve to sixty years had a responsibility to catch offenders, and bring the person before the Moot. This was an early form of court, where the elders sat in judgement on people and their disputes, punishing the guilty.

By 1000AD, the settlements were grouped together into what was called a 'hundred'. Warrington was in the hundred of West Derby. Each hundred would have its own court *similar to the older folk moots*, these would meet every four weeks and deal with most of the court work. The more serious offences saw the offender being taken to the hundred courts which would meet twice a year, The hundred courts was headed by a hundredman or 'Reeve', or the Shire court which was headed by the Shire Reeve. He later became known as the Sheriff. The Sheriff was responsible to the King for the law and order of his area. He also had other duties, like looking after the King horses and calling out all the fit and able-bodied men to arms in the case of an emergency. In these early days, law and order had a good grounding, people were happy with the system and used it well. These were very turbulent times for the Kings of England.

The Norman Conquest of 1066 over threw the Saxon dominance. As the two peoples, Norman's and Anglo-Saxons mixed a new culture of people developed. The Norman's had introduced Feudalism and the upper class people all spoke French. The Sheriffs were all selected by the King and ruled ruthlessly over the Saxons. To ensure that the Saxons behaved and keeping a close check on what they did. The headmen had to report to the Sheriffs court about things that were happening in their settlements. Who was travelling about, living well without an income, lazy, refusing to work, or going out at night, and sleeping during the day. King William 1

gave land by Royal Charter to his Barons. These Barons became the 'Lord of the Manor'; part of their duties would be to hold a court, which would take on much of the work of the hundred courts, these courts, were known as the Manor courts or Court Leet. Each year, in Warrington it was October, the court would meet and elect its Manor officers these were the Ale taster, the Bread-weigher, Swine-ringer and the Constable. The name of 'Constable' is Middle English coming from the Old French word 'cunestable' and the old Latin word 'comes stabuli'. The count of the stable or Marshal. In Middle English, it became used as an officer of the hundred courts as conservator of the peace.

By 1154, Henry II had come to the throne, he developed a system of common law, administered by The Royal Courts of Justice and these laws applied all over England, (*Common to all the land*). These laws did encroached on the laws of local feudal courts and church courts. But, the system was made to last, and it did so, to this day.

The 1216 Magna Carter recorded that 550 souls lived in Warrington.

In 1233, William Le Boteler, the fifth Baron, granted Warrington a charter permitting the Burgesses to hold a free court, this of course freed some time from the Manor courts. This court lasted for nearly 100 years until the seventh Baron renounced all claims and Warrington went back to being governed by the Manor courts.

Warrington had become a very popular town for its Market, which was recognised by Royal Charter in 1277. Traders from afar would travel by ship and Land to trade here. On 5th July 1310, Edward II authorised tolls to be collected to cross

Whilst on 21st May 1321 Edward III allowed William Le Botelier to collect taxes for everything sold at the market. The money raised in taxes was used to pave the main streets of the town; Warrington was one of the first towns in north to have paved streets. Bridge Street was then called

Newgate, which was a narrow dirty street with open fronted shops, panes of glass had to be less than ten inches square to avoid paying window tax.

By 1465, the population of Warrington had grown to 1,314 and the town was taking shape with many of the road that we still have today, Winwick street, Sankey street, Pig hill (Town hill), Heath street (Fennel street), Whitecross, Slutchers lane, Newgate street (Bridge street), Butter Market, Church street, Sonky green ,Hudd lane , Longforthe Street , Beausee street. In 1495 King Henry VII opened the new (Third) bridge, nine years later the bridge became toll free and remained that way.

The decline of the Feudalism started in the late 14th century. England had started to develop as a trading nation, a class of citizen between the Aristocrat and the peasant emerged, they became the middle classes, education grew and a language mixture of Anglo-Saxon with Norman French emerged as ENGLISH. It is surprising to find, however, that although the first Warrington was a product of the Bronze Age. It was not until the Stuart era in the 16th century that recognised Constables were used for ensuring law and order within the town. These Constables or Market Watchers as they were sometimes referred to, although unpaid, apparently carried out their duties successfully. Records show the sitting of Summary Courts in which people were fined for petty offences such as,
Failing to keep a ladder of at least sixteen staves for protection in the case of fire.

Disobeying or obstructing the lords officers in the execution of their duties.

Laying or making midding in the market place.

Person not keeping their channels or gutters clean.

Persons not paying their share towards the roads in Arpley.

Breaking of a neighbour's fence.

Digging holes in the market place.

Suffering vagabonds or idle persons to play unlawful games in their houses.

Grinding corn other than at the lord's mill.

Loosing a horse of less value than 13s 4d (80p) upon Warrington Heath

Selling food under weight.

Letting swine go abroad on the Lord's day, these were being against the local laws of the town.

By 1642, Warrington was in the grip of civil war, between Charles I and Parliament. Warrington was the strategic place because of its bridge crossing the Mersey, many battles were fought in the area. Col John Booth gave to Warrington a bell that was rung every night to announce the curfew. Drunken lawless was the order of the day. Thomas Sargeant was the Constable for most of the north side of the town and had to go raising taxes to pay for the soldiers. The Earl of Derby fortified Warrington as a Garrison town and fierce battles were taking place all around the town.

Good times were ahead, the coming to an end of the civil war, people settled in Warrington and it became a popular place to start new industry. Sail making, Pin manufacture, and Thomas Patten's copper smelt. With all the prosperity there was also the squalor. Poor sanitation was a problem for the population, which had now expanded to 7000. The streets were described by travellers as narrow and dirty. With the increase of cases to be heard by the court, a new Leet Court house was built on the south side of the market, a red stone building that was approached by a flight of stone steps.

In 1794, Peter Stubbs, Tool maker, Maltster and brewer of the town set his trading prices as, Ale 1/8d Gallon, Rum 14/-, Gin 8/3d, Cognac 19/- and Port 12/- . He also had an interest with Mr John Unsworth, a Glassmaker of Newgate Street (Bridge Street) who was a provider of Royal Glassware, as well as to Sir Robert Peel who was a frequent visitor to the

town.

In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, the only bodies comparable with a Police Force consisted of a number of men known as watchmen, and the Parish Constables. The watchmen were equipped with lanterns, Wooden rattles and keys, and were paid and financed by private subscriptions.

Their main duty was to visit and inspect by night, the warehouses and premises of the business people of the town, who were the only people wealthy enough to subscribe to these services. They were employed and worked as individuals, there being no co-ordination or group organisation between them. The Parish Constables, of whom the town had four, were generally tradesmen of the town appointed at the Court Leet. These Constables did little or no actual Police work, they were also responsible for paying 'Sundry Persons' these covered such things as bell ringers, Enginemen, Flogging and the relief of distress. They delegated their powers and work to one deputy and an assistant, by whom the 'King's Peace' had to be kept, by 1811 the inhabitants of the town had grown to 11,738.

In 1813, Warrington obtained a Parliamentary sanction for building a new Bridewell,

Police Commissioners were appointed in 1815 and their responsibility was the well being of its inhabitants of Warrington and the provision of social Services. This was to replace the old lock up that was situated at the back of the work house off Church street, and consisted of one room with two areas defined by metal bars and an open space for an office. This establishment was run by Mr Caudwell. Shortly after the Police Commissioners appointment the Bridewell was erected in what was then known as Irlam Street, now adjoining Dial Street. All prisoners arrested by the Constable or his men were locked up in the Bridewell to await trial and punishment. The cell accommodation was adequate to receive approximately twelve prisoners of each sex.

Maybe the government had some idea at the time of the turmoil that was to follow in the next few years. Warrington was to expand but not prosper; on 12th December 1832 under the Reform Act Warrington became a parliamentary Borough, Mr E.G. Hornby became the first elected member. In 1833 the Abolition of Slavery was enacted, whilst 1834 brought in the Poor Laws Act.

In 1814 there were 160 public houses in the Borough whilst in 1824 there were 81 within the town centre alone. The form of law enforcement carried out by the Watchmen and Parish Constables was apparently to the satisfaction of the Police Commissioners, until the year 1837. In the latter part of that year an occasion arose when an unusually large number of male prisoners were arrested on the same day, which necessitated some being detained in the females' cells. Of those detained in the females cells, one, charged with the serious crime of burglary, escaped by climbing out of the exercise yard the construction of which did not afford as much security as that of the male prisoners yard. How he got from his cell into the yard is still not known, but suspicion fell heavily upon a young man acting as assistant to the Parish Constables Deputy. In that it was thought, he had left the cell door unlocked for the purpose of assisting the escape. No motive was ever put forward for this suspected conduct, the escape of such a serious criminal as this, caused the Police Commissioners some concern, and considerations were being talked about so that it could not happen again.

At lam, Friday 8th December 1837, Betty Minshull aged 52, and the daughter of Thomas Higginson, the landlord of the Legh Arms at Market Square was Murdered, Raped and Robbed, in the outside toilet of the pubs back yard. It was thought that she had died as the result of natural causes but the Deputy Constable of Warrington, James Jones thought differently when he called later in the day. A few days later a William Hill was

arrested. Hill was tried on 29th March 1838 at Liverpool Assizes. The judge was Sir John Patteson. The trial lasted 6 hours and after a short retirement, the jury found him guilty. He was taken to Kirkdale gaol at Liverpool where at 8am Saturday 21st April 1838 he was hanged outside the Gaol walls. Hill had been a weaver at Thomas Eskridge Cotton Mill at St James Street, Latchford. After the trial, Constable Jones was reprimanded by the Judge for carrying out an investigation, something that he was not authorised to do. It did his career no harm though, he was well thought of in Warrington, by both public and the Police Commissioners. Mr Jones was given full responsibility of the Bridewell, which became his residence as well as the Police Station. It was usual for him to engage himself in his duties, mainly patrolling the town from 9am each day until 11pm. often later. His four assistant Constables worked a two-shift system, two men working from 9 a.m. until 9 p.m. and from 9 p.m. until 9 a.m. with rest days still a thing of the future.

On the 5th January 1838, The Police Commissioner's, held a meeting, the outcome of which was the formation of a Committee whose sole responsibility was the selection and appointment of Police Officers. They were in effect to form the 1st official Warrington Police Force, and the efficient administration of the same. This Committee selected James Jones, who, it appears, was then acting as Deputy to the Parish Constables of the town, Thomas Joynson was one of the four Assistant Constables to be under his command. The Committee sat each week to discuss the efficiency of the Force, and to furnish Mr. Jones with any new orders they may have made. These efforts by the Police Commissioners are no doubt the earliest beginning of the Warrington County Borough Police Force.

In 1846 due to the rising population of the town and the rapidly growing industries, which were obviously going to increase as time went on? The people of the town, whom had long been requesting a Charter of

Incorporation sent a petition to the Government. On the 3rd April 1847, a Charter was granted and subsequently a Watch Committee was formed to supervise and take on the responsibility of efficient, effective policing of the 'Borough of Warrington' from the Police Commissioners.

The watch Committee held its first meeting on 15th July 1847, and by November the same year appointed Mr Charles Stewart as the new Chief Constable of the New Borough, Mr. Jones having quietly left the scene. Mr. Stewart still had only four assistant Constables, but due to his very high standards and dedication to duty, was successful in his task of keeping law and order at a bearable level. Within weeks of taking office, he drew up a set of rules for his men. Outlining their hours of duty, and created a simple beat system. At first, he used the boundaries of the already existing wards. Although his Constables worked twelve hour shifts at the very least. He emphatically lay down that no man was to remain within the Bridewell for any time longer than was necessary for the compilation of reports or the completion of other specific duties. He himself worked more than twelve hours daily, mainly in patrolling the streets and supervising his men. At first he ordered his men to work shifts commencing at 12 noon and 12 midnight, but soon changed this back to the 9 o'clock system. Probably due to the frequency in which the night duty men were called on duty early to assist in the many drunken brawls.

Mr. Stewart himself equipped his men with canes or sticks, for night duty patrolling. The following is an order written by him in December 1847, regarding the use of the sticks, as a means of communication:

The Chief Constable in going his rounds on the different beats he will strike one sound and will wait for a replying sound from the Constable. If he sound again, he will strike which will denote that he has heard the sound of the Constable on his beat, and will pass on.

If a Constable wants assistance, he will strike ‘three’ times or should he only want to communicate with the chief or other Constables ‘twice’.”

Mr. Stewart continued in office until 1852, during which time he and his Constables were highly successful in investigating crime and detecting criminals. Constables for the first time were allowed to wear plain clothes on special investigations, no doubt from his interest in detective work and many communications with detective offices of larger Police Forces.

Mr John S. MacMichael was appointed his successor and within six months of his new appointment, the strength of the force was again increased by the addition of one man. The Officers, for the first time in the history of the force were referred to as Police Constables. The Watch Committee officially allowed Mr MacMichael to equip his men with staffs, lanterns and rattles for night duty, which tends to suggest that Mr. Stewart’s earlier issue of canes or sticks, was a just a personal effort. It is remarkable that this is the first record of Police Constables being issued with lanterns remembering that their forerunners, the watchmen, had them.

Warrington at that time consisted of narrow streets illuminated only by gas lighting. The lights were described by a person of that time as *"Faintly illuminating the streets of our town.* Many of the streets had no illumination system at all. The only illumination being from the windows of the many public houses that remained open until midnight. At the police courts on 4th April 1853, the Mayor, Peter Rylands called the attention of the police to the crowds of idle persons lounging about and obstructing the footpaths when the attenders of the churches and chapels are dispersing on Sunday. He ordered the police to apprehend them if after being warned of persisting in their annoyance. He also remarked that he felt hurt by the obscene words chalked on the walls and hoped that the police will see to

there removal. Other court matters were;

James Lomax aged 12 years was charged with leaving the employ of Peter Bradshaw.

Several cases of drunkenness and begging in Golden Square. (A small street that lead from market gate to the market.)

On Friday 8th April 1853, the Deputy Coroner, Mr Mellor held an inquest at the Saracens Head , Wilderspool Causeway. Enquiring into the demise of William Brimelow who was found on the Cheshire side of the river. He heard that Brimelow was last seen in Sankey Street, not quite sober. He was making his way to the new railway station.

It was supposed that he lost his way and fell into the river. Verdict.. Found Drowned.

The Warrington Guardian of 25th June 1853 reported that of the weeks 323 court charges, 107 cases were cases involving drink.

Warrington was also described as having 200 registered lodging houses that were full; there was widespread squalor and dirt in the streets of the poorer parts of the town. Drunkenness was rife, although no worse than any other manufacturing town in the north. It was in 1860, that the town council made a new street, connecting Bridge Street with Suez Street, cutting through 'Black Boys yard' the new street was called Rylands street after Peter Rylands, Mayor of Warrington.

Among Mr. John MacMichael's many reformations and improvements was in 1864, the publication to members of his force a book of instructions. The book has been built on, expanded, and over the years a lot of the principles are the same, detailing the duties of various ranks, and summarising many felonies, misdemeanours and numerous other offences. He also drew up a pay scale including a system of increments for his Constables, which was adopted by the Watch Committee, enabling a Constable to receive from £1 8s. Od. as a third class Constable to 23s. Od

as merit class Constable. Use was made of Special Constables, being sworn in for duty as and when required. Frequently after information had been received of possible outbreaks of violence in the town.

Warrington during these times, due to the rapid expansion of industry, the commencement of work on the Manchester Ship Canal, and the lack of work in Ireland. Attracted increasingly more Irish families and labourers, which resulted in the town becoming literally 'filled' with lodging houses. Brawls were the order of the day and many of which were fought passionately and resulted in full-scale riots. One incident worthy of note showed the bravery and tenacity of Mr. MacMichael and his men in 1857. He, together with two Constables, while arresting two men for causing a disturbance were set upon and beaten to the ground by a riotous mob of nearly 300. Despite their injuries, the three Officers retained the prisoners whom they locked in a public house until the rioters had dispersed. The prisoners were later transferred to the Bridewell later to stand their trial, together with a number of the other rioters who were arrested.

During the thirty years shared by Mr. Stewart and Mr. MacMichael in the office of Chief Constable, much drunkenness and the numerous Alehouses had caused them many headaches. They were not only inundated with offences of drunkenness by the public, but also on many occasions, unfortunately, had to deal with drunkenness within the force. This was no doubt due to the long hours of duty, lack of rest days and the whole atmosphere and general attitude of the town, many Constables found themselves parading for duty in a state of intoxication. This conduct was almost invariably met with instant dismissal by the Watch Committee, one Constable who was so punished, was not only found drunk on duty, but appeared before the Watch Committee to answer his charge in a drunken condition. One report written by Mr. Stewart states how he stripped a man

of his uniform, having paraded himself before a congregation entering Church, in a drunken condition wearing his uniform. Moreover, an old Scotch cap pulled down almost over his eyes. In the words of Mr, Stewart, he appeared to be insane. Sickness and disease were also problems of the times, due mainly to the appalling filth created by the towns inadequate sewage system. On numerous occasions, the strength of the Police Force was nearly halved due to Constables on sick leave. Judging by some of the illnesses reported on the medical certificates. Bad coughs and neuralgia, there is little doubt that some of the Officers took advantage of the conditions to avail themselves of a few days rest, probably well deserved. One medical certificate simply stated:

“I certify that P.C. Pippingale says he was unable to follow his duty on January 24th, 1867.

Signed: Thomas Pennington, Surgeon.

Thomas Pennington, Police Surgeon, born at Lowton and married to Jane was near to retirement at the age of 59. They appeared to have a good life style living in a large house with three servants. On the instructions for an officer reporting sick is an order that the officer will be ‘Freshly bathed’.

Annual inspections by HM Inspectors of Police, commenced during Mr. MacMichael's term of office. The records available show that in 1865 a certificate was issued by them entitling Warrington Borough to a monetary grant from the Treasury of £358. 6s. 4d. being one quarter of the yearly expense was granted to assist in financing the Police Force. Many requests had been made earlier for such a grant, but had been refused due to the inadequate number of Police Officers employed. In 1871, a threat was made to discontinue the grant due to the excessive amount of money spent on uniforms. The specific amount so spent is not known, but there is little doubt that the Police of Warrington appeared on the streets looking much smarter than their predecessors.

In 1864, **Mr. Samuel Hunt** was appointed the first Police Superintendent of Warrington having previously served for thirteen and half years in the Derby Borough Police. He remained in this rank until 1866, when he succeeded Mr. MacMichael as Chief Constable on his premature retirement due to ill health.

On this change at the head, the force consisted of:

1 Chief Constable; 2 Sergeants; 23 Constables and a Clerk.

A short while later the first Detective Constable was officially appointed. Mr. Hunt had a Sergeant who, together with Constables in plain clothes, attended Church services on a Sunday. For their own spiritual benefit and to ensure law and order.

The 1860's were troubled times for the police in the North West, Year after year the police were used for riot duties 1861 and 1862 saw riots at Birkenhead, 1863 to 1868 also saw riots in Stalybridge, Hyde and Dukinfield. At Birkenhead cutlasses had to be available in bulk but kept out of sight. Armlets were also issued to men to wear under their coats on the left arm, a steel bar of the armlet was to ward off blows.

In 1867, firearms (Colt revolvers) were introduced to the force when Mr Hunt, on government orders, was issued with enough revolvers and ammunition to arm each member of his force, for their personal protection if the need to do so ever arose. This had probably been brought about by the foiled plot to steal arms from the Chester Garrison by an Irish nationalist organisation earlier on that year. There was a lot of unrest in the country with bombs being planted up and down the country and policemen being killed. A year later the guns were recalled.

In 1872, the Town hall, which was then, called Bank hall, was sold to the corporation for £13,000.

In August 1873, the government past legislation that allowed police constables to be armed with Sabres or small cutlass. This was only to

reinforce what the chief Constables had been doing 10 years earlier.

Cutlass, to carry. :- Under rules made by the Secretary of State, Aug, by authority of 2&3 Vict., c.93,5.3, sabres may be supplied to mounted Constables, and a small cutlass may be supplied to a Constable whose beat is so situated that in the opinion of two justices it is necessary for his protection, to be worn at night only, or at other times when rioting or serious public disturbance has taken place, or is apprehended, or on an emergency, when orders are given by the Ch. Constable, who shall report the same immediately to two Justices.

It was around 1878 that a change in uniform brought about the wearing of the Shako style of helmet for Cheshire Constabulary.

In 1879 the College of Heralds granted the 'Borough Arms' to the town.

During the 1880s the town had become saturated with Irish immigrants, labourers. Although every possible building was used as a lodging house, large groups of men were found roaming the streets at all hours of the day and night. The only places of comfort they could find were the alehouses, which they resorted to continually. This influx of men and their habits further taxed the strength of the force. Until this time the police had walked the streets with rattles, which they would use to raise the alarm. One small item, made in Birmingham, was going to change the police method of raising the alarm all over the world. Joseph Hudson a Birmingham toolmaker, used to make all types of Whistles, they were of course musical instruments and had been for centuries. Hudson whilst playing with his violin made such a ear piecing shrill that he knew at once this was the sound for the police whistle. They were adopted by the London police in 1883 and brought into use in Warrington in 1884. The familiar Metropolitan whistle is still made today and used by many police forces and prison services.

Mr Hunt lived at the elegant residence at 16 Salisbury Street Warrington. He was a keen bowler easily recognisable by his long white beard, in later life he passed on his set of bowls to his good friend William Stansfield Head Master of St James school, Latchford. On Mr Hunt's retirement in 1895, his men presented him with an ornate wooden clock. Which now has been returned to Warrington police station as a museum piece.

The establishment of his police force had risen to 54. Mr Hunt died on 12th December 1902. The next gentleman to be appointed Chief Constable in 1895 was **Mr. Luke H. Talbot**, having previously been Chief Constable of Kendal for a period of five and half years. Mr. Talbot had much experience in the running and organisation of a Police Force and was very soon instrumental in obtaining an increase in establishment bringing the total strength of the force up to 66. He formed the first Criminal Investigation Department in the Borough Police, which consisted of One Detective Inspector: Four Detective Constables and a Clerk. He also opened out-stations at Latchford and Sankey Bridges and later one at Longford. These out-stations remained in existence until 1963, only moving position slightly as new property as built and acquired. These out stations got quite a reputation; local children who had been naughty could be taken there by their parents. Where they met the local Police Sgt who would box their ears saying "If he's no better in a week bring him back for more". This modernisation of the Police Force was continued.

It is not clear when Warrington police were officially issued with swords, but they were in use during the Great coal strike of 1893.

In 1898, the Constables, showing the first signs of the necessity for mobility and speed thus purchased two motorcycles for use. It is interesting to note that mounted Police were not introduced until 1900, thus in Warrington Police the machine preceded the horse. Another development in

Mr. Talbot's programme of modernisation was the introduction of an official Police photographer. Photographs of prisoners at Warrington are referred to as far back as 1867, but it was not until 1897 that the Police Photographer was appointed. He received 3s. 0d. Per week extra in his pay on the understanding that he took all the necessary photographs and provided all his own apparatus and materials.

In the latter part of the 19th century, the Police Station or Bridewell as it was then called, stood in Irwell Street. The main door was on the first floor approached by a flight of stone steps on either side. On the ground floor between the flight of steps stood a sinister black door abutting onto the pavement, this door lead to the cells. One would not have to wait long in Buttermarket Street before the police arrived with a drunk, male or female often in a wheelbarrow and disappear with their prey through that door. Also a common sight in Manchester road, was a handcart being pushed by two policemen en route to the mortuary, which was then in the cemetery, with a corpse covered in sacking and a group of children running behind.

Social conditions for the policeman were also getting better, On 14th September 1900, officers pay was increased to 31/- a week. (£1.55p) with an allowance of 14/- a year (70p) to buy boots.

In late 1900's after years of debate by HM Inspectors of Constabulary and other Police officials, the Town Council finally decided that it was necessary to build a new courthouse and Police Station. The old Bridewell having long been inadequate for the purpose. On 11th October 1901, the new Police Station, situated in Arpley Street, and still used today, was opened.

It also contained a well-appointed Courtroom, which soon earned itself amongst the visitors of the town the title of 'The Palace of Justice'. The opening of this new building coincided very conveniently with the acceptance of Warrington as a County Borough on 1st October 1901, Warrington thus becoming a judicially self-contained unit. The strength of the force was then 73 men. Well almost, as the decoration had not yet been finished inside so as soon as the ceremony was over the building was closed again for a couple of months when it was ready for use. And the police did not completely move into the new police station until 1902, PC Fish recorded he did not move to the new Police Station until 9th July 1902. and it was shortly after this that the Irwell Street Bridewell was demolished. Before passing from the period in which Mr. Talbot was Chief Constable, it seems only right to mention his fairness and efforts to create a high morale within the force. During his term of office, he realised a personal pay award granted by the Watch Committee, in order to ensure that his Constables received an increase, which had long been overdue. Also due to his foresightedness and belief in recreation, the Warrington Police Athletic Club was founded. This organisation for many years after its formation raised, through its many activities, large sums of money, which were distributed amongst the many worthy charities of the town.

It was in 1901, that an officer was on duty in Bridge street in the early hours of morning when he was confronted by a young man in his night-clothes, The officer tried to find out who the young man was only to be told 'St Michael'. It was established that he was living with the vicar of St James church and was suffering with religious mania. The police took him back to the vicarage without charge and he later went to hospital. It was also the same year that the vicar Rev. Powell retired also having gone insane. The new vicar Rev. Pearson took over but his wife was suddenly taken ill and died, so traumatic was this to the vicar that he shot himself in

the vicarage.

The census of 1901 put the population of Warrington at 62,242.

On 16th April 1902, Warrington police received new style helmets to be worn. Also in April the police had to inspect the new tramway to Latchford and to Sankey prior to it being open to the public.

In 1903 Buffalo Bills Wild West Show came to Warrington, Fletchers ground on Wilderspool Causeway, was the location for the Red Indians and Cowboys galloping around the huge tent. On the following Sunday the Cowboys of the show attended at the Parish Church as choristers and the church was packed to the doors. It was also at this time when travel by horse was popular; these horses were sometimes not as quiet as the rider would like. It was one of an officers recognised duties to stop runaway horse's it was a difficult task stopping a crazy animal galloping at full speed through narrow streets, Sometimes as much as a quarter of a mile before being brought under control. At night the street would resound to the clip clop of the lamplighters clogs as he walked the cobbled streets lighting the gas light burners. Incandescent gas mantles did not appear until a few years later. On 5th January 1904 it was reported in the Warrington Guardian All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy, this also applies to our men in blue stated Chief Constable Luke Talbot. To a Police Athletic club meeting attended by Mayor Alderman Bolton; Supt. Monaghan; Chief Inspector Phillips; Inspector George Cox and Sgt Evans (treasurer). Thing at the police station must have been getting better, It is not known when it was ordered but on 21st January 1904, after a long wait the billiard / snooker table was opened by the watch committee, it is still there today in Arpley street Police Station, although it has been re-covered a few times. The Chief Constable made his annual report on the 30th January 1904, there had been 123 recorded crimes and 107 arrests 1903, 131 crimes and 110 arrests in 1902.

Non indictable offences were also down 463 against 547 in 1902.

The police strength was 69, comprising of Chief Constable, Supt, C.Insp, 2 Inspectors, 6 Sergeants, 1 Warrant officer, 1 Bridewell Sgt, 1 Acting Sgt, 3 Detective constables and 52 uniform men. 3 extra Constables do their duty at private works who pay and equip them.

On 6th February 1904, Constable J Lewis was promoted to merit 1st Class constable, on 3rd February at 12 noon he attempted to stop a runaway horse in Winwick street. There was to be a similar incident on the 20th February when Pc Phillips was commended for conspicuous bravery exhibited by him in stopping a runaway horse.

On 12th February 1904, in an effort to smarten up the police force, weekly drill sessions were reintroduced. And all officers would take part. This no doubt would have helped with the Government inspection that took place on 24th March 1904. Not all officers were in agreement as the discipline book shows offences of insubordination whilst on parade. Even in those past times violence towards the police was quite common, on the 15th February 1904 the Liverpool express reported that John Moore was sentenced to 6 months with hard labour for assaulting PC Gibbs and PC Muskett.

Not every case coming to court was quite so serious, on 3rd March 1904 the defendant had been stopped by the police for showing a number plate on his car AP CCXXX111, These were in the days when number plates were in their infancy, in the magistrates court he argued that Roman numerals were used in all sorts of acts of parliament and on the coins of the realm and no where does it state that Arabic numbers had to be used. He was fined £1 : 9 : 6d

Police uniform was in it infancy, one of the great remembered pieces of uniform came into use on 24th march 1905, The police Cape, made from

serge it was easy to carry warm and dry, fastened at the neck with a piece of chain secured by two lions heads. Many a naughty boy remembers getting a whack with the cape, especially so when the lions got you.

On 4th March 1907, Mr. Talbot suffered a rather tragic death, and the town lost not only a dedicated and forward thinking Chief Constable, but a friend.

In the museum archives is a silver headed ebony cane which was presented by Warrington Borough Police Athletic club to Fredrick Whittaker on his retirement 17th March 1904. There are also the funny stories Mr Frank Curzon editor and reporter of the Warrington guardian recalls a day when the Chief Constable was locked in ; A prisoner had escaped from the prison yard by climbing up the angle of the wall. He was found and placed back in the yard, the chief Constable was called and thinking that this event was very cleaver ordered the prisoner to do it again. This he did running up the wall with ease, when the Chief thought that he had gone far enough he called out “ Now come down” however the prisoner was not for coming down and was off. Before he went the prisoner had pick pocketed the constables pocket of the jail keys so for several hours the Chief was himself prisoner in his own police station yard.

On 12th October 1907, Mr. Martin Nicholls became the next Chief Constable, after serving in a similar capacity at Windsor. He remained Chief Constable for a period of 30 years, retiring in 1937, after a very distinguished Police career and the possessor of the King's Police Medal for meritorious Police service. During his term of office, Warrington saw many changes, not least of all in the administration and organisation of its Police Force.

His medals donated by his family are on display in the museum.

In 1908, what is thought to be the first recorded fatal, fail to stop, road

traffic accident in Warrington. A man was getting onto a tram outside the Coop stores in Church Street when he was knocked down by an open top touring sports car registered number K59. The driver did not stop but was later traced and fined £20.

The watch Committee continued with its progressive policies; increasing in the police establishment

82 in 1908

84 in 1910

On 11th March 1910, following a successful HMIC inspection 4 days earlier, new leave scales were announced. PC's would be allowed 9 days leave a year plus 1 rest day every two weeks. Sergeants would have 11 days leave and one rest day whilst Inspectors would be given 14 days leave as well as the 1 rest day. One way of also receiving extra money was to be a good policeman, PC Fish was awarded his 1st class merit badge in September 1910 which gave him a extra 1/- a week (5p). 5th December 1910 25 officers went to Shotton and returned on 23rd December 1910

86 in 1911

89 in 1915

92 in 1914,

in 1920, the force had reached the 100 mark. During the latter part of this era (1907~1957) the force saw further developments in its Mobility, Communications, setting up of new departments. The availability of lectures and courses of instruction for its members at Manchester, Liverpool, Preston and Wakefield made for a new look professional force.

This was after recovering from the adverse effects of the First World War, in which the force lost five men on active service. At one time only 44 regular Police Constables were available to police the town.

On 19th February 1921 a war Memorial, designed by Capt. Barnish and build by T. Williams and Son was unveiled at the front door of the

police station by the Mayor Robert Henshall

Officers of the day learnt elegant figures of speech with the amount of short reports that they had to write informing the Chief Constable of everything that had happened during their tour of duty. PC Yates dates one such report 25th July 1922.

Sir,

*I respectfully beg to submit the following report for your information
Viz.*

At 2-50am on the above date I was on duty in Bold St when I saw an electric light switched on, in a room on the ground floor of the Gentleman's club. There were light coloured blinds drawn at the windows and through these, I saw the shadow of a man with a hard hat on, pass the window in a crouching position. I then heard a crash of glass and the light was then switched off. Ac. Serg. Clark then came along, and while we were examining the premises I heard a second crash of glass. I knocked on the door and was informed by the manageress, Eleanor Greensinger, that every thing was alright. She said there were only two gentlemen in the club, Mr Monro, a member, and a tall gentleman , his friend, but she did not know his name. She said that the crash of glass was caused by Mr Monro, knocking a tumbler off the ledge. While we were entering particulars in our books two gentlemen came out of the club, "Mr Monro and Dr Harold Joseph", they came across the road to us, and enquired what was the matter. I told them what I had heard and seen, and that we were ascertaining if everything was alright. Dr Joseph then remarked" What as it got to do with you, if you do hear a smash of glass, so-long as it is indoors. I told him that we were only doing our duty by seeing that the premises were safe, after what we had heard and seen at nearly 3 o clock in morning. Both gentlemen then burst

out laughing, and said it was quite alright, Dr Joseph added that he threw a glass jug at Mr Munro, and shouted catch, but the gentleman missed it and it went through a glass panel in the door. To the Chief Constable,
I am your obedient servant, Leonard Yates PC 50

In 1930, the first proper police motor vehicle was purchased for the force, this being a motor cycle combination for use on patrol and traffic duties and the conveyance of prisoners to the gaol at Liverpool. It is not known how long the motorcycles of 1898 remained in service. In the same year a contract was drawn up for the first automatic traffic lights to be erected in the town, stressing the increase on the roads of mechanical traffic. Due to this increase and the fact that Warrington is situated on a cross roads in the industrial north, heavier demands were made on the Police Force and a greater need for further mechanisation was made. In 1935, a motor car was purchased for the exclusive use of the force and the number of pedal cycles available had increased to 15. The cycles were used for many years, for patrolling the out-lying districts of the town and were complimentary to the officers working the existing outstations, then known as Latchford, Orford and Bewsey. By this time communication was essential and all the outstations had been linked to the Central Police Office by means of telephone.

Despite war of 1914-1918, Mr. Nicholls was responsible in 1921 for founding a scheme for providing articles of clothing for poor and needy children, of whom there were many. This scheme, known as the Police Aided Clothing Scheme. No doubt, helped immensely in cementing the good relationship between the public and Police that had developed through the years.

In 1924, Mr. Nicholls also raised funds that enabled the police to

purchase their very fine athletic ground in Loushers Lane.

This ground was one of the finest in the land amongst Police forces of comparable size. Sold in 1970 to Warrington New town development who sold it on to builders for housing where Minerva Close now stands.

On Mr. Nicholl's retirement in 1937, the then Superintendent of Police, Mr. Francis Summers, was appointed Chief Constable. One year later saw the addition at the Police Station of a photographic studio and dark room furnished with modern and highly technical equipment and apparatus for the specialised photographing of fingerprints. The outbreak of World War II brought many extra duties. Mr. Summers very soon found himself in the unenvied position of losing a large number of his authorised strength, to the Armed Services, which had risen in 1939 to 115 men,

In spite of this severe loss of manpower, the Police of Warrington still managed to carry out their duties efficiently. Being ably assisted by the First Police Reserve, the Police 'War Reserve, the Special Constabulary, and the 'Women's Auxiliary Police Corps. Throughout this trying period the Police Authority forged ahead with the task of modernising the force. It now becoming obvious that the future police Force of this town, as indeed that of others, would have to be streamlined in order to combat the growing tendency towards crime of a more serious nature apparent throughout the country. To improve communications and ensure the swift circulation of information to patrolling Constables in 1940 a network of 26 'Ericsson' street telephone pillars was set up in the town This was closely followed by two-way radio.

During the 1939-45 war the force lost six men on active service and several others did not return to their former employment when the war ended. Recruiting at this time was difficult due to the greater remunerative offers made by the large industrial firms in Warrington and the North, and the fact that no accommodation could be offered to married men and their families. This was despite fervent requests by the Chief Constable for the erection of Police owned houses. Warrington Borough Police Force was

now faced with its greatest crisis in peacetime, there being 41 vacancies in the authorised strength that was then 117.

In 1946, the Home Office approved an increase in establishment consisting of 1 Inspector; 1 Sergeant; and 2 Constables for the purpose of forming a special Road Traffic Department. Two new cars were purchased, bringing the full complement of vehicles to three motor cars and a motor cycle. In the same year, four Policewomen were appointed, these posts being quickly filled by women who had served in the Women's Auxiliary Police Corps. In February, 1948, a further 17 were added to the strength making an authorised establishment of 130 men and 4 women. In the war years many office jobs were performed by members of the Women's Auxiliary Police Corps. When they were disbanded in 1946 of the seven some became regular Policewomen whilst others were engaged in a civilian capacity as telephonists, clerks and shorthand typists.

In 1949 there were two shorthand typists, 1 clerk and 5 telephonists in addition to domestic staff as cleaners and matrons. Advertising, modernisation and the long awaited start in the erection of Police houses in Marsden Avenue Latchford on 14th March 1949 attracted a small number of men to the force.

In 1950 Mr. Alexander Jeffrey took command as Chief Constable, having joined the force as a Constable in 1920. The shortage of men was still acute. In order to combat this Mr. Jeffrey reluctantly decided to lower the physical and educational standards required for entry. The average height of the force had always been retained at 6 feet or over, and the physique and bearing of the men had throughout the history of the force been the pride of its members and of the town. A new post of Chief Inspector was added to the force in March 1950, to provide a deputy to the Superintendent and an officer in charge of the Patrol Department. Training had become a most important need in the Police Service. The police force now had two cars RED 20 and TED 999.

In 1951, a Sergeant Training Officer was appointed in the force alter he, himself, had received suitable training at one of the Police District

Training Centres, which by this time had become an essential part of the Police Service, particularly in relation to the training of probationers.

Seven more men and one Policewoman Sergeant were added to the authorised strength and by 1952 the establishment had been increased to 157 men and 5 women. The shortage of staff had decreased to 12. The Traffic Department had expanded and now had 5 motor cars, 1 motor van and a motor cycle, equipped with wireless sets and in direct communication with the Central Police Office. CALLSIGN M2CX , A twenty-four hour patrol was now kept by the traffic patrol drivers, who found themselves attending more accidents and making more traffic enquiries than ever before. Great strides forward were made in the following years, in the modernisation and organisation of the force.

A Crime Prevention Campaign was launched in 1955, and in the same year a Crime Museum was started at the Police Station. On 1st April 1954, the Borough was extended to 4,520 acres with a population of 80,292, which was one Constable to 565 persons and 32 acres.

The regional Criminal Records Office at Hutton, Preston, came into operation on 1st April, 1956, resulting in numerous instances of assistance and arrests in Warrington of persons wanted in many parts of the country. In the same year a Safe Cycling Scheme was started, whereby members of local youth organisations and school children are educated in road safety by the Police and this continued until the end of Warrington Borough Police. The provision of houses for members of the Force had progressed though out the years and by the end of 1957, 68 Police Officers were comfortably accommodated in Police owned houses.

The following year brought two further changes towards more mobility and better communications. An extra motorcycle was provided to permit better patrolling of the outskirts of the Borough. The telephone system for Warrington was changed to automatic dialling and the '999' service was installed at the Police Station.

On the night of 16th July 1958, Army officer at Peninsula Barracks were holding a mess party, During the evening a war time prize,

Napoleonic cannon, was loaded with a thunder flash and a Croquet ball and fired. The cannon, discharged the ball 1,400 feet into the bedroom of a dwelling in Withers Avenue.

In August 1958, five Constables from the Force were seconded for a period of three months to the British Police Unit in Cyprus.

By the end of 1958 recruiting had improved and only one vacancy existed. This was the first time for many years that the force was almost up to its authorised establishment. The Policewomen's Branch was increased in that year by three to an establishment of 1 Sergeant and 7 Constables. Approval was also given to the annual exchange of the four patrol cars thus giving a better fleet and better service to the public.

The conditions of service of members of the force were gradually being improved the working week was reduced from 48 to 44 hours as from 5th September, 1958, and leave on or in lieu of Bank Holidays was also granted. An application for additional 2 Sergeants and 15 Constables to permit these changes to be implemented was submitted. An increase of 1 sergeant and 7 Constables was granted bringing the total establishment of men and women to 155. Variations were granted in that the civilian staff and the 44 hours working week was fully introduced on 1st May 1960.

In the New Year 5 Honours List of 1960, the Chief Constable, Mr. A. Jeffrey, was awarded the Queen's Police medal and a year later two Constables were commended by Her Majesty the Queen for bravery when attacked by three criminals armed with metal bars.

Team policing was introduced in June 1961, and continued in various forms from that time. It was operated at the discretion of the supervising Inspector. One duty which had required a considerable expenditure of Police time and manpower was that of attending to children crossing busy thoroughfares whilst travelling to and from school. On 28th August 1961, ten civilian school-crossing wardens took over ten of these crossings under an arrangement with the British Legion Attendants Company Limited. The scheme was a success and had some 19 wardens employed leaving five for Police supervision.

With the increase of crime and the need for mobility, efforts were

made to obtain separate transport for the Detective Department and in May 1961, a motor vehicle was obtained for use by that branch of the Police Service.

For many years the need for a civilian Road Safety Officer was mentioned in the Chief Constable 5 annual report and on several occasions the attention of the Local Authority was drawn to this need. Eventually in 1962 a Constable was attached to the Traffic Department. He was to undertake other duties and also help with Road Safety matters. Communications took another step forward in 1962 when a teleprinter link was installed between the Police Headquarters and the Lancashire County Police Headquarters.

After forty-three years of Police Service, all of which were in the Warrington County Borough Force, Mr. A. Jeffrey retired on 31st May 1965. His successor was Lieutenant Colonel Ronald E. Rowbottom, MBE, who became Chief Constable on the 1st June 1965. Colonel Rowbottom had previously served in the Southport Borough Police, and as Superintendent and Deputy Chief Constable in the York City Police. Additionally he held appointments in HM Forces and with the Colonial Police in Cyprus.

Reference has previously been made to the outstations that have been with us for many years. The size of the borough was such and with increased mobility and wireless communications, it was decided in 1963 to close the three outstations and all Officers to operate from the one Police Headquarters.

In 1963 a car was purchased for use by Supervising Officers who had formerly done their visiting on foot and an extra motor cycle was also provided. Modern science had produced the Radar speed meter and this was first used in 1963. At first the Press and the motorists accused the Police of unfair tactics and of spying on the motorists, so much so that 'Radar' signs were erected to inform motorists of the use of this new equipment. The Radar meter has been an excellent asset. Speed is considered to be a prime factor in accidents. The use of the radar meter was having the desired effect and so helping in the struggle against the mounting toll of road accidents.

How strange it would all seem to Chief Constable MacMichael, he had witnessed the start of electric tramcars and motor vehicles and who, in 1904, described the driver of a motor car travelling at a speed estimated at 30 miles per hour as "Driving like a meteor gone mad.'

One of Colonel Rowbottom's first tasks was a reappraisal of the manpower situation and need to provide adequate Police service for the town, combined with efficiency, mobility and current trends of crime, incidents and traffic. Resulting from this review an application was submitted for an appreciable increase in the authorised establishment. Approval was given for an increase of 18 on the 1st April 1964 and a further 7 on 1st July 1964 bringing the Force up to strength of 178. The increase of 18 was 1 Inspector; 2 Sergeants; and 15 Constables to provide efficient patrols and beat coverage 1 Detective Constable to act as Crime Prevention and Juvenile Liaison Officer, and 1 Detective Constable for attachment to the Regional Crime Squad. The 7 further Constables were to compensate for the reduction of the working week from 44 to 42 hours, which took effect on 1st July 1964. Four additional personnel were also granted for the civilian staff, thus permitting the release of Police Officers for other duties.

1964 saw the first steps in this locality towards Area Crime Squads when a South West Lancashire Area Crime Squad was formed and a unit was based at our Police Headquarters. One member of the Force was attached to this unit. The Area Crime Squads were replaced on 1st October 1965 by a National Scheme with Regional Co-ordinators. The Headquarters of No.1 Region was established at Manchester with a Branch Office at Warrington. One Detective Sergeant and 1 Detective Constable are attached to the Regional Squad and 1 Shorthand/Typist to the office staff. The formation of these Crime Squads is a method of combating crime in the light of current trends where the criminal recognises no boundaries and has the means to get quickly to any part of the country. The Crime Squad is a highly equipped mobile unit that can operate anywhere. Three Officers were commended by Her Majesty the Queen in March 1964, for bravery when called upon to arrest a man armed with a shotgun who was

threatening to use the weapon. On 1st April 1964 the first Juvenile Liaison and Crime Prevention Officer was appointed, and since then his work has increased considerably in both fields. The prime object of his work as a Juvenile Liaison Officer is to keep children out of trouble and to prevent them from falling into moral danger and/or criminal habits. His efforts as Crime Prevention Officer are to make people more and more crime prevention conscious, and Insurance Companies were pressing their clients to make their premises secure by way of automatic alarms etc. This appointment was upgraded in May 1965, to Detective Sergeant.(Norman Shelley)

Late in 1964 the first Pack radios were received for use by Patrol Officers; thus giving a direct line of communication to the Police Station. As from 1st April 1965, the authorised strength of the Force was increased by 6 Cadets - the employment of youths between the ages of 16 and 19 years with the ultimate Object of becoming Police Constables. This is a means of trying to attract into the Police Service, youths of good educational standards who may otherwise start in some other profession and be lost to the Police. Now for the first time in its history, the citizens of Warrington may have their problems dealt with by a Police Cadet, although most of their time is spent on some form of training to fit them for their future career.

The Force was very proud when it was announced on 19th October 1965 that Constable Thomas Henry Lucas had been awarded the British Empire Medal for Gallantry for the rescue of a man from the River Mersey on 18th March 1965.

PC Lucas recalls,

“In 1984 a man was walking along the bank of the river Mersey, and approaching Howley suspension bridge, he observed a group of children swinging on a rope attached to the underside of the bridge, out over the river.

He heard a splash – shouts for help and saw the remains of a broken rope he also saw air bubbles arising to the surface nearby. He raised the alarm and I attended the scene, and dove into the Mersey at the

place indicated by the informant. Each time I dove down I was dragged with my hands scooping the bottom some 30 – 40 feet, after three or four attempts with nothing found, help arrived and I was fished out exhausted. It subsequently transpired that the children had faked the incident. to the informant.

I went home had a bath I had to change my clothes and I returned to duty. A few days later I was taken seriously ill to Warrington hospital where I remained for four months with suspected Meningitis.

12-18 month later, At 3.10am 18th March 1965, I was on car patrol in Padgate lane, when a radio call was received of a 'man in the Mersey' I went immediately to Warrington bridge in time to see a mans head floating down stream. I entered the Water from Marshall gardens and swam to the man and supported him. A life belt was dropped from the railway bridge with a rope attached, we were swept by a strong current under the bridge. PC Lodge lowered himself by another rope to join us in the water. We tried to swim to the bank but could not make any headway. We hung onto the rope. Some lorry drivers directed by PC Lamerick assisted and dragged us from the water. The rescued man was an Ex military man who was trying to commit suicide. After the incident I was allowed to go home to have a bath and change my clothes before reporting back for duty. This time I went for a check up at the hospital, At that time the Mersey tasted as bad as it smelt”

Attached to the Police Force since 1920 has been a voluntary organisation - The Grappling Corps whose services in recovering bodies and objects from the numerous Waterways in Warrington have been appreciated time and time again. In 1965, because active membership had dwindled and ill health caused resignations, the duties and equipment, which includes a very fine powered military assault type boat, were taken over by the regular Force.

Late 1965 and early 1966 brought with them sweeping changes. Tours of duty were changed to provide seven leave days every four weeks,

including a long week-end every four weeks - a different picture to 1847 when it was a twelve hours tour of duty and no leave days. More vehicle's were provided and more team policing. Dictating machines provided for all departments and typists to prepare the reports.

The biggest change was in January 1966, when 17 Pack Radios were in daily use and the number of Ericsson Street Telephone Pillars were reduced by 50%. In April, 1967, a further wireless scheme of pocket radios was introduced, and Officers on patrol duties now have a personal radio set in addition to direct telephone lines to the Police Station. The Beat system was amended to make the best use of these facilities.

Although the Police Station was erected in 1901 it has seen many changes and few years have gone by without structural alteration or improvement with the result that we have a Police Headquarters of which we are proud and which is comparable with many a modern structure. One major improvement was in 1965 when the sum of £1,000 was expended in the conversion of three cell's into a very modern well equipped photographic and fingerprint room and workshop.

Mr. Thomas A. Lloyd, had been Superintendent and Deputy Chief Constable for more than 16 years, retired in December 1966, after 40 years' Police service with the Warrington Police Force. In the New Year's Honours list for 1967, he was awarded the MBE in recognition of his service. This is the first time such an award has been made to a member of this force.

The early months of 1967 brought further steps to improve the efficiency of the Force Variations in the form of beat working were introduced including neighbourhood beats for the residential areas. In April 1967, an additional car was purchased for utility purposes, i.e. visits to scenes of crime: accident enquiries; and use by the Juvenile Liaison Officer the Bedford van was replaced by a new Incident/Personnel Carrier vehicle.

A report was also prepared for the introduction of a scheme to employ Traffic wardens for minor traffic matters: control of traffic movement, and enforcement of parking regulations. This was approved by the Police Authority and Home Office to commence on 1st April 1968, but

was later deferred on account of the economic position of the country.

The last 130 years has seen the birth and growth of the Warrington County Borough Police Force. With the town changing from one of narrow filthy begrimed cobbled streets, dimly lit and overcrowded with drunken, ragged and often hungry people, to one of hustle and bustle of healthy, well-fed and contented people, provided with every amenity. The Police Force has also changed. No longer does one man patrol half the town with the only means of communication being the loudness of his voice, the speed of his legs, or the sound of a cane struck on the footpath. No longer the endless hours of duty with little rest at their conclusion, and rest days only granted for special occasions. Now we had a streamlined and highly skilled unit, equipped with almost every possible aid, working together as a team. Policemen are no longer required to carry out the various tasks of station cleaning, canteen duty, cleaning vehicles, repairing cycles, mortuary attendant, feedings prisoners, and care of dogs etc. All these duties were being performed by civilians.

In 1966 the Right Honourable Mr. Roy Jenkins, Home Secretary, announced his plans for amalgamation of many of the Police Forces in the country. This procedure to be completed by 1969.

On 1st April 1969 at 6am, Warrington's County Borough Police Force had come to an end. The people of Warrington were, no doubt, somewhat sorry to see the end of the Police Force of which they had come to respect so highly and which they have always been proud to call their own. Warrington had been swallowed up into the larger Lancashire Constabulary. This was only to be short lived as another boundary exchange saw Warrington given to Cheshire and the Police became part of Cheshire Constabulary.