

Policeman's lot: the nature and dynamics of the  
Monmouthshire constabulary 1857-1914

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## Summary

The development of full-time paid police forces throughout England and Wales originated in the nineteenth century. The formation of the Metropolitan force in 1829 had ushered in a new era in policing, but not without many voices being raised in protest. The idea of the new police and the new concept of 'preventive' policing was not universally welcomed. It was not that there was any great sentimentality about the old police, rather that the idea of the new police was seen by many as a strengthening of state power and a threat to personal liberty. It smacked of European despotism.

There is a substantial body of work on the history of the Metropolitan Police and the debates leading up to its formation. The historiography of local forces, on the other hand, occupies considerably less shelf space. This thesis takes its place in the now growing production of local studies which aim to redress the balance by surveying the nature and development of change in the provinces. Early histories of police reform, written from a Whig perspective, and now a subject of controversy, tend to depict the change from old to new as an unproblematical linear continuum; nuances of rate and variety of change are glossed over. In relation to Monmouthshire, this study has attempted to bring those nuances into sharper relief.

Antecedents to the Monmouthshire Constabulary are traced in the first chapter. Subsequent chapters then explore and assess the development of the new force thematically. Through the themes of recruitment, organisation, morbidity and mortality, and discipline and default, the history of the Monmouthshire force is weighed against orthodox accounts. The latter themes more thoroughly survey the policeman's 'lot' than the former, and in this respect they help fill an historical gap, for labour relations within forces and policemen's health have not been widely explored. Overall, the thesis seeks to dispel the idea that provincial change was either radical or straightforward, and it challenges the notion that the Metropolitan situation was irrelevant to that of the provinces.



## Acknowledgements

First, a great debt and many thanks are owed to my husband, Dr David Gregory, Consultant Radiologist, who swapped his lead apron for a linen one and transformed himself into a domestic god, to indulge his wife's passion for policemen long dead. This work could not have been completed without his new-found domesticity and unflagging support. To my supervisor, Dr Bill Jones, a huge debt of gratitude must also be paid. There is intricate psychology in the supervisor's craft, of which Dr Jones is a very able practitioner, but his supreme achievement lay in his ability to supervise what many consider an unsupervisable woman. Dr Ryland Wallace, my mentor and friend, frequently found time to dispense a few pearls of wisdom over the garden gate, for which, if the new keeper of the kitchen was favourably disposed, he received a cup of tea.

Mike Musto, caretaker of the Abertillery and Llanhilleth police stations, must be singled out for special thanks. With the sanction of the Gwent Police, Mike searched out and entrusted to my care many archival documents. It is down to his keen intelligence that so many of them were committed to a life behind bars rather than to the shredder. During their five year parole in my study they told a host of tales, but they are back in police custody now and must languish again in their cell until further interest in the history of the force allows them a second outing. To Mike and the Gwent Police, and to ex-Superintendent Harry Moore, ex-Chief Constables, John Over and the late William Farley, who in various ways furthered my cause, I am deeply indebted.

On the Cardiff beat lies the First Friday Club, a lively forum for archivists and postgraduates alike. John, Julie, Marian, Michael, Sara (now in New Zealand) and Veronica have been its stalwarts. Equipped with a vast array of knowledge and a preoccupation with history, they have been inspirational. Others, whose help and cooperation have been enormous, are too numerous to name individually, but include staff at the Public Record Office; the British Library; the National Library of Wales; the Glamorgan Record Office; Merthyr Tydfil library; Newport Library; and the Prince Charles Hospital Library. To the gallant staff at the Gwent Record Office who flagged under the weight of some of the largest tomes in their collection – the police recruitment registers – in order for this history to be written; to the librarians at the Police Staff College, Bramshill; and to Janet and her staff at Tredegar library, I extend particularly hearty thanks. And finally, to my children, who persisted in throwing spanners into the works by producing five grandchildren in as many years, I hope the completion of this research will not only reinforce their understanding that Mother's made of sterner stuff, but will also encourage the belief that age is no barrier to learning.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Declaration and Statement .....	ii
Summary .....	iii
Acknowledgements .....	iv
Contents .....	v
List of Abbreviations .....	vi
Introduction .....	1–18
Chapter 1: Agents of Change .....	19 - 57
Chapter 2: Fitting the Bill .....	58 – 101
Chapter 3: Organisation and Practice .....	102 – 156
Chapter 4: Morbidity and Mortality .....	157 – 215
Chapter 5: Discipline and Default .....	216 – 261
Conclusion .....	262 – 270
Bibliography .....	271 –284

## List of Abbreviations

GPA .....	Gwent Police Archive
GRO .....	Gwent Record Office
HMIC .....	Her/His Majesty's Inspectors of Constabulary
HO .....	Home Office
PP .....	Parliamentary Papers
PRO .....	Public Record Office (Kew)

Undated photograph of Edmund Herbert, Chief Constable of Monmouthshire 1857 –  
1893.



Source: GRO: Misc. MSS 1931.

# Introduction

While historians have long sought to provide a coherent and chronological account of the introduction and development of the police in the nineteenth century, much still remains to be done on the pace and pattern of change in the provinces. The function of this work, therefore, is to trace the emergence and development of the Monmouthshire Constabulary from 1857 to 1914, and thereby contribute to the historiography of provincial forces. 1857 was the Monmouthshire Constabulary's inaugural year. The County and Borough Police Act of the preceding year had imposed upon the county magistracy the task of deploying a full-time, paid, police force. It was the first act to make county forces compulsory and it marked a new beginning for policing in the shire. Legislation of the 1830s had enabled the establishment of county forces, but the somewhat prudent Monmouthshire magistrates (or perhaps the most influential amongst them) had not been responsive to the idea and had opted for alternative schemes. The outbreak of World War One, with its attendant disruption to the country at large, offered a natural limit to the scope of this work. 1914, therefore, seemed the appropriate place to conclude the thesis.

A rich selection of sources have been drawn upon to provide a portrait of the county constabulary and its workforce. Constabulary and Quarter Sessions records, lodged at the Gwent Record Office, and contemporary police documents, now confined to a cell at Llanhilleth Police Station, have provided an insight into both the setting up and the workings thereafter of the new constabulary. Both sets of records are unusually good ones. The Gwent Police records provided excellent material for commentary not only on the development of the force, but also on the working lives of individual policemen. Various station diaries, the force discipline book, and quarterly reports of

the chief constables proved particularly valuable in this respect. Additionally, there was a great deal to be gained from the police admission registers held at the County Archives – not least an unexpected familiarity with the recruits – for not only do these registers supply accounts of the constables' backgrounds, past occupations, last addresses, previous public service, and career paths in the force, but physical attributes are recorded in extraordinary detail too. Each recruit's height and chest size are laid down, the colour of his hair, his eyes and his complexion, and his distinguishing marks (if any). Also recorded is his marital status, and the number of his children. So detailed is this information that the historian has an immediate sense of engagement with real men, rather than just names on a page.<sup>1</sup>

There was much to be discovered from Quarter Sessions' records too, which proved vital in elucidating county and police administration as well as the perceptions of the local elite. Changing ideas and administration after 1888 were gleaned from the minutes of County Council meetings and, more specifically, the minutes of the Standing Joint Committee, which replaced Quarter Sessions as the local police authority following the Local Government Act of 1888. The *Constabulary Daily States*, which were daily work attendance registers, and the annual reports of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Constabulary (HMIC), helped to round out the picture.

In the chapters which follow, considerable attention is paid not only to an analysis of the creation and evolution of the Monmouthshire Constabulary as an institution, but also to the processes that turned ordinary working-class men into policemen. The well-being and management of the labour force and the way this influenced the development of the force is central to the theme. Only fit and vigorous men were

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<sup>1</sup> The Gwent Record Office (GRO) holds four Monmouthshire Constabulary Admission Registers, which are filed under D 3297. 1-4.

required as police recruits, but this was patently not the case with many Monmouthshire policemen. In terms of their well-being little evidence survives as to the causes of dismissal on ill-health grounds or of deaths in service. Such information was only occasionally documented in the constabulary records. Consequently, in an attempt to offer explanations for morbidity and mortality rates, death certificates were obtained for every man recruited between 1857 and 1914 who died in service and, where possible, of those who died within a year of being dismissed on ill-health grounds. It is believed that the use of death certificates is the first study of its kind in police historiography. Indeed, in-depth studies of nineteenth century policemen's health are somewhat rare, though Shpayer-Makov's work on the Metropolitan Police contains much valuable information and vividly illustrates the complexity of the subject.<sup>2</sup>

While this is not a comparative history *per se*, Shpayer-Makov's work has been used extensively, particularly in Chapters Four and Five, to illuminate common experiences in the development of the Metropolitan and Monmouthshire forces. In some respects the two models are very different, but they are not entirely remote from each other either. A useful image is that of unidentical twins which 'have inherited in differing combinations the genes of their parents – they are easily recognisable as close relatives and yet boast very distinctive features'.<sup>3</sup> The metaphor, constructed by Clive Emsley and David Englander to describe the American and British democracies, seems equally appropriate for the Metropolitan and Monmouthshire forces. In fact, it might serve as a descriptive parallel for most police forces. Unfolding police historiography seems to reinforce the point, though dissimilarities with the Metropolitan Police are

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2 H. Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman: A social history of a labour force in Metropolitan London, 1829-1914* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2002), [hereinafter, Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman*].

3 C. Emsley and D. Englander, 'Introduction' in C. Emsley (ed.), *Essays in Comparative History: Economy, Politics and Society in Britain and America 1850-1920* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1991), p. ix.

more frequently brought to our attention. Wall, for example, emphasises the 'different and separate ... traditions of policing the boroughs, counties and Metropolitan police',<sup>4</sup> while Steedman suggests that the 'Metropolitan situation and the Metropolitan policeman were, for the main part, quite irrelevant to the policing of provincial communities'.<sup>5</sup> This work steadfastly challenges that view.

The thesis has drawn on a considerable number of secondary sources. The published works of Emsley, Steedman, Taylor, Philips, Storch, Reiner and Shpayer-Makov, among many others, were constantly relied on. Additionally, the doctoral researches of Scollan and Clements, which afforded insight into the Essex and Denbighshire forces respectively, proved particularly enlightening.<sup>6</sup> With the exception of works by David Jones and Jane Morgan, books on crime and policing in Wales were found to be in short supply. However, the two mentioned are particularly good and have proved invaluable.<sup>7</sup> The volumes of Radzinowicz and Critchley have become classics and no history of policing can be written without reference to them. Critchley's *A History of Police in England and Wales* and volumes III and IV of Radzinowicz's *A History of English Criminal Law* were never more than an arm's reach away. Shpayer-Makov's work on the Metropolitan Police provided an ideal base for a comparison of the influences that shaped the workforce. Both the Metropolitan and Monmouthshire forces were, to use Marc Bloch's words, 'exposed throughout their development to the action of the same broad causes',<sup>8</sup> a theme that is explored in the

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4 D. Wall, *The Chief Constables of England and Wales* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 1998), [hereinafter, Wall, *Chief Constables*], p. 42.

5 C. Steedman, *Policing the Victorian Community: the formation of the English provincial police, 1856-1880* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984), [hereinafter, Steedman, *Policing the Victorian Community*], p. 9.

6 Though the Essex and Denbighshire forces had distinctive lives of their own, a unity of practice and experience nonetheless pervaded the genesis and development of both, which supports and strengthens the argument of this research.

7 D. J. V. Jones, *Crime in Nineteenth Century Wales* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1992); J. Morgan, *Conflict and Order* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987).

8 M. Bloch, 'A contribution towards a comparative history of European societies' in J. E. Andersen (trans.), *Land and Work in Medieval Europe: Selected Papers by Marc Bloch* (New York: 1969), p. 46.



latter two chapters of this work.

This research also owes a debt to the many local authors who have written about Monmouthshire. It has drawn on their expertise and scholarship, which dates back to the eighteenth century. Two outstanding works are Elliott's *The Industrial development of the Ebbw Valleys 1780-1914* and Roderick's *A Gwent Anthology*, vastly different in intent and scope, yet equally important to historians. Other works, written in a more personal style, such as Gray-Jones's *History of Ebbw Vale*, O. Jones's *The Early Days of Sirhowy and Tredegar*, and Kissack's *Victorian Monmouth*, take the historian on wonderful journeys of local discovery, as does Clarke's *History of Monmouthshire* and Coxe's *Historical Tour through Monmouthshire*. Though some authors of the earlier centuries did not apply the same rules to the writing of history as academic historians do nowadays, it does not invalidate them from being of paramount importance. Indeed a great deal of profit can be extracted from their work, and has been in the pages that follow.

Overall, the thesis reinforces the trend in post-revisionist historiography that sees change and continuity in policing as ambiguous; it widens that perspective by examining issues and experiences unique to the county of Monmouth. Also, as little attention has been paid in the past to industrial relations within individual forces, the work aims to redress the balance by examining the Monmouthshire situation in some detail.<sup>9</sup> In order to do that and to rescue policemen from what E. P. Thompson has famously described as the 'enormous condescension of posterity' – the idea that the lives of people from the past simply prepared the way for those of the future<sup>10</sup> – we

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9 Shpayer-Makov's, *The Making of a Policeman*, is a unique case-study of the labour-force and labour-management relations within the Metropolitan Police.

10 E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (London: Penguin, 1991), p. 13.

must step into the shoes of the men of the Monmouthshire Constabulary, and journey with them over the fifty-seven year period covered by this study.

Any discussion about the reform of the provincial police in Wales, as in England, needs to be placed in the context of the derailing of a centuries-old way of life by the technological and demographic changes wrought by industrialisation. Spreading urbanisation and the perceived increase in crime and disorder consequent to it led to a decline of confidence in the old system of security, not least in the volatile industrial heartlands of South Wales, in which Monmouthshire stood. Other influences, which called for a re-evaluation of the old police, were also at work. By the second quarter of the nineteenth century, for example, the concepts of 'improvement' and 'respectability' were becoming part of the country's general ethos. The old system of policing creaked under the strain of these changing times. A new arena for ideas was thus created; an arena where architects of reform could channel their energy into the task of constructing alternative systems for the creation and maintenance of order.

Most of the issues nineteenth century police reformers grappled with were directed by past debates; they were not working with entirely new ideas. Jeremy Bentham's principle of *utility*, conceptualised in the eighteenth-century, heavily underscored nineteenth-century reform. Utilitarianism promoted the principle of the greatest happiness of the greatest number, which Bentham believed was 'the only proper end of government'.<sup>11</sup> Utilitarians sought sweeping changes in both local and national administration, and thus the overhaul of the system of law and order. It was Bentham's belief that a 'good system was a necessary condition for good government',<sup>12</sup> and that

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<sup>11</sup> T. P. Schofield, "Economy as Applied to Office" and the Development of Bentham's Democratic Thought' in G. J. Postema, *Bentham: Moral, Political and Legal Philosophy*, Vol. 1 (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2002), p. 408.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*, p. 410.

the legislator should 'secure the individual against crime with a rational criminal code and a strong and effective system of police and judiciary'.<sup>13</sup> The eighteenth century social commentator and utilitarian, Patrick Colquhoun, a stipendiary magistrate in London, also suggested in a published work of 1797, that increased crime was not so much due to 'the increase or general depravity of the human character as to the deficiency of the laws in not advancing progressively in the means of prevention'.<sup>14</sup> He was not alone in suggesting that crime 'arose from growing opportunities to secure property without the effort of labour'.<sup>15</sup> Prevention was also part of the Fielding brothers' reform vocabulary. Henry Fielding firmly believed it was better to prevent one man from committing a crime than prosecuting forty.<sup>16</sup> But the Fieldings, despite employing all their energies to police reform, were never able to pursue them to their ultimate limits. Sir John Fielding's vision of a centralised London police did not materialise during his lifetime,<sup>17</sup> neither did his plan to coordinate local policing nationally.<sup>18</sup>

Initially the idea of a full-time, paid police force was a contentious one for politicians, people, and the press alike. A common fear was that it was incompatible with an Englishman's rights and liberties, and it was erroneously supposed that the introduction of such a force would herald a European-style despotism. However, the prevailing distrust was not universal. In July 1793, for example, a contributor to *The Gentleman's Magazine*, calling himself 'Verus', suggested that policing in the metropolis

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13 F. Rosen, 'Liberty and Constitutional Theory' in G.J. Postema, *Bentham: Moral, Political and Legal Philosophy*, Vol. 1 (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2002), p. 402.

14 P. Colquhoun, *A Treatise on the Police of the Metropolis* (4<sup>th</sup> ed., London: 1797), pp. 439-40.

15 L. Zedner, 'Policing before and after the Police: The Historical Antecedents of Contemporary Crime Control', *British Journal of Criminology*, (2006), 46, 78-96.

16 L. Zedner, 'Policing Before and After the Police: The Historical Antecedents of Contemporary Crime Control', *British Journal of Criminology* (2002), 46, 78-96.

17 C. Emsley, *Crime and Society in England 1750-1900* (London: Longman, 1996), [hereinafter, Emsley, *Crime and Society*], p. 221.

18 D. Philips and R. D. Storch, *Policing Provincial England 1829-1856* (London: Leicester University Press, 1999), [hereinafter, Phillips and Storch, *Policing Provincial England*] p. 62.

should 'be put under some new and efficient regulation', as the Bow Street force was not sufficient to secure Londoners' 'lives and property'.<sup>19</sup> Verus's views may not have been wholly representative, but the barriers to reform did not prove insuperable either. Sir Robert Peel, in pursuing his idea for a new police in the metropolis, had the backing of the reformer Edwin Chadwick, whose arguments, grounded philosophically in utilitarianism, again promoted 'the primary importance of the preventive nature of police work'.<sup>20</sup> The establishment of the Metropolitan force in 1829 was a landmark in the history of the police. It also added impetus to the reform era in policing, which culminated in the County and Borough Police Act of 1856.

The 1856 Act, which required Quarter Sessions to 'provide police forces for the whole of their counties where they had not already done so', followed a Select Committee Report of 1852-3.<sup>21</sup> The Committee had concluded that 'attempts to revitalise the old system had largely failed', yet where the Police Act of 1839 had been implemented, it had 'exceeded expectations'.<sup>22</sup> Its recommendations thus led to a Police Act, framed by Palmerston in 1854, but this was rejected by hostile critics, as was a similar proposal the following year. Both Acts were seen by provincial magistrates and borough Watch Committees alike as unacceptable attempts to remove from local hands the administration of law and order in the provinces. However, an 1856 Bill, deftly drafted by Sir George Grey, who, according to Radzinowicz, was 'profoundly attached to the tradition of local government, [and] suspicious of rigid centralisation', was finally accepted.<sup>23</sup> Local elites remained at the centre of command, but the County and

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19 *The Gentleman's Magazine*, LXIII, II, 1793, pp. 605-5.

20 T. A. Critchley, *A History of Police in England and Wales* (London: Constable, 1978), p. 49.

21 Radzinowicz, *A History of English Criminal Law*, Vol. 4, *Grappling for Control*, (London: Stevens & Sons, 1968), [hereinafter, Radzinowicz, Vol. 4], p. 295.

22 Wall, *Chief Constables*, p. 39.

23 Radzinowicz, Vol. 4, p. 294: As Radzinowicz and Philips and Storch also point out, the debates surrounding the 1856 Police Act fill over 80 pages of Hansard: See *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Series, 140, cols. 229-46, 690-7 (Feb. 1856), 2113-90 (March 1856); 141, cols. 1564-85 (April, 1856), 1928-44 (May 1856); 142, cols. 293-309, 605-14, 797 (May 1856).

Borough Police Act of 1856 gave central government 'a coordinating role and ... a constitutional basis' for that role to be increased.<sup>24</sup>

Critical commentaries on the arrival of a new system of police vary considerably, and provide us with ample ground for reflection. Those written from a traditional or 'Whig' perspective not only convey the idea of a one-way stream of improvement, but also that reform was motivated by a fear of crime, and moral and mob disorder engendered by rapid industrialisation.<sup>25</sup> Such orthodox theories imply that in the changing times of the nineteenth century the old police proved wholly incompetent, while the 'new police fitted precisely with the requirements of society'.<sup>26</sup> Reith, Radzinowicz and Critchley, for example, approach the history of police reform in this way.<sup>27</sup> Their histories assume a consensual model of society: as the new police 'represented the most appropriate, most progressive and most effective response' to the problems of the day,<sup>28</sup> they were thus central to the emergence of consensus within society.<sup>29</sup>

Revisionist historians have redefined the points of reference in the evolution of the police. The 'essence' of their argument is the old system's 'growing unsuitability for the new class relations of a capitalist society'.<sup>30</sup> Revisionists present police development 'in terms of the bourgeoisie seeking to extend its control over the dangerous classes'.<sup>31</sup>

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24 Wall, *Chief Constables*, p.41.

25 R. Reiner, *The Politics of the Police* (London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1992), [hereinafter, Reiner, *The Politics of the Police*], p. 16.

26 Emsley, *Crime and Society*, p. 216.

27 C. Reith, *The Police Idea* (London: Oxford University Press, 1938) and *British Police and the Democratic Ideal* (London: Oxford University Press, 1943); L. Radzinowicz, Vols. 3 & 4 (1956 & 1968); T. A. Critchley, *A History of Police in England and Wales* (London: Constable, 1978).

28 Taylor, *The New Police in Nineteenth-Century England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), [hereinafter, Taylor, *The New Police*], p. 2.

29 Emsley, *The English Police*, p. 4.

30 Reiner, *The Politics of the Police*, p. 29.

31 D. Taylor, *The New Police*, p. 3. See also R. D. Storch, 'The Plague of Blue Locusts', *International Review of Social History*, 20, 1975.

They suggest conflict and disunity between the classes and see 'the police as class warriors, fighting to enforce bourgeois values'.<sup>32</sup> However, social and ideological groupings were not always clear-cut, and neither, it seems, were police attitudes.

The consensus-conflict theses at the heart of these discourses are major themes in modern historical writing, and scholars have placed themselves on both sides of the argument. In Wales the works of G. A. Williams and D. Smith fully embody the conflict thesis, while that of I. G. Jones, by contrast, favours consensus.<sup>33</sup> Other Welsh scholars have straddled both sides of the fence. As K. O. Morgan points out, David Jones, writing on nineteenth century crime and policing, 'placed himself scrupulously on both sides'.<sup>34</sup> Neil Evans also suggests that '[n]o society is built entirely around conflict'.<sup>35</sup> Morgan himself, though admitting he is 'much drawn' to the conflict thesis, concludes that neither of 'the ideological extremes have ... struck long-term roots' in Wales.<sup>36</sup> Post-revisionist accounts of police reform again find there is no 'easy and obvious balance to be struck'.<sup>37</sup> And such is the tenor of this work.

Another factor to be considered in any discourse of police reform in Monmouthshire, is the nature of the county itself. Historically, the relationship between the shire and the rest of Wales was complicated by a piece of sixteenth century legislation. As part of Henry VIII's plan to bring order and good government to Wales, the Welsh Marches became shire-ground and Monmouthshire one of the newly created shires. There were now thirteen divisions or shires in the country. Wales was given its

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32 Taylor, *The New Police*, p. 3.

33 See for example, G. A. Williams, *When Was Wales?* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1985); D. Smith, *Wales! Wales!* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1984).

34 K. O. Morgan, 'Consensus and Conflict in Modern Welsh History' in D. W. Howell, *Crime, Protest and Police in Modern British Society* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1999), p. 23.

35 N. Evans, 'Immigrants and Minorities in Wales, 1840-1990', *Llafur*, 5, 4, 1991, p. 6.

36 K. O. Morgan, 'Consensus and Conflict in Modern Welsh History' in D. W. Howell, *Crime, Protest and Police in Modern British Society* (1999).

37 Taylor, *The New Police*, p. 4. See also C. Emsley, *The English Police* (1992).

own high courts, namely the Courts of Great Sessions, and the shires, with the exception of Monmouth, were grouped into four judicial circuits for the purpose of these courts.<sup>38</sup> Monmouthshire, for convenience, was attached to the courts of Westminster. Subsequently, historians have been divided in their opinions as to whether the county was English or Welsh. With the abolition of the Courts of Great Sessions in 1830 Monmouthshire was 'increasingly assumed to be part of Wales', although the different judgments and controversies were not finally settled until Monmouthshire was officially attached to Wales by an act of Parliament in 1961. In 1974 the shire 'was reborn as the county of Gwent'.<sup>39</sup> In this work, however, Monmouthshire is firmly set in Wales.

Geographically the county had a magnetic appeal and caught the imagination of artists and writers alike. A full harvest was gathered from its landscape:

The god who made this country was an artist, who moulded his hills so that their lines run down into the valleys quite magically, and trimmed them with tufted wood so that not an acre glares, however warm the sun is. The fellow who turned out Dorking was a bank holiday tradesman in comparison.<sup>40</sup>

Written in 1897 to Ellen Terry, this description by George Bernard Shaw is just one of a succession of exuberant accounts that pay homage to the grace and beauty of the Monmouthshire countryside. Another is Wordsworth's *Lines* from Tintern Abbey, in which 'wreaths of smoke/ Sent up in silence from among the trees' suggest to the poet a vagrant dweller's fire in the woods, or that of a hermit in his cave.<sup>41</sup> And while such accounts are not altogether idealisations, they are nonetheless unrepresentative of the county as a whole; for Janus-like, Monmouthshire had (indeed, still has) two faces. There was the rural face, encompassing lush pasture lands, picturesque towns and

38 See J. G. Jones, *Wales and the Tudor State* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1989), p. 26.

39 J. Davies, *A History of Wales* (London: Penguin, 1994), [hereinafter, Davies, *A History of Wales*] p. 237.

40 G. B. Shaw, *Collected Letters, 1874-1897*, 1965, in A. Roderick, *A Gwent Anthology* (Swansea: Christopher Davies, 1988), p. 69.

41 W. Wordsworth, 'Lines: Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey, on Revisiting the Banks of the Wye during a Tour, July 13, 1798', in E. Leeson (ed.) *The New Treasury of English Verse* (London: Macmillan, 1980), p. 286.

villages, and regions of outstanding natural beauty, and an industrial face, 'the Wilds of Monmouthshire', hideously scarred by manufacture. Smoke in the industrial environment had no poetic connotations. At Pontypool in 1840 'dense inhalations, loaded with smoke and impure air ... [hung] continually about the dusky habitations'; the smoke emanating 'from an acre of burning coal upon the coke hearths'.<sup>42</sup>

Before the advent of industry, Monmouthshire was predominantly an agricultural county. What little industry there was had agricultural origins – most notably the cloth industry, which produced woollen cloths and flannels. One particular feature of this industry was the famous Monmouth cap, an item of headgear worn by Tudor soldiers and the Welshmen at Crecy, 'according to Fluellen in Shakespeare's play of *Henry V*'.<sup>43</sup> However, there *is* evidence of early iron manufacture. The Romans are known to have smelted iron in various parts of the shire, and although the process does not appear to have continued after their departure, the roots of their endeavours occasionally produced new shoots. Iron was forged by the monks of Monmouth in the twelfth century, and at Pontypool in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. By the seventeenth century the Hanburys were establishing themselves as ironmasters at Abercarn, but this was small-scale industry compared with what was to come. It was not until the end of the eighteenth century, when coal had replaced charcoal for smelting, that the iron industry began to make its indelible mark on the county scene.

A century before this history begins, the western valleys of Monmouthshire were thinly peopled; there was a scattered populace of subsistence farmers, Welsh in language and culture.<sup>44</sup> But the valleys cut through the South Wales Coalfield – a unique

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42 G. S. Kenrick, 'The Population of Pontypool and the Parish of Trevethin, 1840' in A. Roderick, *A Gwent Anthology* (Swansea: Christopher Davies, 1998), p. 61.

43 H. A. Evans, *Monmouthshire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1915), p. 57.

44 See J. Elliott, *The Industrial Development of the Ebbw Valleys, 1780-1914* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2004), [hereinafter Elliott, *The Industrial Development of the Ebbw valleys*], Chapter 1.



coalfield, by way of its range of different coals, namely gas and steam coals and anthracite.<sup>45</sup> Once the potential of this rich geological feature was realised, an enormous engine of change was set in motion. The demand for coal in the production of iron led to the establishment of ironworks on the outcrop of the coalfield and, consequently, to the growth of the coal industry. In turn, the growth of the iron and coal industries led to unbridled demographic change. 'Between 1801 and 1911 the population of Monmouthshire grew from just over 45,000 to about 396,000' (almost ninefold).<sup>46</sup> By 1857, when this history begins, the world economy and world trade were also expanding and continued to do so throughout the second half of the nineteenth century. At the close of this history in 1914, the South Wales Coalfield had become 'the single largest coalfield in Britain'.<sup>47</sup> Its history, therefore, was fundamental to the development of the county constabulary.

The advance of capitalism provided the impetus for social change. With some exceptions, universal manhood suffrage was achieved by 1884 and trade unionism began to gain strength. The closing years of the nineteenth century saw tensions mount between workers and employers, and workers attempting to control industry through strike action. 'The patterns and psychology of working-class life were demanding a new agency'. After the turn of the century, the Labour Party provided it.<sup>48</sup> These significant shifts in politics affected both police/public relationships, and relationships within the police itself. A new police committee after 1888 (the Standing Joint Committee, composed of both unelected magistrates and elected county councillors) and a new chief constable in 1894, were again crucial to the development of the force, as was the

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45 T. Boyns, 'The Coal Industry to 1945' in H. Carter (ed.), *National Atlas of Wales* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1989).

46 Elliott, *The Industrial Development of the Ebbw Valleys*, p. 165.

47 T. Boyns, 'The Coal Industry to 1945' in H. Carter (ed.) *National Atlas of Wales* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1989).

48 P. Stead, 'Establishing a Heartland – the Labour Party in Wales', K. D. Brown (ed.), *The First Labour Party, 1906-1914* (London: Croom Helm, 1985), pp. 64-88.

growth in the power of the state. As Halévy noted, 'England ... was submitting reluctantly to more government and regulation'.<sup>49</sup> The following chapters therefore are an exploration of the evolution of the Monmouthshire Constabulary, both as an institution and a labour force, in the changing environment of 1857-1914.

Chapter One sets the scene by providing an overview of policing in the shire prior to the County and Borough Police Act of 1856. Contemporary press and Quarter Sessions reports highlight how the vast and varying derelictions of the population of Wales at large, give the lie to the notion of 'gwlad y menig gwynion', the crime-free land of the white gloves, sanctified by Henry Richard. The chapter also explores the way increasingly interconnected social, economic and political factors tore apart the foundations of a centuries-old way of life and altered attitudes towards parish constables and their capabilities. In doing so it reflects on how the reputation of the old system was dismantled by the constructs of reformers, and why police reform in the shire was only partially and erratically achieved in the years between the passage of the Metropolitan Police Act of 1829 and the County and Borough Act of 1856.

Following the introduction of the Metropolitan Police, there had been demands from the provinces for rural police reform, though the enthusiasm of county benches was not universal.<sup>50</sup> Chartist disturbances in the summer of 1839, however, had acted as a spur to the government and the permissive County Police Act (2 & 3 Vic., c. 93) was hastily constructed and rushed through Parliament. What prevented the Monmouthshire magistrates from adopting the 1839 Act is explored in this chapter, along with the various schemes they employed to prop up their old system of police. But, as Philips and Storch Point out:

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49 E. Halévy, *A History of the English People in the Nineteenth Century – IV: Victorian Years, 1841-1895* (translated from the French by E. I. Watkin), (London: Ernest Benn Ltd., 1961), p. 420.

50 See Philips and Storch, *Policing Provincial England*, Chapter 7.

After a period that had seen a proliferation of many different schemes on a local level, the state finally found itself, in 1856, able to insist upon a more “uniform” police system.<sup>51</sup>

One particular facet of the 1856 Police Bill was its relatively smooth passage through Parliament and the substantially muted response to it in the provinces, compared to previous attempts to standardise county policing. In Monmouthshire the mobilisation of the nascent constabulary in the Spring of 1857 was barely acknowledged by local commentators. One of the aims of Chapter Two, therefore, is to explore that silence. It can, of course, be traced to the recruits themselves – to who they were. A central preoccupation of policy makers was the perception that men from rural backgrounds, preferably agricultural labourers, made the best policemen.<sup>52</sup> The traditional image of rural life was one of 'ordered hierarchic relationships ... in which masters and men knew their place'.<sup>53</sup> This is why, in their search for ideal recruits, many chief constables looked to the country. However, when the dynamics of establishing the Monmouthshire force are examined, the significance of the above perception as a guide to recruitment policy is thrown into question.

The impact on the emergent force of the hastily erected platform from which it was launched proved hugely challenging to the first Chief Constable, Major Edmund Herbert, but his situation was by no means unique. Initially, in terms of policy and procedure, many infant forces were prisoners of circumstance, not least because 1857 witnessed the creation of so many of them and thus intensified recruitment demands. Also, as wages in industrial Monmouthshire were relatively high at this time, the new chief, more often than not, had to take what he could get. And what he got was often a far cry from the concept of the ideal recruit – the respectable young man from the

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51 Philips and Storch, *Policing Provincial England*, p. 229.

52 See Emsley (1991); Steedman (1984); Taylor (2002).

53 Steedman, *Policing the Victorian Community*, p. 5.

working class, who was 'fit, literate and blessed with a perfect command of temper'.<sup>54</sup> Equally challenging, perhaps, was the fact that the industrialised valleys were virtually unknown to Herbert,<sup>55</sup> even though he had been born and raised at Llanarth, no more than a dozen miles from the nearest industrial town. It could be argued, therefore, that the new chief actively sought men from 'the Hills' to rectify this shortcoming. Consequently, the chapter's main aim is to scrutinize selection procedures and bring ideology and reality into sharp relief.

Following on from the difficulties of recruitment, Chapter Three examines the course of the constabulary's development in terms of infrastructure and operations. This was, without doubt, a jerry-built force. It was shaped by the speed of its birth and the parsimony of the controllers of the county purse. From the earliest stage in its evolution difficulties were encountered from a lack of resources essential to the new level of police activity. The sheer expense of providing police stations, lockups, family living accommodation, and an adequate number of men, as well as men of the right quality, was a major barrier to growth. But, like a post-war prefab, the establishment filled a requirement. Under Edmund Herbert's management first, and then Victor Bosanquet's, it was modified and strengthened, as far as budgets would allow, and by 1914 it stood on firmer foundations. The whole process of development in infrastructure was matched by that in police operations, where again the tenor of change was slow. Therefore, the aim of Chapter Three is to highlight the way the constabulary was forced to grope its way forward, and thus question again what its author sees as the fiction of radical change after 1856.

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<sup>54</sup> C. Emsley, *The English Police*, p. 191.

<sup>55</sup> *Merlin*, 28 March 1857: this point is made in the report of the new chief's appointment.

Chapter Four analyses the physical wellbeing of the workforce. The respectable young men from the working class that Sir Robert Peel envisaged as the new police were expected, above all, to be fit.<sup>56</sup> Again ideology and reality face each other across a divide. For much of the period covered by this research, welfare provision in the Monmouthshire Constabulary was underdeveloped by comparison with that of the Metropolitan Police. Shpayer-Makov has argued that if in the Metropolitan Police

the policeman's health failed, he was provided with free medical care, sick pay and sick leave; and if he became unfit for service in the execution of duty, he was entitled to receive a gratuity in the form of a lump sum.<sup>57</sup>

In essence, this was the case in the Monmouthshire force. In practice, it was seldom so initially. Many men were recruited into the Monmouthshire Constabulary in a poor state of health and quickly dismissed once this became obvious, or when they were no longer physically able to carry out their duties.

Modern police historiography lays much of the blame for morbidity and mortality in nineteenth and early-twentieth century policemen on policing itself, and beat-work is generally cited as the cause.<sup>58</sup> Chapter Four examines this hypothesis and suggests that it loses some of its force when other factors are considered. For example, an added dimension to the physical wellbeing of policemen lay beyond the sphere of the constabulary, in the social and economic organisation both of the county and of the country as a whole. The politics of cost and class are always central to the health of a population. How these impacted upon policemen's health is explored in this chapter. *Morbidity and Mortality* breaks new ground in its use of death certificates, and also because the idea of policing as a major cause of ill-health and death is largely undisputed to date.

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<sup>56</sup> See Emsley, *The English Police*, pp. 191-2.

<sup>57</sup> Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman*, p. 159.

<sup>58</sup> See, for example, Steedman (1984), Emsley (1996) and Taylor (2002).

Chapter Five aims, as does Shpayer-Makov's work on the Metropolitan Police, to 'redress the historical imbalance of the absence of any attempt to analyse the ... policeman as a worker'.<sup>59</sup> It takes as its theme the concepts of discipline and default. Through this, it explores the ways in which labour-management relations within the constabulary shaped the development of the workforce and thus the institution. Integral to this development are the in-built biases of the force elite. Class relations were never entirely clear-cut in this period, but during the latter decades of the nineteenth century they became even more blurred at the edges. The improvement in discipline and control in the latter years of this study was due in large part to the changing times. Expansion of democracy, changing class values, and industrial relations were all part of the changing environment which placed new demands upon the police and the way they were managed. As society underwent change it became necessary to realign practices within the Monmouthshire force, for the labour-management dynamic was the key to its development. In this context the differences between the first Chief Constable, Edmund Herbert, and his successor, Victor Bosanquet, are explored.

*Discipline and Default* extends the arguments, which run through the work as a whole, that a multiplicity of closely intertwined ideologies, actualities and experiences were sufficiently common to all police forces, to refute the idea that the 'Metropolitan situation and the Metropolitan policeman were, for the main part, quite irrelevant to the policing of provincial communities',<sup>60</sup> and that no 'radical alteration in the general structure of policing took place following the County and Borough Police Act of 1856'.<sup>61</sup>

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59 Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman*, p. 8.

60 Steedman, *Policing the Victorian Community*, p. 9.

61 *Ibid.*, viii.

## Chapter One

### Agents of Change: an overview of society and policing in Monmouthshire prior to the 1856 Police Act.

The main aim of *Agents of Change* is to evaluate Monmouthshire's unreformed police, and the processes that led to the formation of the county constabulary in 1857. However, as a full analysis of such a large subject cannot be set out in one chapter alone, necessity has rendered this a general overview. The first concern of the chapter is to sift through the rubble of myths that surround the old police and society in Wales, and assess how they relate, if at all, to actuality. Modern historians have begun the task already and tentative reappraisals have been made. Emsley reiterates a point made by Philips and Storch:

Many parish constables probably were as bad and as uncommitted to their tasks as the police reformers made out. But others could be and were relied upon.<sup>1</sup>

He further suggests that 'a serious analysis' of the men who fulfilled the role of parish constable during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries 'is long overdue'.<sup>2</sup> The work of Philips and Storch is a significant corrective,<sup>3</sup> as is Scollan's doctoral thesis on the Essex police, which provides an excellent basis for further local studies.<sup>4</sup> Both works have, to a degree, rehabilitated the old constables' reputation, which had all but perished under the firing squads of intellectuals seeking to 'revamp' the old system of police. Reformist ideology, it seems, had become assimilated into the general consciousness to such a degree that it was difficult to know where reality ended and

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<sup>1</sup> Emsley, *Crime and Society*, p. 173.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Philips and Storch, *Policing Provincial England*.

<sup>4</sup> M. J. Scollan, *Parish Constables versus Police Constables: Policing Early Nineteenth-Century Essex* (Milton Keynes, Open University, 2007), [hereinafter, Scollan, *Parish Constables versus Police Constables*].

myth began. Likewise, Wales and the Welsh had existed in the minds of many through images offered by highly subjective and personal accounts of public virtue; the country frequently being favourably compared with England. As we cannot gain an understanding of the early police without an understanding of the society within which they operated, that society is also scrutinized in this first chapter, as it seeks to demonstrate the Monmouthshire experience during the 'period of negotiation' in the movement for police reform.

In her journal, written during a tour of North Wales in 1772, for example, Jinny Jenks found that the country could 'be excell'd by none', and that the English had 'entertained a very wrong notion in respect to coming here ... we falsely imagine only Rustics, and everything must be cheap'.<sup>5</sup> But, as David Jones reminds us, '[t]ravellers in the eighteenth century were [also] impressed by the "untainted" nature of the Welsh peasantry and by the absence of drunkenness and disorder amongst the "lower orders" of the towns'.<sup>6</sup> In the past historians have heaped praise on eighteenth century Nonconformists, for 'dispelling the gloom of indolence and superstition which surrounded the Welsh peasantry, and making them intensely religious, law-abiding, vigorous subjects'.<sup>7</sup> Praise in which Monmouthshire, in the course of its history, has shared – even if occasionally the compliments were backhanded:

To many the hill folk appear to be only rough, uncouth, and coarse specimens of humanity ... [though] the thoughtful mind sees in these people many good qualities of head and heart'. However, 'the better classes, even in the "hills", are well educated and refined, despite certain little mannerisms'.<sup>8</sup>

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5 J. Jenks, *A Tour in North Wales* (1772), pp. 57-8: The National Library of Wales; Gathering the Jewels, ref: GTJ 28853: Accessed 22 September 1907.

6 D. J. V. Jones, *Crime in Nineteenth Century Wales* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1992), [hereinafter, Jones, *Crime in Nineteenth Century Wales*], p. 1.

7 H. T. Evans, *History of England and Wales* (Cardiff: Educational Publishing Co., 1910), p. 278.

8 M. Trevelyan, *Glimpses of Welsh Life and Character* (London: John Hogg, 1893), pp. 133-4.



Touring Monmouthshire in the closing years of the eighteenth century, William Coxe found it a 'pleasing amusement' to mingle with the crowds and 'to observe the frank and simple manners of the mountaineers' in Pontypool's weekly market,<sup>9</sup> while, at much the same time, the Reverend Edmund Jones was discovering in the people of Ebbw Vale "an Innate virtue, which upon close, wise and kind dealing soon appears".<sup>10</sup>

Early nineteenth-century court statistics helped perpetuate the notion of a peace-loving people, along with fervent expressions of praise from literary, political and religious men, which continued well beyond the early decades of the century. Indeed, as K. O. Morgan has noted:

Mid-Victorian Wales ... appears at first sight to present a deceptively tranquil interlude in the twenty years that followed the excitements of Merthyr, Rebecca and Chartism. On the surface, Wales still remained the ordered, deferential society it had been for centuries past.<sup>11</sup>

The Welsh, it seemed, lived in the happiest circumstances, at a time when crime 'emerged as one of our great modern "problems"'.<sup>12</sup> It appears that any force that threatened the equanimity of the daily process of living, was invariably cast as alien. The propaganda was still alive at the century's end. In 1900, for example, the Reverend Thomas Jones of Capel Als, Llanelli, declared:

The Welsh rural areas are still the location of 'Hen Wlad y Menyg Gwynion': only the southern industrial valleys have been corrupted through the influence of English people and their vicious habits.<sup>13</sup>

There were, of course, people who fully expressed 'alternative views', though these,

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<sup>9</sup> W. Coxe, *An Historical Tour of Monmouthshire* (London: T. Cadell & W. Davies, 1801), pp. 233-4.

<sup>10</sup> A. Gray-Jones, *History of Ebbw Vale* (Risca: The Starling Press, Ltd., 1971), p. 34.

<sup>11</sup> K. O. Morgan, 'Tom Ellis versus Lloyd George: the Fractured Consciousness of Fin-de-siècle Wales', in G. H. Jenkins and J. Beverley Smith (eds), *Politics and Society in Wales, 1840-1922* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1988), p. 93.

<sup>12</sup> Jones, *Crime in Nineteenth-Century Wales*, p. xiii.

<sup>13</sup> R. Davies, "In a Broken Dream": Some Aspects of Sexual Behaviour and the Dilemmas of the Unmarried Mother in South West Wales, 1887-1914', *Llafur*, 3, 4, 1983, pp. 24-33.

however, 'gained less publicity'.<sup>14</sup>

A point made earlier is that, by contrast, the old police have enjoyed a less flattering history; their reputations largely resting on the opinions of their critics, and the popular repetition of those critics' views. For example, both Shakespeare and Dickens created grotesque representations of early policemen and parish officers; representations which appear to have haunted police reformers and coloured their opinions. The comic constable Dogberry, and his sidekick Verges, in Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*, are but 'shallow fools' (V. i. 222), as is Mr Bumble, the beadle and relieving officer, in *Oliver Twist*. But while the business of writers, like Shakespeare and Dickens, was to entertain their audiences, their buffoons nevertheless indelibly marked the popular consciousness. In 1830, for example, night watchmen of the City of London Police (separate from the Metropolitan force) were described in a press article as 'drivelling *Dogberries*, who have in many instances aided and abetted in the plunder of the dwellings under their protection'<sup>15</sup>— a constable/Dogberry synonymy, therefore, certainly appears to have developed by this period.

One aspect of recent police historiography is the challenging of such stereotypes. The problem as Emsley sees it, is that all 'too often these fictional, comic characters have been taken as representatives of a reality ... because they fit so well with the police reformers' condemnations of the old system of policing'.<sup>16</sup> Philips and Storch suggest that not only were the old constables 'stigmatized ... as lazy, recalcitrant, illiterate, officious, aged, bumbling, mercenary and corrupt, often perfect "Dogberries"', but, as the quality of policemen varied enormously, it was 'not difficult

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<sup>14</sup> Jones, *Crime in Nineteenth-Century Wales*, p. 2.

<sup>15</sup> *The Times*, 21 June, 1830.

<sup>16</sup> Emsley, *Crime and Society*, p. 174.

to find Dogberries (or worse) among them'.<sup>17</sup> Scollan makes the point that Shakespeare's "Much Ado About Nothing" was frequently performed in the nineteenth century, and was part of the repertoire of Covent Garden in 1836 ... [when] Chadwick's Select Committee was undertaking its questionnaires about constables'.<sup>18</sup> She believes that in some instances people's opinions might conceivably have been swayed by it.

'The arguments and assessments of late eighteenth and nineteenth century police reformers were,' according to Emsley, 'generally ... accepted by historians of the English police well into the second half of the twentieth century'.<sup>19</sup> In Critchley's view, for example,

parish constables, whether in London, in the new industrial centres ... or in areas still largely rural, were at best illiterate fools, and at worst as corrupt as the criminal classes from which not a few sprang.<sup>20</sup>

Citing evidence given to an 1853 Select Committee on Police, Critchley also suggested that no authority

could teach illiterate parish constables to read, or persuade the cobbler or baker or farm-labourer to abandon his work and lose money by undertaking police duty for the small fees to which he was entitled.<sup>21</sup>

Likewise, Radzinowicz believed that 'the services of the local constable were likely to depend on what reward [the victim] could offer'.<sup>22</sup> And, Philips and Storch note that the 'safest course' for an eighteenth-century constable 'was always to do nothing until one had an assurance of payment from some source(s)'.<sup>23</sup> This does seem to imply that the old police deserved their reputation. But can we blame the policemen

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<sup>17</sup> Philips and Storch, *Policing Provincial England*, p. 12.

<sup>18</sup> Scollan, *Parish Constables versus Police Constables*, note 8, p. 4.

<sup>19</sup> Emsley, *Crime and Society*, p. 171.

<sup>20</sup> T. A. Critchley, *A History of Police in England and Wales* (London: Constable, 1978), [hereinafter, Critchley, *A History of Police in England and Wales*], pp. 18-19.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 94.

<sup>22</sup> Radzinowicz, Vol. 4, p. 68.

<sup>23</sup> Philips and Storch, *Policing Provincial England*, p. 17.

themselves for their deficiencies? Philips and Storch make the point that following the New Poor Law legislation, Union officials were instructed to 'presume illegal all constables' charges relating to the administration of justice', which necessarily made constables reluctant to move unless 'victims positively underwrote their efforts'.<sup>24</sup> This implies that it was the system that was at fault rather than the constables themselves. Radzinowicz also suggests this.<sup>25</sup> And, as Adrian Shubert persuasively argues, one of the principal causes of the creation of private associations for the prosecution of felons, in the mid-eighteenth century, was clearly 'to overcome deficiencies of the law enforcement apparatus of the state'.<sup>26</sup> So, the negative stereotype of the early policeman, created by the arguments of reformers and backed-up by many historians, no longer appears so eminently plausible. We must, therefore, probe him carefully. We must look too at the problems that confronted the old police in 'innocent' Wales. 'Hen Wlad y Menyg Gwynion' (a land of pure morals) was a reaction to the damning charges made by the 1847 Education Commissioners, who portrayed the Welsh as liars, cheats, unchaste and backward. And religion and language were said to be at the heart of it.<sup>27</sup> However, this chapter does not venture into the politics that carved 'innocent' into the Welsh landscape. It goes no further than reflecting ambiguities.

Despite the many agreeable reports of a peace-loving people of Wales, early newspaper accounts and court records confront us with a marked dichotomy; there is, in fact, abundant evidence to the contrary. Much has been written on the subject.<sup>28</sup>

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24 Philips and Storch, *Policing Provincial England*, p. 56.

25 Radzinowicz, Vol. 4, p. 222.

26 A. Shubert, 'Private Initiative in Law Enforcement: Associations for the Prosecution of Felons, 1744-1856' in V. Bailey (ed.), *Policing and Punishment in Nineteenth Century Britain* (London: Croom Helm, 1981), p. 39.

27 For an introduction to the subject see M. Cragoe, 'Wales', in C. Williams (ed.), *A Companion to Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), pp. 521-33.

28 See D. J. V. Jones, 'Law Enforcement and Popular Disturbances in Wales, 1793-1835', *Journal of Modern History*, 42, 4, 1970; W. T. Morgan, 'Chartism and Industrial Unrest in South Wales in 1842', *National Library of Wales Journal*, X, 1, Summer 1957; G. A. Williams, *When Was Wales?* (London: Penguin Books Ltd., 1985), et al.

However, while military intervention was frequently required to suppress rioting amongst colliers and ironworkers in Glamorgan and Monmouthshire,<sup>29</sup> indeed riotous activity throughout Wales, riotous behaviour was neither exclusively industrial nor always the work of an unruly mob. Nor was it confined to the industrial towns, as the knock-about life evoked by some of the reports below highlight:

Several applications have been made to us from Chepstow, to notice the very disorderly state of the public streets of that town at night, by drunken and noisy desperadoes of the lowest grade. These riotous proceedings ... have been so frequently repeated, particularly on Saturday nights, and until three or four o'clock on Sunday morning, to the terror and alarm of all peaceful subjects, and to the infamous profanation of the Sabbath, that it is a matter of astonishment to many, that some step has not long since been taken to put a stop to such disgraceful practices.<sup>30</sup>

Calm in the borough town of Monmouth had also been destroyed by 'nightly disturbances and depredations' until a Watch was formed. However, an atmosphere of alarm was created in the summer of 1829, when lack of funds threatened the Watch's existence, and a drift away from law and order was envisaged. In the end the day was saved by the philanthropic response of a 'Mr Hardwicke [who] immediately offered, in the most handsome manner, to continue his advances until other funds could be raised for the purpose'.<sup>31</sup> An appeal was then made to the inhabitants of the town to come forward with contributions for the maintenance of their watchmen and, ultimately, their own repose. In Nantyglo, too, and its then Breconshire neighbours, Brynmawr and Beaufort, 'quarrels and fights [were] common, even on the Sabbath' and the 'public peace ... [was] broken with impunity' because the neighbourhood was 'destitute of a Single Police Officer'.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> See, for example, *The Times*, 26 & 28 October 1816.

<sup>30</sup> *Monmouthshire Merlin*, [hereinafter, *Merlin*], 15 August 1829.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid*, 13 June 1829.

<sup>32</sup> *Silurian*, 20 January 1838.

In 1841, a survey of the Monmouthshire parishes of Trevethin and Varteg, found that men 'fly to the beer-shop for excitement, where they spend their evenings in dissolute company, and become familiar with bad habits and vicious companions'.<sup>33</sup> 'Intoxicating liquors', it appears, were 'the bane' of these particular parishes. Likewise, in a similar survey in Merthyr, the author of the above report discovered that '[i]n passing through Dowlais on a Sunday morning, between seven and eight o'clock, without turning out of the main street, sixty-two drunken people were counted; several of them sitting on the steps of the beer-shops waiting for the doors to be opened'.<sup>34</sup> Nor were these concerns confined to South Wales. In 1832, drunkenness and depravation were 'constantly exhibited' in the streets of Caernarfon, where it was hoped that by publishing examples of the town's base humanity – a drunk carrying the corpse of his dead child into the street and threatening to sell it for dissection unless his wife supplied him with more money for drink, or a crowd attempting to rescue a riotous drunk from police custody – would act as a corrective.<sup>35</sup>

But naming and shaming was not always effective. In June 1829, the *Merlin* had hoped to correct a violent Monmouth hairdresser by reporting that he had been brought before the Bench on a charge of threatening to cut his wife's throat with a razor.<sup>36</sup> However the 'exposure' failed in its aim of rendering him 'more cautious and sedate for the future', for just a few week's later the man, whilst out walking with one of his infant children, picked up the child and threw it as far as he could into the air, from where it fell into the river Wye. Before onlookers were able to effect a rescue,

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33 G. S. Kenrick, 'Statistics of the Population in the Parish of Trevethin (Pontypool) and at the Neighbouring Works of Blaenavon in Monmouthshire, chiefly employed in the Iron Trade, and inhabiting part of the District recently disturbed', in *Journal of the Statistical Society of London*, Vol. 3, No. 4, January 1841, pp. 366-375.

34 G. S. Kendrick, 'Statistics of Merthyr Tydfil', in *Journal of the Statistical Society of London*, Vol. 9, No. 1, June 1845, pp. 14-21.

35 *The Welshman*, 23 March 1832.

36 *Merlin*, 6 June 1829.

the hairdresser himself saved the child, thus 'relieving himself from the charge of having been the destroyer of his own offspring'.<sup>37</sup> In terms of operating 'as a warning never to be forgotten' naming and shaming in this case proved not to be a success, because the man continued to be a menace.

'From very early times', as Critchley pointed out, 'the primary responsibility for maintaining the King's peace fell upon each locality under a well-understood principle of social obligation, or collective security'.<sup>38</sup> Communities imposed their own moral codes and, for generations past, popular justice was a part of this. Radzinowicz notes that in the early decades of the nineteenth century, before the extension of summary jurisdiction, 'those wilfully causing damage or committing trespass on private property ... especially if they were youngsters ... would merely have been put under the village pump'.<sup>39</sup> In Wales the *ceffyl pren* (wooden horse) belonged to this tradition,<sup>40</sup> while on the Monmouthshire/Herefordshire border a different tradition prevailed. In June 1829, for example, a female pickpocket was thrown into a horse-pond at Coleford Wool Fair, where it appears to have been the 'custom' among people of the Forest of Dean 'to defer the settlement of disputes' until such occasion. Consequently, 'an appeal to fisticuffs' often produced 'some bloody noses to finish the amusements of the day'.<sup>41</sup>

The old village culture lived on in the new industrial towns too, demonstrated here by an incident at Ebbw Vale on the eve of the county constabulary's formation, in 1857. A large crowd, several hundred strong, has assembled to witness the humiliation and dismissal of a dishonest collier by the rest of the workforce.

<sup>37</sup> *Merlin*, 18 July 1829.

<sup>38</sup> Critchley, *A History of Police in England and Wales*, p. 2.

<sup>39</sup> Radzinowicz, Vol. 4, p.75.

<sup>40</sup> When accepted codes of conduct were breached, transgressors, or their effigies were paraded through the streets on a wooden ladder or pole. See R. A. N. Jones, 'Popular Culture, Policing and the "disappearance" of the Ceffyl Pren in Cardigan, c. 1837-1850', *Ceredigion*, 11, 1988-9.

<sup>41</sup> *Merlin*, 27 June 1829.

[I]n the neighbourhood of Colliers' Row ... 300-400 men, women and children had assembled to witness the ceremony of a private being "drummed out" of the ranks of the colliers' force doing duty at the Gantray coal barracks, situated in the immediate vicinity of this place. It would appear that the offender ... had been guilty of erasing ... the name or mark of his partner, and substituting that of his own, on three trams of coal, which had been sent from the pit, and for this glaring and scandalous breach of fair dealing, he was sentenced by a self-constituted jury of workmen, to leave the ranks, under such ignominious manifestations as the nature of the offence would seem to require ... [T]he culprit being escorted by a picked number of javelin, axe and shovel men, was marched through the long "ranks" in which resided many of his companions in arms against him ... musicians playing on ... instruments that had been formed from old tins, pans and kettles ... As the sooty and heterogeneous assemblage roughly moved through the "ranks" giving vent to the exuberance of their feelings ... women appeared to vie with each other in ... emptying on [the prisoner's] devoted head the contents of sundry earthenware vessels ... At the conclusion of this important ceremony, the offender, once more acquiring a clean pair of heels, brought them into immediate action ... no doubt ... fully convinced that under all circumstances "honesty is the best policy".<sup>42</sup>

Peel away the irony from this passage and a strong sense of community, solidarity, and fair play emerges, which already had a long history in Monmouthshire. Mock trials and intimidation had been used by the 'first generation' of miners and ironworkers in the *Scotch Cattle* movement to achieve the same goals, but they were not only above the law, but quite uncontrollable. In the changing environment of the nineteenth century, what Norbert Elias described as a 'civilizing' process, appears to have been underway.<sup>43</sup> A 'tolerated illegality' had existed amongst eighteenth-century societies and, as a result, as Jones records, 'many assaults, disorders and other misdemeanours went unpunished, or were left to popular rather than state justice'.<sup>44</sup> Wilbur Miller suggests that an 'easier morality and draconian criminal code had encouraged [citizens] to overlook' or, at least, tolerate crime and disorder. But, as the nineteenth century progressed, this was no longer the case, not least because the criminal code was modified, and manners were changing, and 'respectable citizens' were growing intolerant of crime and disorder.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> *Merthyr Telegraph*, 7 March 1857.

<sup>43</sup> N. Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1978).

<sup>44</sup> Jones, *Crime in Nineteenth-Century Wales*, p.201.

<sup>45</sup> W. R. Miller, *Cops and Bobbies: Police Authority in New York and London, 1830-1870* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977), p. 6.



Vic Gatrell also sees a 'shift in mentality' as the eighteenth-century passed. For Gatrell, the year 1820 was a watershed; it marked the moment when 'something happened to English manners'.<sup>46</sup> 'Mounting anxieties about population and urban growth, vagrancy and crime encouraged interventionists to campaign for a more disciplined urban order: "improvement" became the watchword'.<sup>47</sup> The number of denunciatory press reports from the late 1820s onward, and the growing interest in public protection, certainly favour this opinion. Yet in 1839, when the Rural Police Bill (2 & 3 Vict. c. 93) enacted that justices in Quarter Sessions could establish paid police forces, the Monmouthshire magistracy chose not to implement it. It was not that the arguments for police reform had fallen upon deaf ears. The magistrates fully understood the need for and the inevitability of change. At the July Sessions in 1839, for example, they duly resolved 'that a Constabulary Force ... would under certain restrictions prove beneficial' to Monmouthshire.<sup>48</sup> However, by October, they no longer thought 'it requisite to express any opinion upon the adoption of this act either for the whole or any part of the County'.<sup>49</sup> And, on this point, they remained firm until the legislation of 1856 forced their hand.

A number of factors can be put forward to explain the magistrates preference for not introducing a county constabulary in 1839. Money was undoubtedly a major one, but it was not merely a question of money. The magistrates were also motivated by a desire to maintain their local ascendancy. If they were to establish a county police force, they believed every aspect of its management 'should be placed under [their] *entire* control and governance' [my italics].<sup>50</sup> This was said to have been the

46 V. A. C. Gatrell, *City of Laughter: Sex and satire in eighteenth-century London* (London: Atlantic Books, 2006), [hereinafter, Gatrell, *City of Laughter*], p. 20.

47 Gatrell, *City of Laughter*, p. 421.

48 GRO: Monmouthshire Quarter Sessions, Minutes of Business Done, 1836-1850: 1 July 1839: QSM/1.

49 Ibid: 14 October 1839.

50 Ibid: 1 July 1839.

'unanimous opinion' of the court in October 1839. Their nervousness was echoed by magistrates elsewhere, as the returns of the Constabulary Force Commission of 1836 (published in 1839), on the subject of establishing a more uniform rural constabulary, highlight. The magistrates of St. Albans, for example, while admitting that their present system was inadequate, emphasised that any change must be subject to county control. And while the same point was foremost in the minds of the Warwick magistrates, those of Anglesey believed that 'any system under which the constabulary should be directly or indirectly under the control of any other authority would be in itself a greater evil than that to be remedied'.<sup>51</sup> However, changes were afoot. The inexorable march of industry and widespread demographic change was tearing apart the old patterns of life, and with them the old systems of policing. By 1856, as Philips and Storch point out,

across all social groups from the landed classes down through the ranks of paupers, both the idea and experience of policing [underwent] a dramatic transformation from what had been (and had been accepted as) the norm in the 1820s.<sup>52</sup>

So what *was* the norm in the 1820s?

Before the establishment of the Metropolitan Police in 1829, policing throughout England and Wales had been based on a confused pattern of night watchmen, high/chief constables and petty/parish constables: a fractured band of men, insufficient on their own to maintain law and order, and everywhere too nebulous to be called a police force. In periods of extreme unrest special constables were sworn in and the military were called out. Following the introduction of the Metropolitan Police in 1829, however, the system shape-shifted with successive legislative measures between that date and 1857. In Monmouthshire, for instance, various acts were utilised to

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<sup>51</sup> *Proceedings at Quarter Sessions relative to the Establishment of a Constabulary Force*, PP 1839, XLVII, pp. 486-583.

<sup>52</sup> Philips and Storch, *Policing Provincial England*, p. 3.

improve policing arrangements. Borough police forces were established at Newport and Monmouth in 1836, following the Municipal Corporation Act of 1835, and at Trevethin in 1840, under the Lighting and Watching Act of 1833. A town police force came into being at Abergavenny in 1854, under the Town Improvement Act, while elsewhere it was the Parish Constables Act of 1842 and private initiative that furnished constables for the shire, until 1855, when superintending constables were also introduced. Emsley sums up the situation thus:

Those counties which did not take advantage of the 1839 act did not always leave their police systems unchanged. Some districts organised patrols under the Lighting and Watching Act 1833, some utilised the enabling legislation of the Parish Constables Act 1842. The latter reaffirmed the old system of local policing and selection of parish constables, it also authorised the recruitment of paid, superintending constables to oversee the parish constables of a petty sessional division. It offered a policing system which was cheaper and which was better suited to the needs of a rural society.<sup>53</sup>

Monmouthshire, however, was not just a rural society, its western aspect was rapidly undergoing a revolution in industry. Yet the magistracy tenaciously clung to the old culture, even as industrial innovation was cleaving it apart. An inevitable question, which must be addressed, is how effective were the old police in this changing environment? Constables' returns, court records, vestry minute books, the returns of the 1836 Constabulary Force Commission, and the local press form the backdrop against which not only the constables have been measured, but also policing itself. It is a backdrop from which much can be gleaned, not least the structures of authority, the lives of ordinary people, the activities of the old police, and the influences that brought about change.

The parish or petty constables (the terms were interchangeable) were generally chosen at the courts leet or the vestries and were charged with keeping the peace within a parish. The high or chief constables (again, the terms were interchangeable) were

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<sup>53</sup> Emsley, *Crime and Society*, p. 184.

chosen by the jury at the courts of Quarter Sessions, and were charged with keeping the peace within the administrative district of a hundred. They were, therefore, responsible for the parishes within that hundred. At common law the office of constable was compulsory and of a year's duration. Every able-bodied man between the ages of 25 and 55, resident within a parish, and a rate-payer, was qualified to serve. The constables usually followed their own vocations by day and acted only when called upon to do so, and the job of constable was unpaid, though reimbursement of expenses was possible.<sup>54</sup> A number of the parish constables were illiterate, as evinced by their signatory 'mark' on surviving documents. However, in Monmouthshire, such men were not always in the majority, which would appear to render Critchley's generalisation of parish constables as 'illiterate fools' somewhat wide of the mark. Also, illiteracy did not necessarily equate with idiocy. Those who put their mark on the constables' returns appear to have been as diligent as their literate colleagues in forwarding returns to the court and appearing when summoned.<sup>55</sup>

As Tosh has pointed out, 'the illiterate and untravelled ... at any period before the nineteenth century constituted the majority of the population in all societies'.<sup>56</sup> In Monmouthshire, a number of men 'impanelled' for the 'Grand Inquest' at courts leet, or as church wardens and surveyors of the highways, for example, were also illiterate. An entry in the *Parish of Bedwellty Minute Book of Vestry Meetings* for 1809 shows five out of eight members of one particular meeting to be illiterate – the churchwarden and two overseers of the poor being among them.<sup>57</sup> This adds weight to Tosh's evidence that the 'mass of the population ... lived outside the charmed circle of

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<sup>54</sup> See Critchley, *A History of Police in England and Wales*.

<sup>55</sup> See, for example, documents contained in *Constables Returns*, GRO: D 156.

<sup>56</sup> J. Tosh, *The Pursuit of History* (London: Longman, 1991), [hereinafter, Tosh, *The Pursuit of History*], p. 102.

<sup>57</sup> GRO: Parish of Bedwellty Minute Book of Vestry Meetings, 22 February 1809- 6 October 1846; Meeting of 22 February 1809: D 796.

literacy'.<sup>58</sup> And Monmouthshire's 'charmed circle' appears to have retained its exclusivity, at least for the first half of the nineteenth century, if not longer, no doubt as a result of the shire's abysmal educational facilities.

In his work on the development of the Ebbw valleys, Elliott found the area bereft of good schools, and education 'absent at the secondary level until the intermediate schools of the last few years of the nineteenth century'.<sup>59</sup> Matthews also demonstrated that "educational destitution" existed in Tredegar, 'up to the start of the state elementary school system in 1870',<sup>60</sup> while Rawlings' work on education in Abertillery mirrored his findings.<sup>61</sup> And while Matthews points out that in the 1830s 'the majority of grant-aided schools were to be found in rural Monmouthshire',<sup>62</sup> Usk in the 1860s was, nevertheless, 'one of the educational blackspots in the country'.<sup>63</sup> It appears far more convincing, therefore, that in most instances it was from a lack of opportunity and not grey matter that admission into Monmouthshire's 'charmed circle of literacy' was denied.

The high or chief constables were generally of a superior class to the parish constables; the occupations appearing most regularly on the returns were those of farmer, yeoman and gentleman. These men also received a single payment upon taking office, which, in the early 1820s, was 26 guineas apiece.<sup>64</sup> The petty constables were of the labouring classes, and often craftsmen: cordwainers, labourers, masons,

<sup>58</sup> Tosh, *The Pursuit of History*, p. 102.

<sup>59</sup> Elliott, *The Industrial Development of the Ebbw Valleys*, p. 17.

<sup>60</sup> P. H. Matthews, 'Elementary Education in Tredegar During the Nineteenth Century' (unpublished M. Ed. thesis, University of Wales: Cardiff, 1983), p. 12.

<sup>61</sup> J. Rawlings, 'Elementary Education in the Abertillery Area, 1870 – 1914' (unpublished M. Ed. thesis, University of Wales: Cardiff, 1983), p. 152.

<sup>62</sup> P. H. Matthews, 'Elementary Education in Tredegar During the Nineteenth Century' (unpublished M. Ed. thesis, University of Wales: Cardiff, 1983), p. 9.

<sup>63</sup> V. H. Morgan, 'Education in Usk during the Nineteenth Century: with specific reference to the Roger Edwards Grammar School' (unpublished M. Ed. thesis, University of Wales: Cardiff, 1982), p. 18.

<sup>64</sup> Lists of chief constables' appointments can be found in Quarter Sessions minutes: See, for example, GRO: *Sessions Minute Book*, 7 October 1807 – 11 July 1814 : Q/S MB 0005.

tanners and fishermen appear most frequently in local records. However, magistrates answering the 1836 questionnaire from the Royal Commission, differed in their opinions. While Pontypool magistrates concluded that their parish constables were chosen from 'the most respectable classes in the neighbourhood, Agents, Shopkeepers etc. etc., 'the Monmouth Bench reported that 'none but the lowest class of Householders will accept the office' in their division. Worse still, in the Christchurch division of the county, it was said that only 'paupers, or idle characters' filled the ranks of parish constable.<sup>65</sup> The magistrates' subjectivity becomes clear when we find a brisk desire on the part of those in Christchurch to establish an efficient rural police, while in Monmouth an augmentation of the borough force by one or two men was felt to be sufficient. Pontypool magistrates also seemed confident that a few more 'Local Police Officers' would result in a more effective rule of law.<sup>66</sup>

As their terms of office drew to a close, both chief and petty constables were expected to draw up lists of 'proper persons to serve as Constables ... for the ensuing year';<sup>67</sup> each man putting forward three names, one of which would be selected. Documentary evidence shows that in Usk, the petty constables thus chosen at the courts leet were subsequently required, within a period of five days, 'under the Penalty of Five Pounds' to appear before a magistrate to take the oath which would qualify them for service.<sup>68</sup> And the importance of carrying out their duties conscientiously can best be illustrated by this warning from a court steward, in 1789. Newly elected constables, he urged, were:

... then and there to do and perform their Suit and Service according to the Custom of the said Borough ... and perform all and whatsoever things to your duty and Office ... or I may appertain as you will answer your neglect herein at your Peril.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>65</sup> PRO: Correspondence of the Constabulary Force Commission, 1836-9: HO 73/5.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> GRO: Constables' Returns (1790s): D.156.19.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> GRO: Usk Borough Leet Warrant, April 1789: D.156.19.

The threat was no idle one either. When, in 1780, John Hopkins refused to take his turn as parish constable, he was tried for contempt of court,<sup>70</sup> though evidence relating to the outcome of his trial has not survived.

Parish constables, as Scollan asserts, 'must be seen in context before we can assess them ... [as] modern assessments have for too long been distorted by the biased perceptions of the past'.<sup>71</sup> Indeed, Tosh suggests that 'historians encountering a past society through the medium of documentary sources' should experience 'the same sense of "culture shock" that the modern investigator experiences in an exotic or "primitive" community'.<sup>72</sup> This is absolutely right, for using the Usk courts leet 'presentments' as an entrance into late eighteenth and early nineteenth century rural Monmouthshire, the sights and smells seem so shockingly tangible, that some immediate mental adjustment is needed. The leet presentments of the parish constables show life at its rawest.

In April 1779, for instance, inhabitants of every major street in Usk were presented for having littered their roads with filth. Four dunghills sat in New Market Street, and a broken gutter and timber from the 'saw pit' gave cause for complaint there too. There were five dunghills in Bridge Street, two in Porth Carn Street, and nine in Middle Street. Middle Street's saw pit also proved a nuisance, as did a foul gutter, a stinking ditch, and a broken bridge. Three dunghills and a 'heap of Rubbage' littered Old Market Street, two dunghills graced Walker Street, and six, St. Mary Street. The latter street was also in poor repair, for which the surveyors of the highway were presented. Church Street was a veritable den of iniquity, with six dunghills, a pig cott, a 'Rubbage' heap, a broken well, a ramshackle 'pound' and a broken road. A miller

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<sup>70</sup> GRO: Usk Borough Leet Warrant, April 1789: D. 156. 19.

<sup>71</sup> Scollan, *Parish Constables versus Police Constables*, p. 26.

<sup>72</sup> Tosh, *The Pursuit of History*, p. 104.

living in the street continually broke the sabbath by grinding corn and 'over pounding his pond', and a certain Adam Adams gave cause for complaint by lodging vagabonds in his house.<sup>73</sup>

Nineteen years later, no fewer than 46 people were presented to the court for 48 nuisances and a bridge 'much out of repair'. The nuisances comprised ash or cynder [sic] heaps, rubbish heaps, dunghills, muck heaps, heaps of earth, piles of stones and foul gutters.<sup>74</sup> Fines were imposed for each person and each nuisance, yet half a century later, people's habits had barely changed. Life was still intensely local, and this is perfectly demonstrated by two examples cited in Scollan, from the works of King and Gyford. In King there is the case of a Bedfordshire magistrate, still clad in his dressing gown, conducting hearings before breakfast, and in Gyford, a Kelvedon cleric who 'became famous for dispensing justice through his vicarage window'.<sup>75</sup> In Hobsbawm's words 'the workshop of the world was not yet ... the "industry state", either in scale, pattern or technology and industrial organisation'.<sup>76</sup> These were the days before the railways, when people travelled on foot or by horse:

Those horses! ... each horse depositing 22 lbs of dung a day or over three and a half tons a year, each leaving streets swilling in piss and in need of poor boys or beggars to sweep them, the stench so familiar that people didn't notice it.<sup>77</sup>

High and low-born alike heaped life's litter in the streets. At the Usk Leet of 1845, the Reverend Arthur Williams was presented for having allowed the filth from his kennels and stables to drain into New Market Street. And at the same court, Iltyd

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73 GRO: *Constables' Returns*, April 1779: D 156 . 19.

74 GRO: *Constables' Returns*, April 1798: D 156 . 28.

75 P. King, *Crime, Justice and Discretion in England, 1740-1820* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 84, and J. Gyford, 'Men of Bad Character: Property Crime in Essex in the 1820s' (Unpublished MA thesis, University of Essex, 1982), p. 31, cited in Scollan, *Parish Constables versus Police Constables*, pp. 35-6.

76 E. Hobsbawm, *Worlds of Labour* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1984), p.169.

77 F. M. L. Thompson, 'Nineteenth-century horse sense', *Economic History Review*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ser., xxix (1), pp. 65, 77; D. Masson, *Memories of London in the Forties* (1908), cited by P. Jackson, *George Scharf's London* (1987), p. 75, both cited in Gatrell, *City of Laughter*, p. 29.



Nichol, Esq., was fined for 'allowing heaps of stones to lie against his barn in Walker Street'. The surveyors of the highways were also accused of 'gross neglect in allowing persons to throw ashes and rubbish in the streets and also [for] permitting pigs to wander at large through the streets of the town'.<sup>78</sup>

Sixty-six years had elapsed since the leet presentments of 1779, yet dunghills, foul open-ditches, pavements blocked by business goods, and the occasional bonfire blazing in the centre of the road, 'to the great danger of travellers and the public', remained.<sup>79</sup> Conditions in the borough of Newport in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were no better.

Several eminent townsmen had to be ordered to remove stinking dunghills from their front or stable doors or from the street; others had to be presented for dumping dirt, ashes and other rubbish on the Town Green ... [and] a quite influential townsman, had to be fined 1d. in July 1760 for "a nuisance coming down from his boghouse to the Green".<sup>80</sup>

It was an unsavoury reality, shocking to the modern eye, but comfortably familiar, no doubt, to the inhabitants of the towns and their parish officers.

Just as familiar to them was the gratuitous violence, incivility and riotous disturbances which took place: the fighting, shouting, window-breaking, and assaults that pepper the records. And it was not uncommon for the constables to fall prey to the thuggish elements in the shire, particularly as they were not universally valued for their role. In Usk alone, two were 'violently assaulted and beaten' in the execution of their duty in September 1828. Another was set upon by three men, in July 1832, as he attempted to arrest a man for demolishing his mother's door with a brick. And constable William Morgan proved no match for a man disturbing the peace in 1833.

<sup>78</sup> GRO: *Constables' Returns*, 28 October 1845: D 156 . 22.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> B. P. Jones, *From Elizabeth I to Victoria: The Government of Newport (Mon.) 1550 – 1850* (Newport: Newport Corporation, 1957), p. 63.

Morgan was struck a violent blow in the face, had his 'staff of office' snatched from his hand and thrown away, and was then taunted about where his authority was now? In 1835, constable Ralph Smith suffered 'great noise and disturbance' late one night from the local druggist 'knocking violently at [his] door ... without any lawful cause or pretence'. And in 1839 constable Edward Fennell was set upon and knocked to the ground by three men, who then proceeded to rip apart his clothing. Fennell, aided by a Monmouth constable, had been attempting to disperse a mob who had gathered to watch a fight near Usk bridge.<sup>81</sup>

Fist-fights had a brutish appeal and, according to Weiner, 'had long been a part of everyday life' though in the second half of the nineteenth century they 'declined as an accepted public activity' not least because the 'police increasingly took a hand in preventing or breaking them up'.<sup>82</sup> In November 1823 upwards of 100 men had assembled 'riotously' in Usk's New Market Street, to watch an organized fist-fight between two local men; the event causing such 'tumult, noise and disturbance' that residents and passers-by alike were both terrified and annoyed.<sup>83</sup> And an illuminating parallel is made by Oliver Jones, writing of the early days of Sirhowy and Tredegar, in the county's industrial heartland:

Street fighting seemed to be more or less part of the everyday scene. A few army pensioners, sworn in as special constables, tried to keep the peace but were rarely on the spot when trouble began ... and more than once Fothergill, Homfray and Monkhouse [ironmasters] had to use their powers as magistrates to close the inns because of rowdyism ... Each weekend there were fights at one or other recognised pitches – the Back of the Stables, Cefn Golau, No. 2 Pit, The Bloody Spot or Top Pitch, Sirhowy ... the Bloody Spot being a favourite venue for these bare-knuckle bouts. Men fought each other, it seems, just for the sheer love of it.<sup>84</sup>

<sup>81</sup> All the above examples can be found in the bundles of *Constables' Returns*, GRO: D 156. 28.

<sup>82</sup> M. Weiner, *Men of Blood* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 50-51.

<sup>83</sup> GRO: *Constables Returns*, 1 December 1823: D 156. 28.

<sup>84</sup> O. Jones, *The Early Days of Sirhowy and Tredegar* (Newport: Starling Press, 1969), [hereinafter, Jones, *The Early Days of Sirhowy and Tredegar*], p. 63.

Unsurprisingly, constables in the industrial valleys were equally liable to assault. At the Michaelmas County Sessions of 23 October 1830, for example, a man who had 'assaulted, wounded and ill-treated' a petty constable in Trevethin received four months in Usk gaol', while Robert Graham, an assistant sheriff's officer from Newport, was assaulted in riotous circumstances in Bedwellty, in October 1849.<sup>85</sup>

Taken collectively, the examples above (which are only a fraction of the cases found), might appear to show that the people of Monmouthshire made a habit of assaulting their constables. But, as Tosh remarked: 'Before any generalization can be made with confidence, a vast quantity of court records has to be sifted, usually in conjunction with other sources'.<sup>86</sup> Nevertheless, some tentative generalizations *can* be made from those records sifted for this particular work. Vestiges of more barbarous times are clearly evident – unsurprising perhaps, when, theoretically, as the eighteenth century drew to a close, a traitor could still be 'hanged by the neck, cut down while still alive, disembowelled (and his entrails burned before his face) and then beheaded and quartered'.<sup>87</sup> Violence was endemic, active constables were vulnerable, but attacks upon them were not a daily occurrence. Anyone intervening in the affairs of others was susceptible to attack, though no one was totally immune from it: an innocent baby slapped in the face, a two-year old boy violently beaten by a neighbour, a child's arm 'bitten through' by a savage dog, goaded by its equally savage owner, a woman knocked senseless by a brick thrown from behind.<sup>88</sup> Each of these cases appears in the Usk records of the 1820s and 1830s.

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85 GRO: *Depositions Book*, Monmouthshire Quarter Sessions, October 1849; D/67.

86 Tosh, *The Pursuit of History*, pp. 101-102.

87 E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (London: Penguin, 1980), p. 21.

88 These are just a few examples taken from a bundle of assorted documents of the 1820s and 1830s: GRO: D 156.28.

However, a more sophisticated public did exist simultaneously. The contemporary press gives countless examples of concerts, recitals, lectures, debates, and meetings of Bible and other societies throughout the shire. For instance, in August 1829, members of the Llantillio Crossenny Female Club, 'amounting to 100 and 40 upwards', walked together to church, took tea on a local gentleman's lawn, then spent the evening dancing. The funds of the club, which stood at £800 that year, were variously used to promote the wellbeing of poorer women.<sup>89</sup> In September of the same year, Abergavenny church, which had just reopened after repairs, 'was completely filled [with] a congregation of 2000 persons'.<sup>90</sup> Likewise, chapel life thrived in the industrial valleys. Visiting clergy and members of missionary societies did the rounds, and public meetings were held for a variety of worthy causes. Oliver Jones recounts how chapel life in Sirhowy and Tredegar was 'anything but gloomy [with] tea parties, coffee suppers, concerts and singing sessions adding gaiety and lightheartedness to their fellowship'.<sup>91</sup> On a different note, 'Mr. John Parry's entertainments ... gave ... universal satisfaction' at the Cymreigyddion Hall in Abergavenny, which was 'crowded with the *elite* of the neighbourhood' in November 1849.<sup>92</sup>

Occasions like these were seldom, if ever, the concern of the police. But, as demonstrated earlier, those presented for falling foul of the law were not always ne'er-do-wells; they might include the local butcher, druggist or clergyman, for example. 'We may say', in Thompson's words, 'that there were several different "publics" impinging upon and overlapping each other'.<sup>93</sup> 'Even chapelgoers', it appears 'did not disdain entering a public house with moderation as their guide'.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> *Merlin*, 15 August 1829.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid*, 3 October 1829.

<sup>91</sup> Jones, *The Early Days of Sirhowy and Tredegar*, p. 63.

<sup>92</sup> *Monmouthshire Gazette*, 1 December 1849.

<sup>93</sup> E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (London: Penguin, 1991), p. 790.

<sup>94</sup> Jones, *The Early Days of Sirhowy and Tredegar*, p. 62.

The role of the parish constable was manifold. Many of the tasks assigned to him prefigured those of the county constables. In June 1838, for example, two men from the parish of Aberystroth were charged 'with having aided the brutal sport of cock-fighting',<sup>95</sup> while another had his gaming apparatus confiscated by constable William Morgan. The gambler had been entertaining a crowd in the Twyn, in Usk, with 'a certain pretended game of chance called pricking the garter'.<sup>96</sup> Parish constables also inspected weights and measures. 'William Stockham, constable ... did weigh the piece of lead (used as a pound weight by a local fishmonger) ... with the standard pound weight deposited in the Town Hall ... and the same proved to be and is one ounce deficient in weight.'<sup>97</sup> In 1790 a parish constable presented five men for 'breaking the Lord's day commonly called Sunday ... by playing at foot Ball'.<sup>98</sup> And in March 1828 a number of men were presented for having destroyed churchyard grass and flower beds by playing a game of 'bando' in a cemetery.<sup>99</sup> In 1816 a warrant was made to the constable of Llandegreth to 'summon overseers there why they failed to give relief to Margaret Barker'.<sup>100</sup> And in 1796, an order was sent to the petty constables of Chepstow and Mathern to assemble a vestry meeting 'to consider the most speedy means of raising men for service in the army'.<sup>101</sup>

Generally, the responses of the Monmouthshire magistrates to the 1836 Constabulary Force Commission indicate that, rather than having lost faith in the old parish constable system altogether, they believed it could be improved by an increase in manpower. But manpower would always be a problem while parish constables were unpaid and part-time. In May 1830, for example, seven men spent four hours

95 *Silurian*, 23 June 1838.

96 GRO: *Constables' Returns*, 7 June 1841: D 156 . 28.

97 *Ibid.*, c. 1832: D 156 . 28.

98 *Ibid.*, 26 October 1790: D 156 . 19.

99 GRO: *Constables' Returns*, March 1828: D 156 . 28.

100 GRO: *Warrant to Constable of Llandegreth*, 1816: D 396 . 98.

101 GRO: *Order to Petty Constables of Chepstow and Mathern*, 1796: D 396 . 78.

threatening and intimidating a publican before a constable was able to be brought to the scene. They consumed large quantities of the man's 'cyder' without paying for it, and made a 'great noise and uproar and refused to leave the premises'. By the time the constable arrived, however, they had gone and taken with them a quantity of the landlord's glass and chinaware, only to return in the night to break his windows.<sup>102</sup> But parish constables were ill-equipped to act against such gangs, unless they could summon assistance from other members of the community – though the fact that so many of them were seriously assaulted in the execution of their duty (one man had part of his finger bitten off, while another's life hung in the balance for the duration of a night) does suggest that a number of them were willing to have a go.

Many favourable reports of conscientious constables appear in the records. In the early hours of an August morning in 1829, two horse thieves were 'laid hold of' and 'secured' by 'two night constables, who happened to be on Monnow Bridge' when the men came riding by.<sup>103</sup> And in November of the same year 'two men were taken up ... at Abergavenny, for passing bad silver'. Mr Morgan, the constable, was greatly praised 'for his activity on this and several other occasions'.<sup>104</sup> As Philips and Storch have pointed out:

the old system of parish constables was not nearly as hopeless as those who beat the drum for a 'new police' made out, but the former came to look more and more obsolete – even 'shambolic' – as Metropolitan intellectuals, government ministers and commissions of enquiry hammered away at its deficiencies.<sup>105</sup>

But for how long could the old system survive the burgeoning industrial towns and the new forces that were given life there?

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<sup>102</sup> GRO: *Constables' Returns*, 24 May 1830: D 156 . 28.

<sup>103</sup> *Merlin*, 22 August 1829.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, 14 November 1829.

<sup>105</sup> Philips and Storch, *Policing Provincial England*, p. 6.

Industrialisation was the catalyst of social change. In Monmouthshire, as the nineteenth century progressed, it dislocated the labour market and revolutionized the lives of the inhabitants of the valleys.<sup>106</sup> And although, as Elliott points out, 'there were considerable differences in the processes of change' in different locations in the valleys – it moved, for instance, 'in differing directions and [was] based on a variety of industries'<sup>107</sup> – a centuries-old way of life was, nevertheless, overthrown and the orientation of policing with it. Some adjustment to the old parish constable system was inevitable, not only because the formation of the Metropolitan Police had precipitated national moves for reform, but also because of the destruction of the old patterns of life by industry. Even when one industry superseded another, things were not left where industrialists had found them. The people, as well as their lives and landscapes, had changed – from processes both internal and external to the valleys. Police reform in the county, therefore, cannot be examined in isolation; how it related to wider national changes must be considered.

A string of ironworks grew up in the industrial valleys, from Blaenavon to Rhymney, and sparsely populated districts were feverishly transformed – the population of Monmouthshire grew from 45,568 in 1801 to 395,719 in 1911.<sup>108</sup> Tiny hamlets now 'dilated stood ... gone to wrack, disturbed and torn'.<sup>109</sup> For, as Davies has noted, '[t]he iron districts had no urban traditions. Although a mass society developed there, it happened in a frontier world ... lacking the graces of civic life'.<sup>110</sup> Although 'graces' seems somewhat incongruous, the sentiment is nonetheless true. The newly industrialised valley towns were certainly not like any other town in Monmouthshire's

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<sup>106</sup> Elliott, *The Industrial Development of the Ebbw Valleys*, pp. 3-9.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>108</sup> J. Williams, *Digest of Welsh Historical Statistics, Population 1* (Cardiff: Welsh Office, 1985).

<sup>109</sup> J. Milton, *Paradise Lost*, Book IV (London: Bell and Daldy, 1831), lines 986 & 994.

<sup>110</sup> Davies, *A History of Wales*, p. 331.

eastern aspect. All the dangers that accompany rapid industrialisation and urbanisation were present – not least exploitation and oppression, which caused the greatest antagonism and provided the right environment for riotous behaviour, particularly in times of shortage.

An early industrial riot in the area occurred in 1800, at Beaufort, when a crowd 'led by a desperate woman', stripped a mule train of its load of barley.<sup>111</sup> In 1816, following another slump in trade, Tredegar workmen brought the entire iron region – from Merthyr to Blaenavon – to a standstill. Even with the deployment of special constables, the civil forces alone were not equipped to deal with the rioters and the military were called into action. Similar scenes occurred in 1822; the striking workers, committing 'daring outrages,' by tearing up roads and, from hiding places on 'immense mountains, almost perpendicular', pelted the military with 'immense stones and fragments of rock'.<sup>112</sup>

Many of the processes that influenced local politics and proved a potent source of tension were external to the valleys – in Thompson's words, 'the hazards of markets; the manifold commercial and financial consequences of the Wars; the post-war deflation; movements in the terms of trade; and the exceptional stresses resulting from the population "explosion"'.<sup>113</sup> Ivor Wilks highlights the same influences, 'particular forms which the working-class struggle took in south Wales' appear to have been dictated by ... movements in the economy. Rioting, strikes and combinations were all features of alternating phases of 'boom and slump'.<sup>114</sup> Legal combinations, in the form of Friendly Societies, developed alongside those of the *Scotch Cattle*, which were

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<sup>111</sup> Jones, *The Early Days of Sirhowy and Tredegar*, p. 74.

<sup>112</sup> *The Times*, 7 May 1822: See also *Cambrian*, 11 & 12 May 1822.

<sup>113</sup> Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, p. 223.

<sup>114</sup> I. Wilks, *South Wales and the Rising of 1839* (London: Croom Helm, 1984), p. 73.



'terroristic in operation and illegal'.<sup>115</sup> The illegal *Scotch Cattle* movement, which was particularly active in Monmouthshire in the 1820s and 1830s, targeted turncoat workers and powerful masters alike.<sup>116</sup> The Chartist movement also grew out of the discontent and hardship of the labouring classes, but grafted on to social and economic considerations were political ones. Underlying the six points of the Charter was the belief that political change would ameliorate workers' distress. A 'mass of ironworkers and colliers were mobilised in the working-class cause', which erupted in the Newport Rising of 1839.<sup>117</sup>

It is not difficult to see how Monmouthshire acquired its melting-pot character; a melting-pot with a purportedly lethal mix of ingredients, if critical pronouncements of parliamentary ministers and press are to be believed. In 1831 Lord Melbourne, had declared the south Wales coalfield to be "the most terrifying part of the kingdom",<sup>118</sup> while in 1834 the *Merthyr Guardian* supposed that to be the case exactly, declaring 'from Dowlais to Abergavenny ... THERE IS NO LAW'.<sup>119</sup> The relevance of that theory to the reform of policing in Monmouthshire must now be considered.

One thing magistrates felt more than a little restive about in relation to policing was demographic change. Over the length and breadth of the country they acknowledged that the increasing population and 'extension of trade and commerce' had rendered the system of parish constables 'inefficient'.<sup>120</sup> In Monmouthshire, the

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<sup>115</sup> I. Wilks, *South Wales and the Rising of 1839* (London: Croom Helm, 1984), p. 74.

<sup>116</sup> See for example, D. J. V. Jones, 'Scotch Cattle and Chartism' in T. Herbert & G. E. Jones (eds.) *People and Protest: Wales 1815-1880* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1988), p. 139-59; Jones, *The Early Days of Sirhowy and Tredegar*.

<sup>117</sup> I. Wilks, *South Wales and the Rising of 1839* (London: Croom Helm, 1984), p. 247. See also, D. J. V. Jones, *Chartism and the Chartists* (London: Allen Lane, 1975).

<sup>118</sup> Davies, *A History of Wales*, p. 376.

<sup>119</sup> *Merthyr Guardian*, 14 June 1834.

<sup>120</sup> Proceedings at Quarter Sessions Relative to the Establishment of a Constabulary Force, PP 1839, Vol. XLVII, pp. 486-583.

burgeoning manufacturing towns were believed to facilitate crime, by affording easy concealment. The county's navigable rivers also provided important getaway routes, though the currents of crime were said to flow in both directions – local magistrates having taken to heart reformist propaganda that criminals were fleeing London and other large centres where police forces had been established:

The active interference of the New Body of Police in Cities and large Towns has had the effect of distributing Hordes of Criminals ... from Town to Country. ... In these districts through which the Highroad from London to the South of Ireland and from Bristol to Liverpool lie – the Country is infested with gangs of Vagrants.<sup>121</sup>

And

An escape with stolen property of certain descriptions may be made to Bristol by the Newport and Chepstow Packets – but as to stolen horses & cattle the River Severn affords such an obstacle to an immediate escape, that offenders are not infrequently apprehended there or traced to Bristol, the most ready mart for stolen goods. The Mineral Districts are favourable to the escape of offenders etc., their being lost sight of amidst a dense population.<sup>122</sup>

This response of the Monmouthshire magistrates to the Constabulary Force Commission's questionnaire of 1836 evokes an image of criminal hordes, like squadrons of army ants on the move, relentless in pursuit of plunder. Yet at every turn the justices contradict themselves. They begin by stating that most crimes in their areas are committed by residents. At another point, they declare, as axiomatic, that crime is the work of the displaced hordes. In the division of Christchurch, for example, the number of felonies and misdemeanors committed in the year leading up to the questionnaire is recorded as three. But, contradiction breaks out just a few lines further on, when suddenly 'the whole neighbourhood abounds with thieves'.<sup>123</sup>

Few magistrates would admit to any good qualities in their parish constables, yet cattle rustlers were 'not infrequently apprehended' on the banks of the Severn or in Bristol. Much of the evidence is therefore disputable. What is clearly apparent, is the

<sup>121</sup> PRO: HO 73/5: Monmouth Magistrates' Returns to the Constabulary Force Commission, 1836.

<sup>122</sup> PRO: HO 73/5: Usk Magistrates' Returns to the Constabulary Force Commission, 1836.

<sup>123</sup> PRO: HO 73/5: Christchurch Magistrates' Returns to the Constabulary Force Commission, 1836.

anxiety of the county gentry concerning the threat to law and order. The need to control and discipline the lower orders seemed never more urgent. As Taylor points out:

the concept of crime was re-created and in the process of reconstruction took on a far greater significance. The multifaceted anxieties of a society undergoing fundamental change were displaced onto "the criminal" who became folk devil and scapegoat.<sup>124</sup>

Propagandists for the new police had certainly kindled the collective imagination of the Monmouthshire magistrates. With industrial and social revolution going on in their midst efficiency became their watchword. As the unpaid, part-time, parish constables did not equate with the concept, the old system was considered untenable and some manner of reform inevitable. However, Philips and Storch suggest that the lack of confidence in the old system 'had less to do with the individual constable's own qualities and capabilities and more to do with the growth of a powerful and increasingly persuasive critique of the criminal justice system at large'.<sup>125</sup> And Emsley points out that when the printed report of the constabulary commissioners appeared in 1839, Chadwick (who was largely responsible for the project), had 'carefully selected the material for inclusion in [it]'.<sup>126</sup> Order was of the first importance, and 'police reform for Chadwick was part and parcel of his plan for the well-regulated state'.<sup>127</sup>

Taken as a whole, the Monmouthshire magistrates, though critical of their parish constables, did not favour the introduction of a county police force. Only the Christchurch magistrates displayed a fervent desire for this type of reform, providing it rode tandem with their continuing ascendancy. They pledged that:

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<sup>124</sup> Taylor, *Policing the Victorian Town*, p. 6.

<sup>125</sup> Philips and Storch, *Policing Provincial England*, p. 50.

<sup>126</sup> Emsley, *The English Police*, p. 39.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid., p. 38.

under the authority of the magistrates and unconnected with a Board of Guardians ... a compulsory system of Police would be the greatest Boon that could be granted to this neighbourhood, it would be accepted as such by the whole body of farmers, who are most desirous of such an establishment [and] the expense of such will have no weight with them.<sup>128</sup>

The proximity of the Christchurch division to the Borough of Newport had, no doubt, helped make the magistrates there particularly receptive to the idea. 'In every important case' in Christchurch, they 'employ[ed] the police at Newport'.<sup>129</sup> However, the majority of the county Bench were more resistant to change. They certainly believed in police reform, but they believed also that reform and the retention of their local hegemony could only be reconciled by patching up rather than completely replacing the old system of parish constables. Most believed that a few additional men would suffice – 'local' men under magisterial control. Their long-standing local hegemony appears, as Lawrence Stone observed, to have 'provid[ed] them with a self-confident arrogance which enabled them to behave with extreme selfishness when their own interests were at stake'.<sup>130</sup>

On the other hand, as Reiner points out, during the 1838 debates on police reform, there was also 'a strong current of influential contemporary opinion agreeing with Disraeli that expanding the police throughout the provinces amounted to a declaration of civil war against the people and would be counter-productive'.<sup>131</sup> Quoting Watts-Miller, he continues, '[s]ocial harmony could be restored only by the privileged part of the nation once more recognising their duties to the second nation'.<sup>132</sup> An undated document in the Monmouthshire archives (attributed to the 1830s from the names of the magistrates concerned) illustrates such paternalism in

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128 PRO: HO 73/5: Christchurch Magistrates' Returns to the Constabulary Force Commission, 1836.

129 Ibid.

130 L. Stone and J.C. Fawtier Stone, *An Open Elite? England 1540-1880* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1984), p. 412.

131 Reiner, *The Politics of the Police*, p 46.

132 Ibid.

action. It reveals that an emergency meeting of county gentlemen was convened in Usk for the purpose of adopting measures to forestall sedition. Acts of 'open outrage' by 'tumultuous assemblies of persons' were occurring in England. But the 'midnight Burnings of buildings, Machinery, Articles of food and other property' had not yet spread to Monmouthshire. It was therefore resolved that for the preservation of peace in the county, special constables, armed with 'stout staffs', should be enrolled under the direction of the magistrates, and that people should be discouraged from attending 'any assemblage collected for the purpose of tumults', even out of curiosity. Furthermore, the magistrates agreed to encourage 'honest and industrious Labourers in awarding to them full employment at reasonable wages and by the liberal dispensation of charity to such deserving persons as may really stand in need of it, most particularly during the present season.' This was to be met by subscriptions 'immediately entered into'. A hundred copies of the 'resolutions' were to be printed, distributed around the neighbourhood, and published in the *Monmouthshire Merlin*.<sup>133</sup>

It would be naïve to suppose that the magistrates were solely motivated by paternalistic feelings. Their fear is palpable, and measures of 'precaution and security' are being quickly adopted. Custom and convention are resorted to in an attempt to avert trouble, with the traditional form of crowd control – a substantial muster of men with stout staffs. This was still the sharp end of policing for the gentlemen of Usk, and neither the activities of the Scotch Cattle nor the Chartists appears to have made them any more receptive to the idea of adopting the 1839 County Police Act. It is difficult to *fully* understand why, but this is a question other historians have pondered. Storch, for example, 'failed to find a strong relationship between adoption of the County Police

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<sup>133</sup> GRO: An emergency meeting of Usk magistrates to discuss the adoption of measures to forestall sedition, (undated document): D 156 28.

Act [1839] and the intensity of “Captain Swing” disturbances in the southern counties'.<sup>134</sup> In collaboration with Philips, in a study of police in provincial England prior to the 1856 Police Act, this conclusion was drawn:

If we examine those counties which did and did not adopt the Act, no obvious pattern emerges; there is no single factor – geographical, economic, social or political – which clearly distinguishes the adopting from the non-adopting counties.<sup>135</sup>

The evidence seemed to suggest 'the existence of certain “political cultures” or “climates of opinion” within the county bench', which shaped attitudes towards reform.<sup>136</sup>

An alternative to the County Police Acts of 1839-40 presented itself in 1842, with the passing of the Parish Constables Act (5 & 6 Vict. c. 109). The Act amended the laws relating to the appointment of parish constables, by transferring the responsibility from the leets and vestries to the petty sessions. Justices were now enabled to build lock-ups – the costs of which were to be met from the county rate. The deployment of superintending constables to take charge of both the lock-ups and the parish constables was a further provision of the Act, as was the payment of parish constables. The Act was amended in 1850 (13 & 14 Vict. c. 20) to ensure its better working. But, despite the fact that it 'created an alternative system which proved attractive to many English counties and was widely implemented',<sup>137</sup> Monmouthshire did not employ superintending constables until 1855. Table 1 below, provides a picture of how the county was policed prior to 1855: a picture of the 'little police schemes' given countenance by the magistracy in place of more widespread measures.

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<sup>134</sup> R. D. Storch, 'Policing Rural Southern England Before the Police: Opinion and Practice, 1830-56' in D. Hay and F. Snyder (eds), *Policing and Prosecution in Britain 1750-1850* (Oxford, 1989), p. 250, cited in Philips and Storch, *Policing Provincial England*, notes to Chapter 7, no. 119.

<sup>135</sup> Philips and Storch, *Policing Provincial England*, p. 159.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 159.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 215.

**Table 1: Number of Monmouthshire constables prior to the appointment of Superintending Constables, April 1855.**

Division of County	No. of Cons.	Appointing authority	Remarks
Abergavenny	73	Parish Constables Act 5 & 6 Vic. c.10	3 Raglan constables appointed temporarily whilst railway in construction
Bedwellty	86	"	
Caerleon	19	"	
Chepstow	51	"	
Christchurch	24	"	
Monmouth	8	"	
Newport	41	"	
Pontypool	88	"	
Raglan	30	"	
Skenfrith	10	"	
Trellock	14	"	
Usk	21	"	
<b>Total</b>	<b>465</b>		
<b>Boroughs &amp; Towns</b>			
Abergavenny	4	Town Improvement Act	No return
Caerleon	1	Caerleon inhabitants	
Chepstow	2	Chepstow inhabitants	
Monmouth	--	-----	
Newport	19	Municipal Corporation Act	
Newport	6	Harbour Act	
Pontypool	5	Lighting & Watching Act	
Rhymney	5	Parish Constables Act	
Tredegar	4	Parish Constables Act	
<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>		
<b>Police paid by Companies</b>			
Rhymney Iron Co	2	* The services of the 49 rail & canal constables have not been reckoned among the constables of the county for general purposes; their work being confined to their company.	
Nantyglo Iron Co	1		
Cwm Celyn & Blaina	1		
Blaenavon Iron Co	1		
Pontypool Iron Co	1		
Abersychan Iron Co	1		
Monmouthshire Railway & Canal Co	49 *		
Pontyminster Co	1		
Risca Coal Co	1		
Newport Dock Co	1		
Ebbw Vale Iron Co	1		
Victoria Iron Co	1		
Sirhowey Iron Co	1		
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>		
<b>Summary</b>			
Parish constables	465	These men follow their ordinary vocations & generally act only when called upon to do so	
Paid police	46		
Constables in pay of companies	13		
<b>Total</b>	<b>524</b>		

Source: GRO: Data extracted from Q/S Cons R 2 – 3; April 1855.

Twelve superintendent constables, one for each petty sessional division of the county, were appointed at the Midsummer Court of Quarter Sessions, in 1855. They took up their posts in October of the same year. The justices had looked to Hereford as a suitable example of the system in operation, and had structured their new force accordingly. All the chosen candidates had already 'discharged somewhat similar duties to those required of them'.<sup>138</sup> Edmund Wheeldon, of the Abergavenny division, for example, had previously served with the Gloucester Constabulary, and William Pennymore, of the Caerleon division, had transferred from the Newport Borough Police. A police committee of twelve men was formed – namely one magistrate from each petty sessional division – whose concern it was to meet quarterly, attend to matters of finance, clothing, discipline, appointments and dismissals, to inspect the superintendents' journals, and to submit reports to Quarter Sessions. Most of this prefigured the management of the Monmouthshire Constabulary, except that the Chief Constable undertook most of the duties assigned to the 1855 Committee. Ironically, however, Monmouthshire implemented its new system two years after a select committee on policing had 'declared the experiments with superintending constables to be a failure'.<sup>139</sup> The quarterly reports of the new superintendents may indicate why.

In March 1856, the Usk superintendent lamented that the duties of the parish constables 'have been very inefficiently performed, and those in *Usk* do not manifest a desire to cooperate with me, in preserving the peace of the town'.<sup>140</sup> In Christchurch, the superintendent complained that the 1856 batch of parish constables were, 'with few exceptions, labourers ... who from the nature of their Employment are reluctant in discharging any duty which may bring them in Collision with any of their fellow

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<sup>138</sup> GRO: Report of Committee as to Superintending Constables, Midsummer 1855: Q/S Cons R 2 – 11.

<sup>139</sup> Emsley, *The English Police*, p. 51.

<sup>140</sup> GRO: Quarterly Report of Superintendent John Hurd of the Usk Division, 7 March 1856: Q/S Cons R 0001 22



workers, or [give] any information against them'.<sup>141</sup> And in Monmouth the constables were said to have cooperated with the superintendent 'when cases of felony have been brought to their notice', but did not 'initiate inquires [sic] into Crime with energy for the public service which the office and their dutes [sic] require'.<sup>142</sup>

In general there was an apathy amongst the parish constables, which the superintendents had no control over: Death gnawed at the system even as it was born, though a few sparks of life flickered bravely. In the Raglan division, for instance, the superintendent reported: 'I have received every assistance I have required from the Parish Constables, some of whom are very active and intelligent men'.<sup>143</sup> And in Bedwellty the superintendent found the parish constables to be 'improving in the execution of their duties'.<sup>144</sup> However, any thought of resuscitation was too late. This was 1856, the year of the County and Borough Police Act (19 & 20 Vict. c. 69):

There was no more room for little police schemes based on parishes, petty sessional divisions or Poor Law Unions, nor for superintending constables, or small forces appointed under the Lighting and Watching Act or voluntary subscriptions. Those alternative models, widely tried in the 1830s and 1840s, were now no longer available.<sup>145</sup>

In Monmouthshire, however, the passing of the 1856 Police Act did not eliminate parish constables overnight. In January 1859 Constable David Jones resigned from the county constabulary and took up the post of paid parish constable at Abertillery. In the parish of Aberystroth (of which Abertillery was part), lists of men suitable for the office of parish constable were compiled up to 1892. After that date, however, the

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141 GRO: Quarterly Report of Superintendent Stephen Pidgeon of the Christchurch Division, 19 June 1856, Q/S Cons R 0001 49.

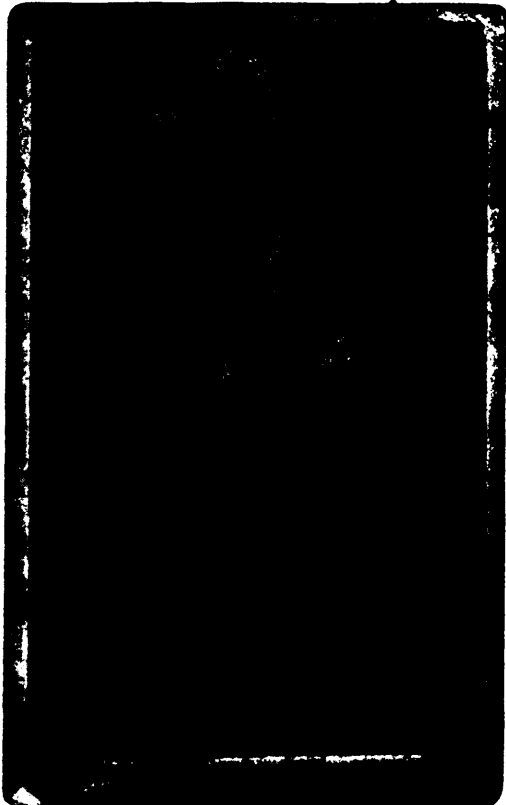
142 GRO: Quarterly Report of Superintendent Henry Brice of the Monmouth Division (undated): Q/S Cons R 0001 17.

143 GRO: Quarterly Report of Superintendent Jon Beswick of the Raglan Division, 7 March 1856: Q/S Cons R 0001 20.

144 GRO: Quarterly Report of Superintendent David Evans of the Bedwellty Division, 3 October 1856: Q/S Cons R 0004 20.

145 Philips and Storch, *Policing Provincial England*, p. 230.

vestry meetings were sparsely attended and very little business was recorded.<sup>146</sup> Furthermore, little evidence exists as to the role of these parish officers after the formation of the county constabulary in 1857. In Essex, as Scollan has demonstrated, parish constables were appointed 'until just before the First World War, but their responsibilities were minimal and had nothing to do with law enforcement'.<sup>147</sup> Fewtrell Clements, on the other hand, found that in Denbighshire there was a great deal of cooperation between the county force and the old parish constables. Denman, the Chief Constable of the shire, 'relied heavily on the co-operation of the 'old' police especially in the early years when the strength of the constabulary meant that the new police could not adequately police large areas of rural Denbighshire'.<sup>148</sup> One surviving photo of a Monmouthshire parish constable, with a small accompanying text, does give a clue to the tasks one rural parish assigned to its 'old' officers.



**Illustration 1:** Undated photograph of Parish Constable William Hatherall and his wife.

Hatherall was the constable for the parish of Llanwenarth Ultra (Govilon and Pwlldu) and father of Sergeant C. Hatherall of the Monmouthshire Constabulary (1888-1922). It is known that as late as 1877 Parish Constable Hatherall acted as a Coroner's Officer for the Pwlldu district – arranging juries and attending on the Coroner at inquests.

Source: GPA: Print reproduced by kind permission of the Gwent Police, from a scrapbook of assorted photographs (compiler unknown):

<sup>146</sup> GRO: Parish business recorded in the Aberystroth Parish Vestry Minute Book: D 1242.

<sup>147</sup> Scollan, *Parish Constables versus Police Constables*, pp. 2 & 250-251.

<sup>148</sup> F. Clements, 'The Development and Aims of the Denbighshire Constabulary in the Nineteenth Century' (Unpublished PhD thesis: Open University, 2004), p. 332.

## Conclusion

The diversity of examples given above would suggest that the Welsh were no purer in their ways than the English, and that 'innocent Wales' was a manipulated ideal. The glowing eulogies were an ideological construct; their writers recording only what they found to admire in the country. Vic Gatrell discovered much the same with eighteenth-century London. Guidebooks and 'panoramas', he noted, celebrated the city's 'wonderfulness ... with scant concern for the underworlds hidden beneath it ... London had many faces, and the face people saw depended on their experiences, temperaments and preoccupations'.<sup>149</sup> So it was with Wales. Wales was as much in need of practical remedies for its ills as England.

The advance of capitalism provided fertile ground for violent disturbances throughout the country, as did the failure of the legislation of the 1830s to produce any profound social change. Waves of popular agitation brought the all-engrossing subject of reform sharply into focus, and the reputation of the parochial constables was placed within this context, particularly as the removal of inefficiency in both local and central administration was at the heart of reformist creed. The alleged malaise of the old constables was easily exaggerated; in fact much of the criticism of the old system grew out of the fear of rising crime – a preoccupation of the reformists in seeking to realise their goals, more than a reality. However, the parish constable system was indeed far from satisfactory. The parochial officers' sense of social responsibility was undoubtedly dulled by the numerous impediments of office: the part-time nature of the work; the uncertainty of remuneration; the annual turnover of men; and the likelihood of assault, amongst other things. A parish officer employed under such conditions

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<sup>149</sup> Gatrell, *City of Laughter*, pp. 31-36.

would have had difficulty developing a moral or emotional attachment to his job. However, some were better than others. Constable Hatherall and his wife (p. 54) look eminently respectable and seem eager to convey that message by their well-dressed, neat appearance and the book in Mrs Hatherall's hand. Their son was an extremely committed policeman – having previously worked as a collier, Charles Hatherall joined the Monmouthshire force in 1888, at the age of twenty-one, and served for thirty four years. The Hatheralls were not of the Dogberry class.

But it was not just parish officers who failed in their duties, the county elite were not without blame either. The magistrates, while clinging tenaciously to their local hegemony, frequently failed the parish constables in many of their moral obligations towards them. In the town of Chepstow, for example, which was described in the 1836 Constabulary Force Commission as 'a great thoroughfare passing to South Wales and Ireland for vagrants and tramps of every description', there were no resident magistrates. Consequently, when a warrant was required in the division, there was either a delay in seeking out a JP, or one was not found at all.<sup>150</sup> Moreover, the 1836 return of the Christchurch magistrates contains thirteen unanswered questions, which indicates a dismal lack of interest in, or knowledge of, the parish constables of that particular division, as does their apparent belief that most of the constables were 'paupers'. The gentlemen's detachment is further reflected by their habit of seeking help, in times of need, from the Newport Borough Police.<sup>151</sup>

While most of the Monmouthshire magistrates agreed that a better system of policing was needed to meet the changing times, they differed from the reformists in

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<sup>150</sup> PRO: HO 73/5: Chepstow Magistrates Returns to the Constabulary Force Commission, 1836.

<sup>151</sup> PRO: HO 73/5: Christchurch Magistrates Returns to the Constabulary Force Commission, 1836.

their policies for achieving it. This prevented them from taking advantage of the 1839 Rural Constabulary Act. They continued, even after 1856, to lay great store by military intervention during periods of unrest, not least because it was what the country paid millions in taxation for. Their collective cast of mind was reactionary and parsimonious, and the pace and pattern of police reform in Monmouthshire was shaped by it.

## Chapter Two

### Fitting The Bill: A Recruitment Profile

Chapter Two, with its emphasis on recruitment patterns, records the dynamics of enlisting a constabulary force in Monmouthshire following the 1856 County and Borough Police Act. It charts too the difficulties associated with a parsimonious magistracy with fixed habits and a distaste for rapid change. Set against these are the energetic labours of the first chief constable, Major Edmund Herbert, who strove so valiantly to escape their rigid bounds in order to implement the new policing arrangements and thereby lay the foundations of a new system of policing in the county.

Also considered are the wider social and economic changes wrought by industrialisation, which impacted on recruitment patterns in the shire. But difficulties had arisen in different counties simultaneously, and Edmund Herbert's plight was that of many other chief constables in 1857: relatively high industrial wages coupled with compulsory police reform resulted in a paucity of 'ideal' recruits, if indeed such beings were to be found in the first place. Modern police historiography questions that they were. Taylor, for example, believes that :

The image of ploughman turned policeman, which was central to the model of policing that triumphed in 1856, also became well established in popular culture in the nineteenth century. The reality [however] was somewhat different.<sup>1</sup>

And Shpayer-Makov discovered, in relation to the Metropolitan force, that the 'overall success of the police in recruiting the type of men they desired did not necessarily determine the quality of the workforce'.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Taylor, *The New Police*, p. 47.

<sup>2</sup> Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman*, p. 75.

As has been highlighted in Chapter One, the ideal policeman was conceptualised by the many proponents of police reform. Most were of the same cast of mind as a Suffolk magistrate, cited by Philips and Storch, who had had quite enough of the “Dogberrys” and wanted instead a ‘system and a body of “active, vigilant and otherwise effective men”’.<sup>3</sup> After all, a reformed system of police required reformed policemen. The unquestioned belief in the idea of the trusty ‘ploughman turned policeman’ sprang from this sentiment and became a myth in its own time. Some police historians have suggested that with the implementation of the 1856 Act a new, reformed police came into being, and the old police passed into history.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, the word *reform* strongly suggests an historical discontinuity, but this was not entirely the case in Monmouthshire. Here something old and familiar was brought to the new, for many of the new policemen were simply old policemen in new clothes.

This may partly explain what Steedman describes as a ‘lack of provincial reaction’ to the new police, though she rightly suggests that by 1856 almost thirty years’ experience of new policing, together with the idea that a policeman was ‘part of a pre-existing hierarchy’, contributed to that ‘silence’.<sup>5</sup> The policeman’s lowly status, she notes ‘did not necessitate any special discussion of his position’. A policeman was ‘always to be measured against the fact that he was recruited from the working class’.<sup>6</sup> Emsley also suggests that the relatively smooth passage of the 1856 Police Bill was facilitated by a number of factors that had not been present when former legislation was drawn up: for example, the appeasement of the provincial elite, by keeping ‘existing local authority ... intact’; the amendment of the criminal law, which curtailed

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3 Philips and Storch, *Policing Provincial England*, p. 190.

4 Accounts by orthodox or Whig historians tend to exaggerate the differences between the old and new police. See C. Reith (1948) and T. A. Critchley (1967), for example. For a contemporary eulogy see J. Munro, Late Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis of London, ‘The London Police’, *North American Review*, 1890, pp. 617-18, cited in D. Taylor, *The New Police*, pp. 162-3.

5 Steedman, *Policing the Victorian Community*, pp. 6-7.

6 Ibid.

transportation and saw prisoners 'absorbed into the home community'; and the 'imminent return' of soldiers brutalised by war in the Crimea.<sup>7</sup> Such factors undoubtedly helped to mute protest in 1856, for the provincial population and its elite now had more reason to acquiesce in the new legislation.

The general implications of the arrival of a new county constabulary appear not to have been strongly felt by the citizens of Monmouthshire, for the mobilization of the nascent force in the Spring of 1857 was barely acknowledged by local commentators. In J. H. Clark's *Reminiscences of Monmouthshire*, for example, a single paragraph marks the event, whereas topics such as 'Hunting in Monmouthshire' and the 'Usk Rifle Corps' run to seven or eight pages apiece.<sup>8</sup> There are no major discussions in the local press either. The silence, no doubt unnoticed by the policemen themselves, is a telling reflection of power and status in mid-nineteenth century community life. It helps explain, as Taylor points out, why 'Victorian policemen can easily be caricatured and their importance overlooked'.<sup>9</sup> But because, as George Eliot once noted, 'we do not expect people to be deeply moved by what is not unusual',<sup>10</sup> a degree of silence should perhaps be expected.

Fortunately, a cacophony resonates from the Monmouthshire archives. Police recruitment registers, Quarter Sessions reports, various station books, contemporary newspapers, and the reports of the HMICs, have collectively provided the empirical support for *Fitting the Bill*. By examining how forces both internal and external to the constabulary shaped recruitment, and how recruitment shaped the constabulary's pattern

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<sup>7</sup> Emsley, *The English Police*, pp. 53-4.

<sup>8</sup> J. H. Clark, *Reminiscences of Monmouthshire* (Usk: County Observer Works, 1908), pp. 87. Clark, born in 1818, lived in Usk for almost 90 years. That the new police did not loom large in his orbit of experience and memory reaffirms Steedman's view that nineteenth century policemen were seen as unimportant servants, 'paid to protect property and keep the streets clean'. (Steedman, p. 7).

<sup>9</sup> Taylor, *Policing The Victorian Town*, p. 13.

<sup>10</sup> G. Eliot, *Middlemarch* (London: Oxford University Press, 1947), p. 207.



of development, the chapter thus explores the interface between ideology and actuality. In doing so it demonstrates what lay 'on the other side of silence' in 1857.<sup>11</sup>

At the Epiphany Quarter Sessions in Usk, in 1857, a report was presented to the magistrates on the subject of implementing the County and Borough Police Act of the previous year. 'Distrust of the central government, on both political and financial grounds', as Radzinowicz explained, 'was profound and of long-standing',<sup>12</sup> and this was emphasised at the Usk meeting by the reaction of the magistrate, Thomas Brown. Brown, who was a local industrialist and part owner of the Ebbw Vale Works, showed outright opposition to the establishment of a county force,<sup>13</sup> claiming that 'a very serious evil had come upon the county by being forced to constitute a constabulary ... it was the act of the legislature and they must bow to it'.<sup>14</sup> He further argued that the reform would put a severe strain on the already over-burdened tax payer, and the magistrates generally agreed with him. From 'legislation and other causes', they complained, 'local taxation was becoming a very formidable matter for consideration'. The present cost of the county's superintending constables, for instance, was £850 per annum.<sup>15</sup>

Such claims were not unique, they were part of the general rhetorical invocation against the establishment of county constabularies. For example, in a survey of nineteenth century police in England, Taylor found that often 'issues centred on who should exercise local control and what would be the financial implications of reform'.<sup>16</sup> And, as has already been emphasised in Chapter One, 'ratepayers in general [seemed] to have been less worried by threats to order than by threats to their pocket'.<sup>17</sup>

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11 G. Eliot, *Middlemarch* (London: Oxford University Press, 1947), p. 207.

12 Radzinowicz, Vol. 4, p. 292.

13 For a short biographical account of Thomas Brown see A. Gray-Jones, *History of Ebbw Vale* (Risca: The Starling Press, 1970), pp.80-1.

14 *Star of Gwent*, 31 January 1857.

15 Ibid.

16 Taylor, *The New Police*, p. 28.

17 Emsley, *The English Police*, p. 46.

Finance was certainly foremost in the minds of the Monmouthshire magistrates as the technical minutiae of providing a regular, paid constabulary was discussed. The task, as they saw it, was twofold – to provide a force on the smallest scale consistent with efficiency and preservation of the peace, and to do so as cheaply as possible. This it was hoped would secure the approval of the 'already over-burdened' ratepayers.<sup>18</sup> It should be noted here that the borough forces of Newport, Monmouth and Trevethin remained separate from the county constabulary initially, but the Abergavenny Town Police were absorbed into it from the start. The Trevethin and Monmouth police were eventually amalgamated with the county force in 1860 and 1881 respectively, but the Newport Borough Police remained a separate entity until the police reforms of the late 1960s, and are therefore not included in this history. The Newport Borough Police amalgamated with the Monmouthshire Constabulary to become the Gwent Police, in 1967.

In the course of the two-hour discussion it was decided that the county should be divided into agricultural and mining districts, with one superintendent, four sergeants, and nineteen constables assigned to the agricultural district, and one superintendent, two sergeants, and eighteen constables to the mining and manufacturing district. The exact division of the men was to be put into the hands of the Chief Constable on his appointment. The committee estimated that the probable annual expense of maintaining a force of one Chief Constable and 45 men would be as follows:

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<sup>18</sup> *Star of Gwent*, 31 January 1857.

**Table 1:** Estimated expense of the proposed Monmouthshire Constabulary, January 1857.

Men, Clothing and Incidental Expenses	Cost in £.s.d
1 Chief Constable	350.0.0
2 Superintendents @ £150	300.0.0
6 Sergeants @ £65	390.0.0
18 Constables @ £49.8.0 to £54.12.0 (say £52)	936.0.0
19 Constables @ £46.16.0 to £52.0.0 (say £50)	950.0.0
Clothing for 45 at £6.0.0	270.0.0
Incidental expenses including additional salary to the County Treasurer, extraordinary expenses under 2 & 3 Vict. c. 93	200.0.0
Total	3396.0.0
The Treasury will pay ¼ of the costs of pay and clothing (£3196)	799.0.0
Leaving the cost to the county	2597.0.0

Source: GRO: Quarter Sessions Report, January 1857: Q/S Cons R.7

The proposal to give the entire county of Monmouth a force only marginally bigger than that of the Merthyr district of Glamorgan concerned the magistrate Samuel Homfray.<sup>19</sup> He feared that if the HMIC compared the two forces he would not be able to certify the Monmouthshire Constabulary efficient and so grant it the Treasury allowance of a quarter of the cost of pay and clothing. In reply it was argued that crime in Merthyr Tydfil was more abundant than in Monmouthshire and that the present ratio of police to population in Monmouthshire 'maintained the peace so completely' that a larger force was not needed.<sup>20</sup> Though the argument was untenable, it was useful nevertheless in debates about numbers and deployment of men. Another claim, as already mentioned, was that no force could ever be adequate in the event of large-scale popular disturbances and therefore the military at Brecon or Newport would always have to be resorted to – it was, according to the magistrates, what the country paid millions in taxation for.<sup>21</sup> And, as it was always easier to increase rather than reduce an establishment, the resolution was finally agreed upon and passed.

<sup>19</sup> Samuel Homfray, like Thomas Brown, was an ironmaster and coalowner, and while his main interests were in Tredegar, his family had strong links with Merthyr.

<sup>20</sup> *Star of Gwent*, 31 January 1857.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

The next concern, therefore, was to appoint a Chief Constable. For this purpose the County Police Act of 1839 (2 & 3 Vict. c. 92 & 93) had laid down a set of guidelines for magistrates in Quarter Sessions to follow. These were updated in 1841 and 1857. Apart from an age limit of 45, just two other requirements were to be met. The successful candidate should be:

certified by a medical practitioner to be in good health and of a sound constitution, and fitted to perform the duties of office ... [and] recommended to the Secretary of State by the police committee in whom the appointment [was] vested as a person of general good character and conduct. (Home Secretary's Rules 1857).<sup>22</sup>

With this in mind, the justices set out to find a gentleman of quality and good reputation; an efficient and talented administrator; and a man with experience of having governed and directed others. Testimonials provided by the candidates were to guide them in their choice. However, as Wall points out, 'various hidden, social agendas ... were in play' too.<sup>23</sup> Local 'power elites' needed one of their own to fill the important post of Chief Constable. Their snobbery dictated that the new chief of police should embody the traditions of gentry life. The magistrates could not unite themselves with a man who had risen through the ranks of the police for they were 'antithetical to police occupational culture and sought to avoid any conflict of interest by appointing persons who would appreciate their own viewpoint'.<sup>24</sup> The following advertisement was published in February 1857:

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<sup>22</sup> Wall, *Chief Constables*, p. 90. Wall also points out that the qualifications for the post of chief constable 'remained unchanged until the rules made in 1920 under the Police Act 1919', p. 91.

<sup>23</sup> Wall, *Chief Constables*, pp. 100-1.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 128.

**Figure 1: Advertisement for Chief Constable of Monmouthshire**

**CHIEF CONSTABLE OF MONMOUTHSHIRE**

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN**, that the Magistrates of the County of Monmouth will, at the General Quarter Sessions of the Peace, to be held at Usk, in and for the said County, on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> day of March next, at Twelve o'clock, at noon, proceed to the appointment of **CHIEF CONSTABLE** of the Police Force, to be established in the said County, pursuant to the Acts 2 and 3 Vic. c. 93, and 4 Vic. c. 88, and 19 and 20 Vic. c. 69 some or other of them.

The salary will be £250 per annum, with an addition of £100 for travelling and other expenses. The Chief Constable's age must not exceed 45 years, and he must be in other respects qualified according to the rules made by the Secretary of State for the regulation of Police in the Counties and he will be required to reside within four miles of Usk.

Candidates for the situation are requested to forward their applications accompanied by testimonials as to qualifications and fitness for the Office, prepaid, to me, at my office in Newport, so that I may receive them on or before Thursday, the 5<sup>th</sup> March.

The Candidates will not be required to attend the Sessions on the appointment, unless specifically desired to do so.

**CHARLES PROTHEROE**  
Clerk of the Peace

Newport, Feb. 12, 1857.

Source: *Monmouthshire Merlin*, 14 February 1857.

The Chief Constable elect had, in every case, to be approved by the Home Secretary before he could take office but, other than that, the magistrates were given *carte blanche*. This situation prevailed until about the third decade of the twentieth century, when the Desborough Report of 1920 'sought to standardise, and centralise, many aspects of the police'.<sup>25</sup> The Desborough Report, born of several decades of disquiet over the policies by which chief constables were selected, and the focus of a campaign by the *Police Review*, thus began the process of change. And though change was protracted, much of the groundwork was laid during the latter period of this study. Wall has describes the pre- Desborough system thus:

the selection processes [were] comprised of local variants of time-honoured practices: this was truly the age of amateur policing and of management by the "gifted amateur", which for almost a century, had been the principle underlying many public appointments.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Wall, *Chief Constables*, p. 57.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 87.

The principle underlying the appointments of both Herbert and Bosanquet remained largely unchanged during the period 1857- 1914, and examples of their appointments reveal how the system of patronage worked. During the second chief's appointment at the end of 1893, however, support for change was building up. When he was being sought, it was specified that only men with police experience would be considered – a situation that was unique at the time.<sup>27</sup> The second chief, Mr Victor Foulcrand Bosanquet served between 1894 and 1936. No stranger to controversy, he was, at times, central to the campaign for change. A sequential overview, outlined below, of the process of appointing first Edmund Herbert and then Victor Bosanquet, makes plain the structure of the 'time-honoured' system.

Following the advertisement for a 'Chief Constable of Monmouthshire' in February 1857, sixty-seven applications were received, nearly all from military men. A committee of five was chosen to shortlist the best, 'not from personal knowledge, or examination of the aspirants themselves, but from the weight of documentary evidence laid before it'. It was to be a 'trial of testimonials'.<sup>28</sup> Five men were shortlisted, four military officers and a superintendent of police. However, only one was 'to the manor born', a native of the county: this was Major Edmund Philip Herbert, who had family and friends on the Bench, and on whom the choice fell with 55 per cent of the votes.<sup>29</sup>

**Table 2:** The list of votes

Name	No. of votes	Percentage of votes
Captain Brickman	2	2
Captain Carter	6	11
Captain Duverney	9	17
Major Herbert	30	55
Superintendent Wrenn	8	15

Source: *Supplement to the Monmouthshire Merlin*, 28 March 1857.

<sup>27</sup> Wall highlights the case of how the Buckinghamshire Constabulary, in its quest to fill the chief constablenesship in 1896, sought advice from seven other county forces that had recently been in the same position. Monmouthshire had been the only one to stipulate that police experience was essential: Wall, *Chief Constables*, p. 101.

<sup>28</sup> *Merlin*, 28 March 1857.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

Nepotism was part and parcel of the times. And while the 'the army and civil service had sought to eradicate its influence' it remained a 'fairly widely accepted practice in local civic life'.<sup>30</sup> Roland Hill, for example, employed so many of his relatives in the Post Office that, according to Daunton, 'a wit who enquired why Sir Roland was like the sun could expect the reply "because he touches the little Hills with gold"'.<sup>31</sup> Wall has demonstrated numerous examples in the police.<sup>32</sup> In 1877, twenty years after the formation of the Monmouthshire Constabulary, the *Police Guardian* could still announce that the post of Chief Constable was for 'the friend and gentleman who happened to enjoy the greatest popularity in the society frequented by justices of the peace'.<sup>33</sup> Steedman makes this point in relation to the appointment of county chiefs after 1856:

younger sons figure large ... not always the impoverished scions of minor county families ... it is clear that from the 1850s onward county chief constables served as an occupation for younger sons in much the same way as the army had traditionally done.<sup>34</sup>

Hewitt describes the situation thus: 'because of the restrictions of inheritance ... and titles to the eldest male', younger sons were 'inserted ... into positions of profit and authority in the state system'.<sup>35</sup> The insertion of Herbert into the prestigious role of county chief followed thus.

And everemoore he hadde a sovereyn prys:  
And though that he were worthy, he was wyse...  
Chaucer, *Prologue to the Canterbury Tales*.

Major Edmund Phillip Herbert was appointed Chief Constable of Monmouthshire on 23 March 1857. He was 33 years of age, a Catholic and unmarried. He was the

<sup>30</sup> Wall, *Chief Constables*, p. 141.

<sup>31</sup> M. J. Daunton, *Royal Mail: The Post Office since 1840* (London: Athlone Press, 1985), p. 5.

<sup>32</sup> Wall, *Chief Constables*, pp. 139-42.

<sup>33</sup> *Police Guardian*, 30 March 1877.

<sup>34</sup> Steedman, *Policing the Victorian Community*, p. 47.

<sup>35</sup> M. Hewitt, 'Class and the Classes', in C. Williams (ed.), *A Companion to Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), p. 308.

third son of John Jones of Llanarth, Monmouthshire, and Lady Harriet Plunkett, daughter of the eighth earl of Fingall. On his father's side, the family had reputedly descended from the Henry I's Chamberlain, Henry fitz Herbert, the Llanarth line having adopted the cognomen Jones in 1587. In 1848, however, the sons of John Jones of Llanarth had reverted to the name of Herbert by Royal Licence.<sup>36</sup> Prior to his appointment, Herbert had served with the Royal Monmouthshire Militia, a regiment he had taken charge of several times, most notably whilst his colonel was engaged in the Crimea. He had no previous experience of police work, other than having spent a few weeks at the office of the Chief Constable of Carmarthenshire, immediately prior to his selection, but for the task before him he was said to have been well equipped. He had, it appears, prevented a mutiny in the Militia by his firmness and strength of character, yet he had alluded to it during his interview in such a reserved and self-effacing manner, that the *Merlin* thought fit to declare, 'he had brought no trumpeter with him to extol his merits'.<sup>37</sup> He was described as:

a gentleman, whom the magistrates from what they [knew] of him, felt sure would discharge his duties with extreme diligence and, no doubt, with success, and who would give all [his] attention to the interests of the county to which he was joined by habits and associations.<sup>38</sup>

The magistrates, however, new him rather well. In a letter to the Clerk of the Peace, in March 1856, Herbert wrote:

I believe I am personally acquainted with about ¼ of the Magistrates, but as yet I have only written to two or three of the most influential – Williams, Bosanquet and Relph – to announce my intention of presenting myself as a candidate. I propose as soon as I obtain a correct list of them to send a circular to each ... PS Do you think that at present a personal canvass would be of any use?<sup>39</sup>

It was not uncommon for candidates to canvass support from members of the appointing body. As Wall points out, the most successful candidates were generally

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36 D. Attwater, *The Catholic Church in Modern Wales* (Cardiff, 1935).

37 *Merlin*, 28 March 1857.

38 Ibid.

39 GRO: Letter from Edmund Herbert to Monmouthshire's Clerk of the Peace, 17 March 1856: LLCM & V/10041.



those 'who could wield the most influence over enough members of the police authority to win the ballot'.<sup>40</sup> This appears true in Herbert's case for records show that other candidates for the post also sought the magistrates' names in order to canvass support, and the testimonials of all those shortlisted were said to be impressive.<sup>41</sup> The date on the letter, 17 March 1856, also indicates that Herbert was paying great attention to the progress being made towards the adoption of a uniform system of police in the provinces. He was preparing himself for the chief constableness even as the Bill was passing through Parliament. The contemporary Press has furnished us with a vivid account of his appointment, and this was made possible by an Act of 1834 (4 & 5 Wm. IV, c. 48), which 'laid down that all county business should be transacted in open court'.<sup>42</sup> As a result much was transcribed in the Press that did not find its way into Quarter Sessions' reports.

On the day of the interviews the number of magistrates attending Quarter Sessions in Usk was the greatest ever seen at the Court House. Among their ranks were members of Monmouthshire's leading families, including Herbert's brother John, and Alexander Rolls, a friend and fellow officer in the Militia. Other names associated with the Militia, such as Colonel Clifford and G. G. Tyler, were also amongst those who cast their vote in Herbert's favour. Colonel Clifford, who had worked closely with Herbert, had also provided a testimonial, yet the *Merlin* was able to report that the degree of impartiality shown was both 'striking and impressive'.<sup>43</sup> Yet another military gentleman of 'high distinction' captivated those present at the interviews. This was Captain Duverney – 'sprung from a line of heroes ... the *beau ideal* of an English soldier ... decorated on two occasions by his gracious Sovereign ... his talents considerable'.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Wall, *Chief Constables*, p. 100.

<sup>41</sup> *Merlin*, 28 March 1857.

<sup>42</sup> Philips and Storch, *Policing Provincial England*, p. 167.

<sup>43</sup> *Merlin*, 28 March 1857.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*

But, it was suggested, this 'proved man upon tried occasions' would be wasted in civilian life. 'The army is *his* calling – to it he should cling'.<sup>45</sup>

The Lord Lieutenant of the county, Capel Hanbury Leigh, who had not been present at Herbert's appointment, was thrilled to hear of the major's 'triumphant majority over his opponents', and believed 'the magistrates could not have made a better selection'.<sup>46</sup> In fact the whole event, from the perspective of a twenty-first century historian, has the feel of an army setting forth to do battle and returning victorious. At the Court House in Usk the battle lines were drawn unevenly in Herbert's favour, to enable his allies to outnumber and rout the opposition. And in this respect, the Monmouthshire example is absolutely consistent with Wall's conclusion that 'the candidate with the most influential family or personal connections tended to get appointed'.<sup>47</sup> It might be thought that a point in Herbert's favour was that he was reputedly a good Welsh Scholar, as the *Merlin* was quick to note:

We were glad to find that he possesses more than an elementary knowledge of the Welsh language, and when he promises to make himself perfect in its idioms, to be enabled to write and speak it fluently, we feel quite sure he will redeem his promise, and thus greatly enhance his sphere of usefulness in the public service.<sup>48</sup>

But how much use Herbert made of the Welsh language is not recorded, or indeed whether he ever became 'perfect in its idioms', though his family were attached by marriage to the Llanovers<sup>49</sup> and, according to Sian Rhiannon Williams, by mid-century:

There was for the first time in the history of Wales, a populous, Welsh-speaking industrial society which could afford to support a flourishing Welsh-language press, and innumerable Welsh social and religious institutions.<sup>50</sup>

At the time of the Chartist attack on Newport, *The Times* reported that the secrecy

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<sup>45</sup> *Merlin*, 28 March 1857.

<sup>46</sup> GRO: Letter from Capel Hanbury Leigh to C. Protheroe, March 1857: LLC C of P/3.

<sup>47</sup> Wall, *Chief Constables*, p. 128.

<sup>48</sup> *Merlin*, 28 March 1857.

<sup>49</sup> Edmund Herbert's brother married Augusta Hall, daughter of Baron and Lady Llanover – the latter being famous for her involvement in numerous Welsh cultural activities, and her patronage of *eisteddfodau*.

<sup>50</sup> S. R. Williams, 'Welsh in the Valleys of Gwent', *Planet*, 51 (June/July 1985), p. 113.

amongst workers in the lead-up to the event had been preserved 'from the fact of the mountaineers universally making use of the Welch [sic] language'.<sup>51</sup> And when, in April 1857, an advertisement was placed in the 'Wanted' column of the *Merlin* for police recruits, it emphasised that a knowledge of Welsh was desirable.<sup>52</sup> But very few appointees appear to have spoken the language, and the columns in the police registers which recorded a recruit's ability to speak it were seldom filled-in.<sup>53</sup> As no other references to Welsh were found in the sources drawn on for this work, language issues have therefore not been explored.

Edmund Herbert held office as Chief Constable of Monmouthshire for thirty-six years. When he retired in December 1893 very little had changed with respect to the selection of county chiefs, but much had changed elsewhere. The inter-connected spheres of political, economic and social change had shaped the force in a variety of ways: developments in each had moulded its operations, its labour relations, and its overall management, as will be demonstrated in the ensuing chapters. In the recruitment and selection of county chiefs, however, these developments had led no further than to the sowing of some seeds of change; seeds which contained in their genetic blueprint a new order – that of internally recruited men. But firm roots were not established until the inter-war years. As Wall points out, 'where internal recruitment did take place, it was not often on the basis of the principle of promotion by merit', patronage still played an important role.<sup>54</sup> This was evident in Superintendent Victor Bosanquet's appointment in 1893:

When the present Chief Constable was appointed, it was admitted that he was not the best of the four candidates ultimately selected. [But] the principle laid down was to select a candidate from the force and that principle was acted on.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> *The Times*, 1839.

<sup>52</sup> *Merlin*, 4 April, 1857.

<sup>53</sup> GRO: Monmouthshire Constabulary Recruitment Register, 1857-65: D3297.1.

<sup>54</sup> Wall, *Chief Constables*, p. 129.

<sup>55</sup> *Abergavenny Chronicle*, 23 March 1894.

In fact, Bosanquet, one of three Monmouthshire superintendents to apply for the post, had come third out of six candidates during the first round of voting, with Superintendent James of the Pontypool division above him.

**Table 3:** The list of votes

Name	No. of votes	Percentage of votes
Superintendent James (Pontypool)	15	20
Mr Jesse (Chief Constable of Devonshire)	15	20
Superintendent Bosanquet (Risca)	14	19
Superintendent Showers (Tredegar)	11	15
Superintendent Scott (Llanelli)	10	13
District Inspector Irwin (Listowel, County Kerry)	10	13

Source: *Abergavenny Chronicle*, 10 November 1893.

Bosanquet had, however, been sponsored by Herbert and he was also a member of the Monmouthshire elite.<sup>56</sup> He had further recommended himself to the appointing panel by an assurance that once in office 'all things being equal, he would promote from the ranks'.<sup>57</sup> In 1857 that statement would not have been possible; all things were not equal, hierarchy was rigidly controlled and '[o]pportunities were profoundly unequal'.<sup>58</sup> The contours of change that allowed such a statement are followed throughout this work.

**Figure 2:** Advertisement for Monmouthshire Constabulary recruits

MONMOUTHSHIRE CONSTABULARY
WANTED, TWO SUPERINTENDENTS, salary £150 per annum, including keep of two horses; SIX SERGEANTS, at 25s. per week; and 37 CONSTABLES, at from 18s. to 21s. per week. Age not exceeding 40; height not under 5ft. 7in. A knowledge of Welsh desirable.
Apply by letter, to the CHIEF CONSTABLE, Usk, Monmouthshire.

Source: *Monmouthshire Merlin*, 4 April 1857.

<sup>56</sup> Victor Bosanquet was the son of Arthur Bosanquet Esq. of Cleddon Hall, Trelleck, and nephew to Samuel Bosanquet, who, for many years, was Chairman of the Police Committee.

<sup>57</sup> *Abergavenny Chronicle*, 23 March 1894.

<sup>58</sup> M. Hewitt, 'Class and the Classes', in C. Williams (ed.), *A Companion to Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), p. 310.

In the spring of 1857 a force of 45 officers and constables was rapidly formed under the direction of Herbert, and despite the determination of the magistrates to limit the numbers, three more constables were added on 4 June. In Herbert's view, a force of 48 (excluding himself) was still quite inadequate for the role it was expected to play in dealing with the problems and demands of Monmouthshire's diverse society. This led him to prepare a comparative study of the proportion of policemen to population and acreage in his own county and that of the adjoining counties of Gloucester and Glamorgan. He presented his findings to the magistrates at the 1857 Midsummer Sessions.

**Table 4:** Ratio of police to population and area in the counties of Gloucester, Glamorgan, and Monmouth: Midsummer, 1857

Gloucestershire			Population	Area
Police	100	100	100	100
Population	1,207	100	100	100
Area	2,518	100	100	100
Glamorgan				
Police	100	100	100	100
Population	2,518	100	100	100
Area	37,915	100	100	100

Source: GRO: Report from Edmund Herbert to the Justices in Quarter Sessions, Midsummer 1857: QS/Cons R 0007 19.

A provision of the Police Act of 1856 had provided for HMICs to inspect forces annually and report back to the Home Office. Favourable reports resulted in the payment of a Treasury grant to the police authorities, of a quarter of the cost of pay and clothing for their respective forces. Efficiency, which the Inspectors were assessing, rested on a number of factors, but organisation and numbers of men were central to it. Following the 1857 inspection, the Monmouthshire force did not meet the required

number of men and was therefore declared inefficient. The HMIC recommended that the force be increased by 65 per cent: 'two additional superintendents, four inspectors, six sergeants and twenty constables' were needed before the force could be pronounced efficient, and thus receive the Treasury grant.<sup>59</sup>

The magistrates were caught between Scylla and Charybdis. The Boards of Guardians of the Bedwellty and Pontypool Unions had sent in memorials strongly denouncing any form of augmentation, on the grounds of cost to the ratepayers.<sup>60</sup> The Board of Guardians at Pontypool had cited 'pressure of the poor on the rates' as a result of trade being 'much restricted'.<sup>61</sup> The Bedwellty Board believed that 'the great expense [already] inflicted upon ratepayers by the establishment of the County Constabulary' should in itself be sufficient to 'discountenance any projected addition'.<sup>62</sup> Yet without the increase, the police authority would be denied the government grant. The Police Committee sided with the Boards of Guardians and concluded that it was not 'expedient to recommend to the Quarter Sessions any increase of the present Police Force of the County'.<sup>63</sup> The decision prompted the following response from Herbert:

During the past Quarter I have endeavoured by every means in my power to render the County Constabulary efficient, but owing to the insufficient number of men at my disposal, I have been unable to carry out any regular preventive system of police duties ... [while] the Constabulary remains in its present inefficient state there is every reason to fear that crime, instead of diminishing, will increase as this country will probably become the favourite resort of delinquents who have been driven out of adjoining districts.<sup>64</sup>

It is difficult to assess whether this rather worn rhetoric forced the Bench's hand. It had been used for decades. Following the formation of the Metropolitan Police, for

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59 Report of Captain Edward Willis, Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary for the Southern District, September, 1857.

60 GRO: Report of Samuel Bosanquet, Chairman of the Police Committee, Midsummer Sessions, 1857: Cons R 0007 28.

61 GRO: Memorial from Pontypool Union against the increase in police, 26 November, 1857: QS/Cons R. 7.

62 GRO: Memorial from the Bedwellty Union against the increase in police, 24 October 1857: QS/Cons R. 7.

63 GRO: Report of Samuel Bosanquet, Chairman of the Police Committee, Midsummer Sessions, 1857: Cons R 0007 28..

64 GRO: Report from the Chief Constable to Justices in Quarter Sessions, March 1858: QS/Cons R 7.

example, it was claimed that because the City of London remained outside the scope of the new force, it 'became a convenient refuge' for criminals.<sup>65</sup> And other areas around London complained of 'the familiar problem of undesirables driven out by firm action' in the Metropolitan Police area.<sup>66</sup> Philips and Storch also remind us that Chadwick used the argument 'as a major theme of the Constabulary Force Commission Report' (as was demonstrated in Chapter One), and that the argument 'was advanced as a sort of "domino theory" of necessary police growth'.<sup>67</sup> If the magistrates did believe it, then the fact that the borough forces of Monmouth and Newport, and the neighbouring Glamorganshire Constabulary had passed the efficiency test, may have added weight to the argument.<sup>68</sup> However, for whatever motive, they did respond positively before the next inspection; the force was augmented by 31 men, bringing its total to 80. It was duly passed 'efficient' by the HMIC in September 1858.<sup>69</sup>

This was a victory for Herbert, and something that the authors of his testimonials would have expected. 'Energy, demeanour, tact, and knowledge of men, from a long and successful rule of them, temper, firmness, great courtesy, all fit you', wrote one of his old commanding officers.<sup>70</sup> And these are the qualities he appears to have brought to his new position and applied in his relationship with the magistracy, which a man of lesser social standing could not have done. But testimonials could not always be relied upon. Those of the constabulary's first two superintendents utterly obscured the real men; on paper they fitted the bill perfectly, in practice they were a disaster.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Radzinowicz, Vol. 4, p. 172.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid, p. 202.

<sup>67</sup> Philips and Storch, *Policing Provincial England*, p.145.

<sup>68</sup> Reports of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Constabulary, September, 1857.

<sup>69</sup> Report of Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary, September, 1858.

<sup>70</sup> GRO: Extract from a testimonial providing evidence of Edmund Herbert's character from N. Norcott, Colonel Commanding Troops at Pembroke Dock, 5 August 1856: QS/Cons 7.

<sup>71</sup> GRO: Note from Edmund Herbert to Charles Protheroe, Clerk of the Peace, 5 June 1858. 'Both these men had the highest testimonials': QS/Cons R 7.

The rules governing the appointment of superintendents, like those of chief constables, were vague:

His age must not exceed forty years. He must not be less than five feet seven inches high, without his shoes. He must be a man of general intelligence, able to read and write well, and to keep accounts: and must be certified by a medical practitioner to be free from bodily complaints, and of a strong constitution.<sup>72</sup>

The first superintendents appointed to the Monmouthshire force were thirty-two-year-old Charles Wedderburne and thirty-one-year-old George Gordon. Both were almost six feet tall, 'gentlemen', and professional soldiers – each had a seven-year history of military service. Their credentials were excellent, and they were therefore appointed in April and May 1857, respectively.<sup>73</sup> Yet both disappointed their chief; Gordon was a thief and Wedderburne an inebriate, and both were dismissed after a year's service. Two brief lines in the force discipline book – six words apiece – heralded their departure.<sup>74</sup> There was no mention of them in the Chief Constable's *General Orders*, where the failings of lesser officers and men were always to be found, and Herbert's explanatory note to the Clerk of the Peace was equally spare:

I am sorry to say that I have been obliged to part with both my Superintendents – Mr Wedderburne is gone where I have no idea – Mr Gordon is still at Blackwood but is no longer a Superintendent. Both these men had the highest testimonials.<sup>75</sup>

Gordon eventually returned to London, where he had previously been stationed with his regiment. Unable to settle into respectable employment, he was jailed for a year in 1862 for fraud. Three years later, with his wife and five children in 'pitiable distress', he served a five-year term of imprisonment for a similar crime.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>72</sup> *Merlin*, 21 February 1857: 'Home Secretary' Rules'. The 'Rules' had originally been laid down in the Constabulary Act of 1839 (2 & 3 Vict., c. 93).

<sup>73</sup> GRO: Monmouthshire Constabulary Recruitment Register, 1857-65: D3297.1.

<sup>74</sup> GPA: Monmouthshire Constabulary Defaulters' Book, 1857-1929 [hereinafter *Defaulters' Book*], pp. 3 & 4.

<sup>75</sup> GRO: Note from Edmund Herbert to Charles Protheroe, Clerk of the Peace, 5 June 1858: QS/Cons R 7.

<sup>76</sup> GRO: Monmouthshire Constabulary Recruitment Register, 1857-65: D3297.1, and *The Times*, 3 May 1865.



Gordon and Wedderburne's replacements proved to be excellent men. Like their predecessors, Superintendents William Handyside and William Bell were military men. But Handyside returned to the army after sixteen months, and Bell resigned in less than four years to become chief of the Leeds Borough Police. The loss of Bell, who had been elevated to the rank of deputy chief constable in 1861, was a great blow to Herbert. 'I shall much regret this county being deprived of his services', he lamented, for Bell 'had always conducted himself exceedingly well' and had shown 'great zeal and intelligence in the discharge of his very important duties'.<sup>77</sup> However, Leeds was soon deprived of them too. On 15 August 1866, after a long illness, William Bell died of abdominal cancer, at the age of thirty-nine.<sup>78</sup>

The appointment of William McIntosh, in September 1858, and William Freeman, in November 1859, broke the mould of quick-turnover superintendents. William McIntosh, a soldier and veteran of the Crimean War, gave an impeccable twenty-two years service. He died in the force of renal failure at the age of fifty-three.<sup>79</sup> William Freeman, who had formerly served in the Gloucestershire Constabulary, was superannuated in 1895, at the age of sixty-two. He had completed thirty-five years service.<sup>80</sup> Two superintendents were appointments in 1860. They were John Grainger, of whom there are no details, and who left almost immediately to take up a military appointment, and David Jones-Llewellyn.

The case of Jones-Llewellyn is perplexing. At five feet, six and three-quarter inches (a quarter of an inch below the recommended height), he was the smallest man in the force. His inferior stature was also accompanied by crippling idleness and a total

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77 GRO: Monmouthshire Constabulary Recruitment Register, 1857-65: D 3297.1.

78 Details obtained from the death certificate of William Bell.

79 Details obtained from the death certificate of William McIntosh, and from the Monmouthshire Constabulary Recruitment Register, 1857-65: D 3297. 1.

80 GRO: Monmouthshire Constabulary Recruitment Register, 1857-65: D 3297.1.

disregard for rules. Yet he remained in post for eleven years. Herbert repeatedly threatened that his next misdemeanour would be his last, but one incident followed another with monotonous regularity. Weekly reports and letters were neglected; serious criminal damage and theft were ignored; constables caught drinking on duty went unpunished; drunk himself one night, Jones-Llewellyn assaulted a civilian, but escaped dismissal by signing the pledge and forfeiting his annual increment of five pounds. There were accusations of improper conduct with a young girl; he married without the Chief Constable's permission; and finally, facing dismissal after a catalogue of other complaints (which the Chief Constable kept in a special file, that has not survived), and suffering from poor health, Jones-Llewellyn deserted the force. The last entry on the totally inadequate superintendent's record is written in pencil and reads, very simply, 'DEAD'.<sup>81</sup> Heart disease claimed him on 9 March 1873, at the age of forty, in a cottage in Carmarthenshire.<sup>82</sup>

What accounted for Herbert's tolerance is difficult to know. Jones-Llewellyn, who was described as a 'gentleman' by occupation, was from Carmarthenshire, as was the Chief Constable's first wife.<sup>83</sup> It is known that Herbert was familiar with the county, having spent a short time at the office of its Chief Constable in preparation for his post in Monmouthshire.<sup>84</sup> It is possible, therefore, that Herbert knew something of the superintendent's family, which may have been well-connected. What is certain is that some years after Jones-Llewellyn's death, his wife and children, like the family of George Gordon, were destitute, and members of the force were given the opportunity to make a donation to ease their plight.<sup>85</sup> Detailed enquiries into the transgressions of

81 GRO: Monmouthshire Constabulary Recruitment Register, 1857-65: D 3297.1.

82 Details obtained from David Jones-Llewellyn's death certificate.

83 Edmund Herbert married Elinora Gwynne-Holford on 21 October 1865. Elinora was from Cilgwyn, Myddfai, in Carmarthenshire. She died whilst visiting Cilgwyn in January 1876, three months after the death of the couple's six year-old son John.

84 GRO: Testimonial of Captain Richard Scott, Chief Constable of Carmarthenshire, 3 March 1857: QS/Cons R. 7.

85 GPA: Hand-written copy of a 'Memo' from Edmund Herbert to officers in charge of sub-divisions: Memo No. 258, 4 August 1884. The book from which it was extracted was not cited.

senior officers is not abundant in police historiography. While Taylor has highlighted the failings of several in various English forces, he rightly considers the subject to be a neglected one.<sup>86</sup> In this work, the topic is more fully explored in Chapter Five.

Being a gentleman and a soldier, or having had previous police experience did not automatically make a superintendent a useful administrator or good commander of men. Several of the superintendents proved to be poor choices, others simply used the force as a stepping stone to higher positions, which undoubtedly impeded its development. The picture that emerges from the Monmouthshire records does not accord with Steedman's findings that in English forces generally the officer class was 'extraordinarily stable':

It was officers that provided the stability that has been ascribed to mid-Victorian police forces. Their backgrounds, their pattern of daily life and their daily work cut them off from the great fluctuating, impermanent army of the rank and file.<sup>87</sup>

From the examples given above it is clear that the quality of several Monmouthshire superintendents was poor. In the case of others, securing a county superintendentship was simply a device for being launched into the orbit of a borough head constablenesship or, occasionally, county deputy-chief constablenesship. This is backed up by Wall's analysis of the careers of chief constables in England and Wales.<sup>88</sup> Chart 1 and Table 5 below highlight the periods of service of eighteen superintendents recruited between 1857 and 1914 and their reasons for leaving the force. In Chart 1, it can be seen that eleven of the eighteen Monmouthshire superintendents served for periods of five years or less, two served between six and eleven years, and only five for twenty or more years. It is not a picture of extraordinary stability.

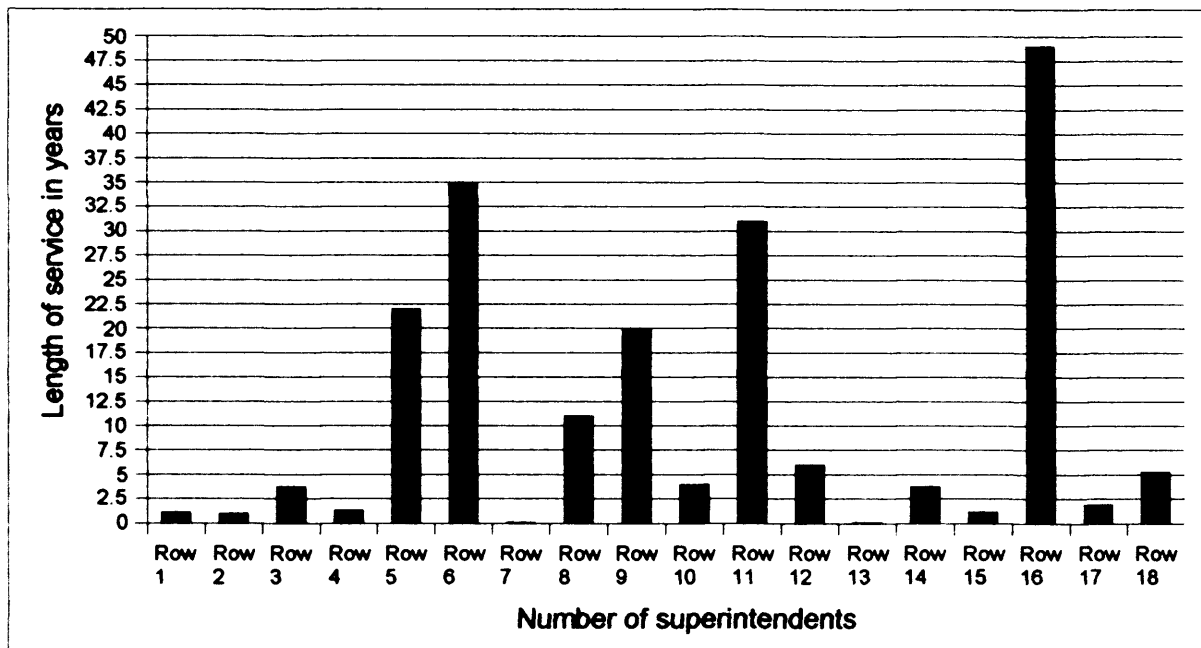
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<sup>86</sup> Taylor, *The New Police*, pp. 59-60.

<sup>87</sup> Steedman, *Policing the Victorian Community*, p. 119.

<sup>88</sup> Wall, *Chief Constables*, Chapter 4.

**Chart 1:** Length of service of eighteen men recruited as superintendents between 1857 and 1914.



Source: GRO: Constabulary Recruitment Registers, 1857-1914: D 3297.1-3.

**Table 5:** Recruited superintendents, and their reasons for leaving the force

Recruitment date	Name	Reason for leaving	Leaving date
24/04/1857	Wedderburne	Dismissed for drunkenness	16/05/1858
15/05/1857	Gordon	Dismissed for theft	31/05/1858
16/05/1858	Bell	Appt. Head Constable of Leeds Borough Police	01/02/1862
20/07/1858	Handyside	Returned to the military	12/11/1859
24/09/1858	McIntosh	Died in service	10/11/1880
29/11/1859	Freeman	Superannuated	01/07/1895
22/03/1860	Grainger	Returned to military	30/03/1860
05/05/1860	Jones-Llewellyn	Deserted the force	01/12/1871
11/01/1872	Berthon	Resigned through ill-health	01/05/1892
28/08/1877	Foll	Appt. Head Constable of Barrow-in-Furnace	1881
20/12/1880	Parker	Superannuated	01/11/1911
26/04/1881	Whitfield	Appt. Head Constable of Shrewsbury	12/07/1887
30/09/1881	Wheeldon	Joined when Mon. Borough Police and County Constabulary amalgamated: Superannuated almost immediately.	01/11/1881
01/01/1882	Gurney	Appt. Head Constable of Hull	01/10/1886
12/11/1886	Hasted	Died in service	31/01/1888
15/07/1887	Bosanquet	Died in service: Chief Constable since 1894	30/08/1936
08/10/1892	Showers	Forced to resign through bankruptcy	07/09/1894
08/02/1894	Parry	Appt. Deputy Chief Constable of Kent	31/05/1899

Source: GRO: Monmouthshire Constabulary Recruitment Registers, 1857-1914: D 3298.1-3;  
GPA: Quarterly Reports of the Chief Constable, Dec. 1883 – Jul. 1901.

A few outstanding men were responsible for holding the force together, and Superintendent McIntosh appeared like a giant amongst them. Old inhabitants of Pontypool 'can tell how the very appearance of Mr MacIntosh [sic] would be sufficient to disperse a crowd where ordinary constables were powerless'. When he died, his funeral procession, on a bitterly cold November afternoon, with snow 'coming down in a blinding curtain', attracted huge crowds, and was conducted in a military style.<sup>89</sup> McIntosh, an army veteran, was one of the ablest superintendents, and deputy chief constable of the force from 1865 until the time of his death in 1880.

The position of superintendent, like that of chief constable, was class based and it was not until the last quarter of the nineteenth century that men could expect to be promoted from the ranks. There were exceptions to this rule, of course. In Monmouthshire, Inspector Humphrey Fowler gained a superintendentship in 1862.<sup>90</sup> But generally it was not until the late 1880s that men could hope for such promotion. Even then more were directly appointed than promoted from the ranks, though by this time superintendents who were directly appointed invariably had police experience. Between 1880 and 1900, eight men were directly appointed to the post of superintendent, while five were appointed from the ranks. Over the entire period of this study, 1857 – 1914, twelve superintendents came from the ranks: two were recruited as inspectors, three as third-class constables, and seven as fourth-class constables.

At mid-nineteenth century it had been unthinkable that a lowly fourth-class constable might aspire to become a superintendent. But, by the turn of the twentieth century, a new breed of senior policemen was evolving – drawn from the ranks of farm labourers, general labourers and colliers alike. In 1874, for example, Charles Saunders made the journey from colliery to county police force and was promoted to

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<sup>89</sup> *Pontypool Free Press*, 13 November 1881.

<sup>90</sup> GRO: Monmouthshire Constabulary Recruitment Register, 1858-97: D 3297. 2.

superintendent in 1905. William Bullock came from the fields; a farm labourer in 1887, a superintendent of police in 1911.<sup>91</sup> How could common labourers be superintendents of police? Had the job been devalued? Clearly a significant shift had occurred.

The period covered by this thesis was an age of unprecedented change, not only in industry, but in the expansion of democracy, in class values and in labour /management relations too. It was an age of aspirations. As Hewitt points out, 'the boundary between the upper ranks of the working class and the lower middle class became more porous'.<sup>92</sup> Stone and Fawtier-Stone describe the change thus:

After 1880 the main props of elite hegemony collapsed one after another, opening the way to the transformation of what was already the workshop of the world into a more openly bourgeois society.<sup>93</sup>

The topic is only briefly dealt with in this chapter, as it is central to Chapter Five of the thesis. Here, it is suffice to say that major shifts occurring in British life were translated into changes within the police. Policemen's aspirations grew accordingly and were shared through the agency of police journals, which emerged in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Many of the working-class men who rose through the ranks of the Monmouthshire force had unblemished records. Coming from the humblest roots, and all things now seeming possible, they were driven by a powerful sense of ambition. In common parlance, they had 'fire in the belly'. They possessed a work ethic and honesty that was absent in some of the earlier superintendents of higher social standing. In this respect they dignified the position of superintendent and promoted stability and development within the force, but in Monmouthshire it occurred at a later date than Steedman suggests.

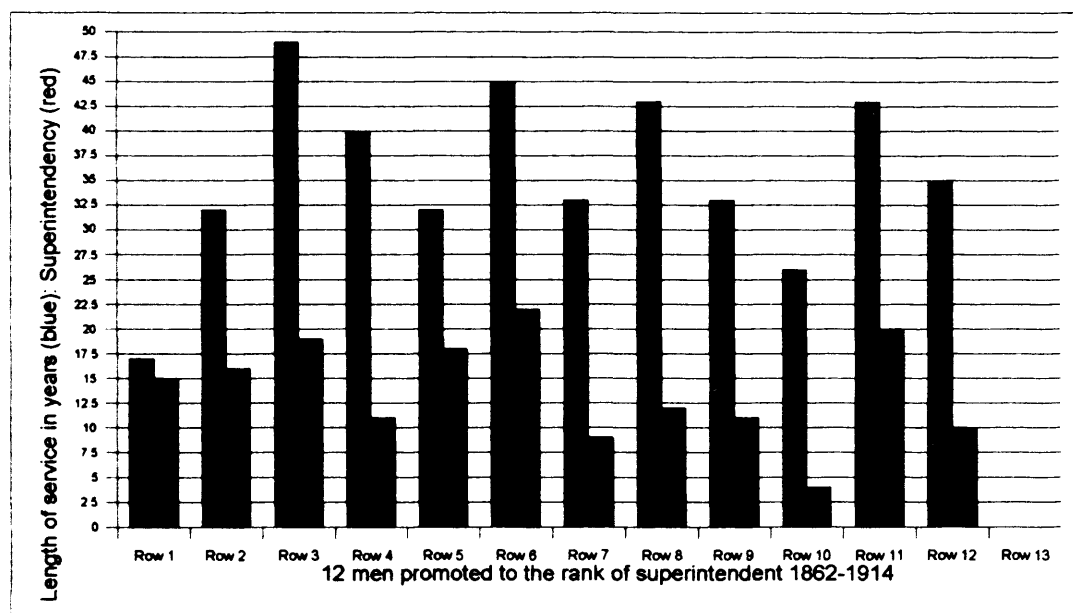
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<sup>91</sup> GRO: Monmouthshire Constabulary Recruitment Registers, 1858-1914: D 3297. 2-3.

<sup>92</sup> M. Hewitt, 'Class and the Classes', in C. Williams (ed.), *A Companion to Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004, p. 310.

<sup>93</sup> L. Stone and J. C. Fawtier-Stone, *An Open Elite? England 1540-1880* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), p.424. \* the topic is taken up and more fully discussed in Chapter Five.

**Chart 2:** Overall length of service (blue) and superintendency (red) of twelve men promoted to the rank of superintendent between 1862 and 1914



Source: GRO: Monmouthshire Constabulary Recruitment Registers, 1857-1914: D 3297. 1-3.

Yet the contours of hierarchical change were not entirely smooth. As the 'main props of elite hegemony collapsed one after another', the elite were at times thought to be trying to shore them up again. The drama that accompanied the appointment of Victor Bosanquet as Chief Constable of Monmouthshire in 1893, is an example of this. A superintendent's post had been made vacant by Bosanquet's promotion and, in filling it, members of the Monmouthshire force were passed over in favour of a young officer from the Bristol force. The young man in question was the twenty-four year-old son of an HMIC, with very little police experience and apparently no knowledge of the county of Monmouthshire. There was hue and cry amongst members of the Standing Joint Committee:

Well, it looks like a job; but I hope it isn't: because the new chief constable will create such a bad impression. It is his first official act ... he got a lot of very broad hints from the Standing Joint Committee about selecting a man from the force... Standing Joint must formulate a new rule. No promotion from the ranks above that of inspector; superintendents selected by advertisement from other police forces; chief constables to be appointed by special rule to fit the occasion, etc. I'm afraid there'll be language at the meeting of the Monmouthshire County Council next week. The Radicals – fine fellows that they are – will be “wanting to know, Mr Chairman” etc.<sup>94</sup>

<sup>94</sup> *Police Chronicle and Guardian*, 3 February 1894.

And, of course, there *was* plenty of 'language'. The Abertillery representative, Councillor S. N. Jones, was incensed and proposed that the Standing Joint Committee 'take steps for the dismissal of the Chief Constable for disregarding the promises he made when elected to the position'.<sup>95</sup> The Nantyglo Chamber of Trade also resolved that

this Chamber strongly disapproves of the manner in which the Chief Constable has appointed a YOUNG AND INEXPERIENCED PERSON to the position of superintendent over the heads of older and more efficient men in the county, and approves the action of several members of the County Council in questioning the same, and trusts that other local bodies in the county will take the matter in hand.<sup>96</sup>

Accusations of jobbery and patronage rumbled on for months, but the Chief Constable stood firm. After all, two of his senior officers in the running for the superintendentship had lost their nerve during the examination process and had withdrawn. Chief Inspector Parry, who was acknowledged to be 'an exceedingly smart officer ... and in every way qualified for the responsible post to which he has been elected',<sup>97</sup> had, on the other hand, submitted the best examination paper. A similar furore had occurred over his previous appointment. When Parry joined the Bristol force his career at that point had consisted of a brief period of service in Derbyshire. But, at Bristol, where he joined the force as a clerk,

[h]e is at once made an inspector; within six months he takes charge of the division in the absence of superintendents on leave, and within a year he is appointed chief inspector over the heads of thirteen inspectors, mostly of long standing.<sup>98</sup>

The editor of the *Police Review* wrote to Monmouthshire's Standing Joint Committee about the 'injustice', and how such appointments made through 'personal patronage' wrecked the 'hopes and aspirations of the best men in the police'.<sup>99</sup>

Some members of the Standing Joint Committee suggested that Herbert was more to blame than Bosanquet. At the County Council meeting in March 1894, Alderman

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<sup>95</sup> *Abergavenny Chronicle*, 23 March 1894.

<sup>96</sup> *South Wales Weekly Argus*, 17 February 1894.

<sup>97</sup> *Police Chronicle and Guardian*, 3 February 1894.

<sup>98</sup> *South Wales Weekly Argus*, 17 February 1894.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*



Parfitt complained that 'inspectors were not trained to become superintendents.' He believed, 'it reflected on Major Herbert's long rule that such men, after twenty-five years experience, were not suitable to take the highest position.'<sup>100</sup> Yet Herbert had constantly stressed that while it was always desirable that senior men should be selected from the force, he nevertheless deemed it impossible unless they 'qualify themselves by education.'<sup>101</sup>

No Sergeant can expect to be promoted to the rank of Inspector unless, in addition to the requirements of a good officer, he possess[es] sufficient education to write a perfectly correct and intelligent report on any subject, and to keep simple accounts.<sup>102</sup>

But many men fell short of expectation, which caused the Chief Constable to issue one reminder after another:

The Constables and Officers of the Force are again strongly urged to improve themselves in Writing, Spelling and Arithmetic and in the knowledge of their duties, by the study of their Instruction Book and Archibald's Constable's Assistant. In future, before Constables are promoted to the rank of Full Sergeant they will be required to undergo an examination at the Chief Constable's Office. Sergeants, before promotion, will also be required to undergo a further examination in the singular rules of Arithmetic – making up returns – classifying offences – writing reports and Police Law generally.<sup>103</sup>

In the summer of 1893, Sergeants Kendall, Capper and Pask, each 'having passed a satisfactory examination', were duly promoted to the rank of inspector.<sup>104</sup> Yet Kendall and Capper withdrew from the superintendent's examination, and Pask lost out to Parry. Despite the older inspectors' shortcomings, did 'the county [owe] her old servants a debt of gratitude,' as was suggested in the press?<sup>105</sup> It seems likely that the two who withdrew were conscious of their limitations. The third was simply no match for the better educated Parry. Prior to becoming policemen, Capper had been a farm labourer, Kendall a collier/stoker, and Pask, a woodcutter – by definition they were men of limited education. However, to rise through the ranks required

<sup>100</sup> *Abergavenny Chronicle*, 23 March 1894.

<sup>101</sup> GPA: Tredegar Station General Order Book, 20 July 1857 – 4 February 1864; GO of 2 Nov. 1861.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., GO of 1 Feb. 1862.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid., GO of 1 May 1862.

<sup>104</sup> GPA: Newport Station General Order Book, 31 January 1893 – 1 March 1901; GOs of 10 July & 3 Aug. 1893.

<sup>105</sup> *Police Chronicle and Guardian*, 3 February 1894.

intelligence, activity and perseverance, and each of these men had succeeded. But by what standard had they been judged?

Herbert had constantly complained of the difficulty in recruiting men of the highest calibre to the constabulary; a complaint that was echoed by other county chiefs. Parry appeared to have all the requisite qualities for command. He was young, ambitious, well-educated, and had proved himself in the Bristol force: he was exactly the sort of man Herbert and Bosanquet sought to bring fresh impetus and dynamism to the Monmouthshire Constabulary. He was also well connected, which added great weight, for even in the closing years of the nineteenth century, despite the changes highlighted above, county forces were still class dominated.<sup>106</sup> And Herbert and Bosanquet's views were not unique. They were, for example, echoed by a former policeman and Commissioner of the City of London Police, Sir William Nott-Bower. It was Nott-Bower's belief that persons required for the higher posts were

not generally to be found within the ranks of the police forces ... as nearly all the constables had little more than elementary education, and the constables with secondary education were dulled after many years in the lower ranks.<sup>107</sup>

Such sweeping generalisations no longer carry weight. Modern historiography demands a more objective assessment. And in assessing the men of the Monmouthshire Constabulary who rose through the ranks to become superintendents, it can be argued that far from being 'dulled after many years in the lower ranks' they had a powerful sense of ambition which drove them to heed Herbert's advice and embark upon a road of self-improvement through education. It can also be argued that ambition allowed them to be guided by the impetus and dynamism of some of the well-educated and efficient men recruited into the force. And, because all things are not equal, some were better than others in achieving their goals.

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<sup>106</sup> Wall, *Chief Constables*, Chapter 4.

<sup>107</sup> Sir J. W. Nott-Bower, *Fifty Years a Policeman* (London: Edward Arnold, 1926), cited in Wall, *Chief Constables*, p.131.

Below the rank of superintendent came that of inspector. As Shpayer-Makov notes: 'Police manpower was organised along the lines of a military bureaucracy with a wide base and a top-down style of supervision'.<sup>108</sup> As former policemen, the first inspectors in the Monmouthshire Constabulary were accustomed to police work. It appears that by virtue of their previous police experience (and perhaps length of service thereof), they were recruited as sergeants and quickly promoted. Ready-made policemen offered the opportunity for recruits to learn their trade on the job, for the initial training period at Headquarters was extremely short, and could generally be counted in days, rather than weeks or months. 'The less training time, the faster the authorities could make use of the newcomer as a full-time worker',<sup>109</sup> thus lessening the expense to the ratepayer.

Four men were promoted to the rank of inspector between 1858 and 1859. Pennymore, the oldest and most experienced of the four, was in his early forties. A tailor by trade, he became a policeman in 1839 when he joined the Bristol Police. He served for three years at Bristol before moving to Monmouthshire, where he spent a further fifteen years in borough forces. David Edwards had spent eleven years with the Carmarthenshire Constabulary as sergeant and clerk. Edward Lipscombe had come down from London, where he had formerly served with the Metropolitan Police. Lipscombe brought with him a very prestigious testimonial; he was recommended by Sir Richard Mayne, one of the first commissioners of the metropolitan force. The fourth inspector was Sidney Short. Short had served as a constable in the Gloucester Constabulary prior to becoming one of Monmouthshire's superintendent constables.<sup>110</sup> It would seem, therefore, that the nascent force was well furnished with experienced inspectors and that the Chief Constable had every reason to be optimistic.

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<sup>108</sup> Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman*, p. 15.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 100.

<sup>110</sup> GRO: Monmouthshire Constabulary Recruitment Register, 1857-1862: D 3297.1.

However, the first inspectors, like some of the early superintendents, disappointed their chief. Pennymore stirred up a hornets' nest in Tredegar, by forcibly entering the town's Punch House inn to serve a summons on its owner. He was reputed to have used insulting language and unbecoming behaviour whilst doing so. The problem was further compounded by the fact that the owner's wife lay dying at the time and the premises had been closed during her illness. During the inquiry, Pennymore had allegedly criticised the plaintiff's solicitor for being drunk, and the solicitor had responded with a barrage of complaints about the inspector's apparent failings: Pennymore had allegedly allowed obstructions on the footpaths, he had refused to follow up a nuisance case, and he was altogether too familiar with the men under him. The inspector was made to apologise to the injured parties and was moved from Tredegar to Abergavenny. But he was soon in trouble again. During the Punch House affair he had omitted to enter in the Occurrence Book a rape that had been reported to him. Six months later he was dead. He had been suffering from tuberculosis.<sup>111</sup>

Edwards, the second inspector, also made a hasty exit. After disappearing for nine days without leave, following his wife's discovery of, and violent reaction to, his involvement with another woman, he was dismissed. He was honest with the Chief Constable and confessed to having been 'labouring under a temporary derangement'. But Herbert dismissed him anyway.<sup>112</sup> Lipscombe's career was extinguished by the local pubs and billiard halls. Constantly drawn to them, he eventually chose to keep a 'billiard table' in Abergavenny rather than peace on the town streets.<sup>113</sup> His Metropolitan training and important testimonial had counted for little.

There are numerous reports of misconduct on thirty-six year old Short's record,

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<sup>111</sup> GPA: *Defaulters' Book*, pp. 96-7.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid, p. 150.

<sup>113</sup> GPA: *Defaulters' Book*, p. 150.

yet the Chief Constable appears to have treated him with some degree of leniency. Short allowed a constable under him to take out fifteen summonses without making proper enquiries into the cases – the inspector was made to pay for two of them himself. In an anonymous letter to the Chief Constable, he was accused of 'frequently returning in a trap the worse for drink; taking supper in The Boat public house kept by Kitty Rock; receiving £1 per annum from Mr Williams for looking after his woods; being so drunk in November or early part of December that he fell down in the bar of The George in Tintern and lost his horse; [and] of settling a case with Guy, the landlord of a public'.<sup>114</sup> In 1863 a more serious charge was recorded; Short had failed to make 'proper enquiries in a case of child murder'. On investigation it was found that there had indeed been 'want of activity' on the inspector's part and 'remissness in circulating information', but no real blame was apportioned him. He was simply reprimanded and allowed to continue. Later in the same month he was found, by the Chief Constable, to be slightly affected by drink, but again, a caution was all he received. He resigned the force of his own volition in 1865, at the age of forty-four.<sup>115</sup>

As the 'anonymous letter' complaints against Short were never proved, and the Chief Constable adopted a restrained approach towards his punishment, it seems reasonable to suppose that he was a satisfactory, if not energetic, policeman. In the case of Edwards, however, the code of sexual morality that Herbert demanded for the inherent dignity of his men and his force, had been broken. And, as far as the chief was concerned, there was no room for manoeuvre on the subject. Pennymore's difficulties in Tredegar may well have been due to the fact that he was extremely ill (though undiagnosed) at the time, particularly as his behaviour was, according to Herbert, 'so contrary to his general conduct'. And though privately Herbert accepted his inspector's word, he was not prepared to admit it publicly. The inspector was 'removed' from

<sup>114</sup> GPA, *Defaulter's Book*, p. 176.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

Tredegar to appease the landlord of the Punch House and his solicitor.<sup>116</sup> This recognition accorded to people of a higher social standing than policemen was to be expected at mid-century, but it was detrimental to the newly established constabulary nonetheless. As will be demonstrated in later chapters, alternative strategies had to be devised in order to ensure the force's stability, though certain conciliatory measures on Herbert's part, such as overlooking the failings of senior men, did not always guarantee coherence or stability.

At the bottom of the hierarchical order was the lowly constable. Lowly because, as Shpayer-Makov suggests, 'the low wage standard' paid to recruits 'shows that police recruiters were not intent on reaching the upper grades of the working class', in their selection of the rank and file.<sup>117</sup> Sergeants were selected from the best of these men. A survey of 251 men (excluding eight superintendents), recruited into the Monmouthshire force during the first five years of its development, however, highlights how men of every description were recruited, even though Herbert complained of having to settle for less than the best, because of the widespread demand to fill the ranks of the newly-formed constabularies. The situation was comparable to that of other forces. In 1875, for example, the Hertfordshire force comprised 'some farm bailiffs, some shoemakers, some labourers, some of all sorts'.<sup>118</sup> Even the heads of the Metropolitan Police were at times 'compelled to accept [a]... "large proportion of town men ... for want of better"'.<sup>119</sup>

In an effort to fill the ranks of his force in 1857, Herbert recruited men he had commanded in the Militia, as well as servants from his own and other local estates. Lord Llanover, the Rolls family of the Hendre, and the Currens of Itton, all lost servants

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<sup>116</sup> GPA: *Defaulters' Book*, p. 96.

<sup>117</sup> Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman*, p. 60.

<sup>118</sup> Steedman, *Policing the Victorian Community*, p. 70.

<sup>119</sup> Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman*, p. 52.

to the county constabulary.<sup>120</sup> However, very few of these servants and militiamen endured for more than one or two months.<sup>121</sup> The tables below present occupational lists of men recruited during the first five years of the constabulary's establishment. Table 6a represents the recruits' original 'trade or calling'. In Table 6b their occupations immediately prior to joining the force are presented.

**Table 6a:** First trade or calling of 251 men recruited into the Monmouthshire Constabulary between April 1857 and March 1862.

First trade or calling	No. of recruits	First trade or calling	No. of recruits
Labourer	55	Baker	1
Farmer/Farmer's son/Farm labourer	28	Black ornament cutter	1
Collier/Miner	28	Boilermaker	1
Woodworker/Carpenter	12	Bricklayer	1
Boot/Shoe maker	11	Brightsmith	1
Butcher	10	Coal merchant	1
Policeman	9	Engine driver (at Works)	1
Railway worker	8	Fitter	1
Blacksmith	8	Gamekeeper	1
Draper/Draper's assistant	7	Haulier	1
Iron/Tinplate worker	7	Limeburner	1
Groom/Coachman	6	Millwright	1
Gardener	6	Printer's assistant	1
Mason	6	Ropemaker	1
Tailor	6	Saddler	1
Soldier	4	Sailmaker	1
Shopkeeper	3	Silversmith	1
Servant	3	Tanner	1
Sailor	3	No occupation recorded	5
Painter/Glazier	2		
Plasterer/Tiler	2		
Schoolteacher	2		
Wheelwright	2		
		<b>Total</b>	<b>251</b>

Source: GRO: Monmouthshire Constabulary Recruitment Registers, 1857-85: D3297.1-2.

<sup>120</sup> GRO: Monmouthshire Constabulary Recruitment Registers, 1857-97: D 3297.1-2.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

**Table 6b:** Last employment of 251 recruits prior to entering the Monmouthshire Constabulary between April 1857 and March 1862.

Last employment	No. of recruits	Last employment	No. of recruits
Policeman	76	Blockmaker	1
Labourer	27	Boilermaker	1
Collier/Miner	20	Bricklayer	1
Soldier/Militiaman	19	Butcher	1
Farmer/Farmer's son/Farm labourer	18	Engine driver (at Works)	1
Railway worker	16	Gamekeeper	1
Woodworker/Carpenter	9	Gaol warder	1
Ironworker/Tinplate worker	8	Haulier	1
Boot/Shoe maker	7	Lime burner	1
Blacksmith	6	Plasterer	1
Mason	4	Printer's assistant	1
Servant	4	Sailmaker	1
Gardener	3	Shopkeeper	1
Sailor	3	Silversmith	1
Groom/Coachman	3	Tailor	1
Draper	3	Tanner	1
Painter/Glazier	2	No occupation recorded	5
Wheelwright	2		
		<b>Total</b>	<b>251</b>

Source: GRO: Monmouthshire Constabulary Recruitment Registers, 1857-85: D3297.1-2.

The huge increase, shown in Table 6b, of the number of men serving as policemen immediately prior to joining the county force, reflects the rise in the number of police forces following the legislation of the 1830s onward. For some, the move to the county constabulary was clearly a step up the ladder. A number of men transferred from small local forces; from the Monmouth Borough Police, the Trevethin Police, and the Abergavenny Town Police, for example.<sup>122</sup> Others transferred from larger county and borough forces. Half of the county's old superintendent constables joined the force, as did a number of paid parish constables and works constables. Many of these men were drawn on to fill the ranks of sergeant and inspector. And so, as has already been stressed, the break with the past in Monmouthshire was not decisive; the new police were not entirely new. Not only did some, like Inspector Pennymore, have many years of police experience behind them, but a considerable amount of police experience had been gained within the county itself.

<sup>122</sup> GRO: Monmouthshire Constabulary Recruitment Registers, 1857-97: D 3297.1-2.



For some policemen the move to Monmouthshire was an opportunity to return to their own localities. For others the move brought them nearer to their homes than their former employment had done. Sergeant Joseph Basham, for example, left the Breconshire Constabulary and Constable Thomas Powell the Liverpool Police, to return home to Monmouthshire. On the other hand, Superintendent William Freeman's move from Cardigan and Constable Henry Brookshaw's from Wolverhampton, brought them closer to their home town of Gloucester.<sup>123</sup> Why these men chose to become policemen is less easy to discern, though security of employment and various fringe benefits were obvious attractions.

Policemen's jobs were seldom affected by fluctuations in the market. Only once between 1857 and 1914 did the economic climate lead to a reduction in the strength of the force. During the depression of the late nineteenth century, when the iron and coal companies were compelled to dispense with some of their constables (men under the governance of the county force, but paid by the companies), a few of the most recent county recruits had to be released.<sup>124</sup> But this was rare. For those who endured, a small pension could be expected. Clothing was provided and other living allowances were made. In most jobs clothing and certain other living allowances were not routinely provided. Often 'navvies, dustmen, sewer cleaners and clerical employees' had to furnish themselves with clothing, equipment and other necessities. Girls sifting on the Merthyr slag heaps 'got no protective clothing'.<sup>125</sup> However, policemen, like postmen and railway workers, were part of the 'uniformed working class which was a growing sector in Victorian Britain'.<sup>126</sup> For policemen there was also an avenue for promotion,

123 GRO: Monmouthshire Constabulary Recruitment Registers, 1857-97: D 3297.1-2.

124 GRO: Monmouthshire Constabulary Recruitment Register, 1858-97: D 3297.2. See, for examples, the entries of Edward Pugh and Philip Miles, on 5 and 9 Dec. 1878, respectively. \* There is considerable overlap in Registers 1 and 2. Register 1 was replaced by Register 2, but not all of its contents were transferred, therefore great care had to be taken in compiling the recruitment database.

125 G. Best, *Mid-Victorian Britain 1851-75* (London: Fontana, 1987) [Hereinafter, Best, *Mid-Victorian Britain*], pp. 95-6.

126 M. Daunt, *Royal Mail: The Post Office since 1840* (London: Athlone Press, 1985), p. 255.

with concomitant pay increases, and though wages were low they were offset by the above considerations. Describing the period 1851-75, Best pointed out:

the loss of your job *at almost any level of society* was a much more fearful thing than it now need be; and security of employment was therefore worth a huge sacrifice of income.<sup>127</sup>

This was palpably obvious amongst policemen during the depression of the late nineteenth century. The economic climate had an immediate effect upon recruitment figures, and far fewer men resigned the Monmouthshire force during this bleak period than ever before. The situation was the same nationwide. In 1876 Captain Edward Willis, HMIC for the southern counties, noted that vacancies within forces were 'considerably fewer than in 1875', one of the reasons being 'the stagnation in trade, and consequent greater difficulty experienced by working men in obtaining employment'.<sup>128</sup>

Table 6c below highlights recruitment figures for the five-year period 1877-1882. However, the asterisked figure indicates a statistic that is not wholly representative, as the Monmouth Borough Police amalgamated with the county force in 1881 and the five men taken on by the county constabulary were almost immediately pensioned off – their hasty removal a sign, perhaps, of the desperate times. Though they had not been compelled to do so, there had been pressure for small borough forces to amalgamate with their county constabularies since the passage of the 1856 Act.<sup>129</sup> But, the amalgamation of the Trevethin and Monmouth forces, in relation to the provisions of the Act and the HMICs recommendations, is more pertinent to the topics of organisation and practice, and is therefore discussed in Chapter Three.

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<sup>127</sup> Best, *Mid-Victorian Britain*, p. 95.

<sup>128</sup> Twentieth Annual Report of Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary, Captain Edward Willis, September 1876.

<sup>129</sup> Radzinowicz, Vol. 4, pp. 298-300.

**Table 6c:** Recruitment into the Monmouthshire Constabulary between April 1877 and March 1882

Trade or calling	No. of recruits
Railway worker	14
Collier	9
Farmer/Farmer's son/Farm labourer	8
Labourer	8
Soldier	8
Policeman	8 *
Ironworker	3
Boot/Shoe maker	3
Gardener	3
Servant	2
Blacksmith	1
Blocklayer	1
Sawyer	1
Hoopmaker	1
Haulier	1
Assistant to general merchant	1
Coachman	1
Steelworker	1
Asylum attendant	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>

Source: GRO: Monmouthshire Constabulary Recruitment Register: D 3297.2

By 1914, the end of the period under investigation, recruitment had increased again and its pattern had altered somewhat (see Table 6d below). In looking at a number of English police registers, Emsley also found a decline in 'the old trades' and 'a plethora of new jobs'.<sup>130</sup> A few new trades had appeared in the Monmouthshire lists: some, like the mechanic and the telegraph wireman, reflected the rise in technology, many others had simply altered in composition. For example, more soldiers were recruited, and there was a small but steady rise in the number of men coming directly from the land. Servants, including grooms, gardeners, gamekeepers and footmen were also more abundant in Table 6d than in Table 6b: the figures being approximately 4 per cent in 6b and 8 per cent in 6d. Overall the recruitment figures in Table 6d give an indication of the changes that were taking place in Britain. 'The major part of the Welsh rail network was laid between 1850 and 1880',<sup>131</sup> and the motor car had made its

<sup>130</sup> Emsley, *The English Police*, p. 193.

<sup>131</sup> C. Baber, 'The Growth of Transportation' in H. Carter (ed.), *National Atlas of Wales* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1989).



appearance on the roads, thus creating an abundance of new jobs as well as altering patterns of life.

**Table 6d:** Recruitment into the Monmouthshire Constabulary between April 1909 and March 1914

Trade or calling	No.of recruits	Trade or calling	No.of recruits
Soldier	39	Barman	1
Railway worker	33	Boatman	1
Farmer/Farmer's on/Farm Labourer	29	Builder/Bricklayer	1
Labourer	19	Cab driver	1
Policeman	14	Clerk	1
Groom/Gardener	12	Farm bailiff	1
Collier	11	Hotel under-bootman	1
Asylum attendant	10	Iron/Steel worker	1
Carpenter/woodturner	9	Measurer for customs	1
Sailor	5	Mechanic	1
Gamekeeper	4	Musical instrument maker	1
Insurance agent	4	Plasterer	1
Mason/Stone dresser	4	Postman	1
Haulier	3	Potter	1
Woodcutter	3	Prison warder	1
Blacksmith	2	Quarryman	1
Warehouseman	2	Telegraph wireman	1
Footman	2		
Shop assistant	2		
Engineman at works	2		
		<b>Total</b>	<b>226</b>

Source: GRO: Monmouthshire Constabulary Recruitment Register, 1898-1919: D 3297.3.

The gradual increase since 1857 in the number of farming men is perhaps indicative that such men had become surplus to the needs of agriculture in a contracting rural population. Analysing the distribution of national income in the 1870s, Best observed that the fastest declining sector 'was that of agriculture, etc., which more or less matched the decline in the proportion of people engaged in it'.<sup>132</sup> On the other hand, it has also been suggested that 'by the turn of the twentieth century, the appeal of the rural workers [as police recruits] seemed, if anything, to increase'.<sup>133</sup> It is likely therefore that agricultural workers were being actively sought as police recruits and, owing to the decline in farming, they were more easily obtained. The relative

<sup>132</sup> Best, *Mid-Victorian Britain*, p. 98.

<sup>133</sup> Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman*, p. 46.

abundance of soldiers in Table 6d may be due, as Emsley has suggested, to Cardwell's army reforms, or more specifically to the 'short-service enlistment'.<sup>134</sup>

Men were now leaving the army after a relatively short period; they were still young and, perhaps had grown attached to life in a disciplined, uniformed, hierarchical institution.<sup>135</sup>

But generally, as Shpayer-Makov points out, 'the soldier proved a poor policeman, as measured by both length of service and suitability'.<sup>136</sup> This was also the case in Monmouthshire. Of thirty-nine soldiers recruited into the force between 1909 and 1914, twenty-one served for less than a year; ten served between one and five years; one, between six and ten years; and only seven for longer than ten years. The terms of office of this last group ranged from between fourteen and forty-one years: the longest serving was Superintendent Lawrence Spendlove, who joined the Army at sixteen and served there for eight years before becoming a policeman. He was the only member of the group to rise to the rank of superintendent.

Emsley has observed that in some forces it was the policy to recruit from outside the police district because strangers were 'less likely to find themselves in a situation of conflicting loyalties' (much as the old parish constables had done). But he also found that 'more often the police drew on what they could get'.<sup>137</sup> As has been shown, this was the case in Monmouthshire. Consequently, many of the recruits were local men; some born and raised in the rural parishes, some in the industrial towns. Others, who were working in the industrial centres at the time of their recruitment, had already migrated from their county or country of origin, as had many of the 'old' policemen. These facts can be found in the admission registers, which record (with some gaps) a recruit's place of birth, last residence and last employer. A sample of the industrial immigrant workers,

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<sup>134</sup> Emsley, *The English Police*, p. 195.

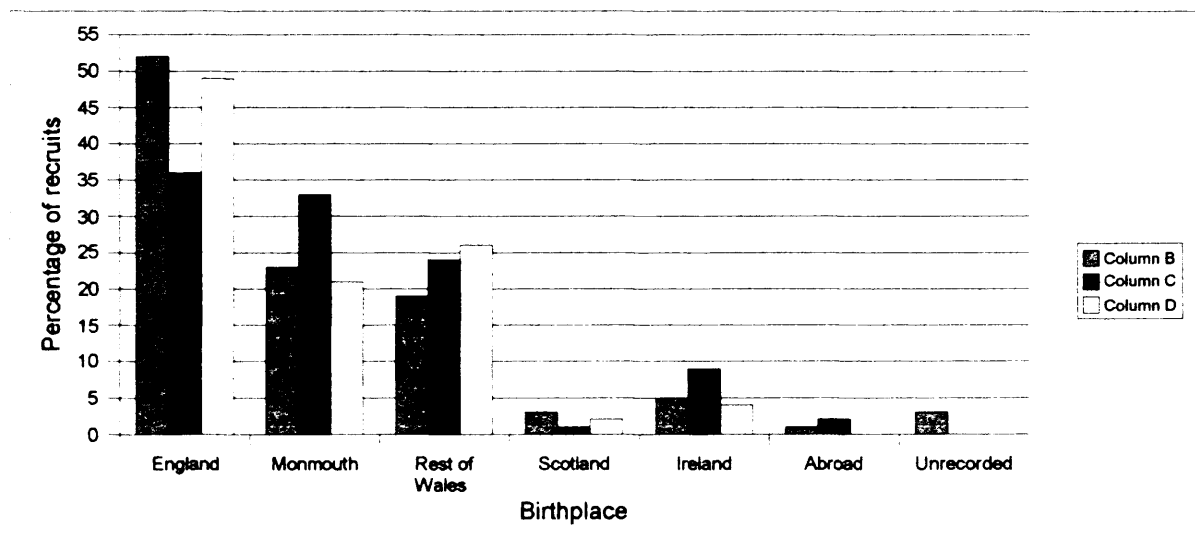
<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 195-6.

<sup>136</sup> Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman*, p. 91.

<sup>137</sup> Emsley, *The English Police*, p. 197.

for example, are Richard Williams from Montgomery, who joined the force from a colliery in Talywain; Joseph Millett and Joseph Cook, both from Somerset, who came from the ironworks at Blaina and the Varteg Mineral Works, respectively; Jeremiah Evans from Pembroke, was recruited from a colliery in Rhymney; Evan Owen, also from Pembroke, and Charles Anning from Dorset, both joined the force from the Britton Ferry Ironworks.<sup>138</sup>

**Chart 3:** Origin of recruits to the Monmouthshire Constabulary over three five year periods: Column B represents 1857-62; Column C, 1877-82; Column D, 1909-14.



Source: GRO: Monmouthshire Constabulary Recruitment Registers, 1857-1914: D 3297.1-3

Chart 3 above shows English-born recruits to the force to be in the majority throughout the period of this study, and men from other parts of Wales outnumbering Monmouthshire-born men in the 1909-14 period. However, this tends to camouflage the fact, as indicated above, that many immigrants had already settled in the county before the constabulary was established. Some may even have begun to think of themselves as 'local'. Recruitment from the industrial heartlands may also have reflected a desire on Herbert's part to employ men who were familiar with such communities. Many of the industrial towns had a 'frontier' quality, which frightened

<sup>138</sup> GRO: Monmouthshire Constabulary Recruitment Registers, 1857-1914: D 3297. 1-3.

observers (not least Lord Melbourne), and tough towns required tough men to police them. For example, in Middlesbrough, in 1854, it was decided to issue two members of the force with cutlasses 'following assaults on the town's police'.<sup>139</sup> In 1875 the chief constable of Staffordshire told a Parliamentary Select Committee that 'the policemen in the Black Country are liable to be hurt every day'.<sup>140</sup> And notorious amongst Welsh 'frontier' towns was Merthyr, where 'Superintendent Wrenn ... and his officers physically fought their way into "no-go" areas like "China"'.<sup>141</sup> Men with the capacity to manage violent situations and not feel intimidated by their surroundings were as much needed in the Monmouthshire force as elsewhere. By recruiting them Herbert was probably addressing this situation.

### Conclusion

The hastily erected platform from which the constabulary was launched inevitably led to compromise (debates about implementing the 1856 Act began in January 1857, Herbert was appointed in March, and by midsummer the constabulary was up and running). Few of the early superintendents had any knowledge of policing and while Herbert's own practical knowledge was rudimentary, evidence does suggest that he had taken an interest in the subject for at least a year before his appointment. The circumstances of his appointment were accepted practice at the time. As Steedman points out:

Military experience was the binding experience between all nineteenth-century chief constables, though the growth in magistrates use of such experience after 1856 is striking.<sup>142</sup>

In choosing superintendents, Herbert still clung to what Stone and Fawtier-Stone describe as 'the old distinction between the gentlemen and the rest of the population'.<sup>143</sup>

<sup>139</sup> Taylor, *Policing the Victorian Town*, p. 35.

<sup>140</sup> PP, 1875 (352), *Select Committee on Police Superannuation Funds*, q. 1614, cited in C. Emsley, *Hard Men: Violence in England Since 1750* (London: Hambledon and London, 2005), p. 133.

<sup>141</sup> Jones, *Crime in Nineteenth-Century Wales*, p. 211.

<sup>142</sup> Steedman, *Policing the Victorian Community*, p. 47.

<sup>143</sup> Stone and Fawtier-Stone, *An Open Elite?* p. 408.

However, whether from naivety or poor judgment of character, some of the chief's choices were disastrous. The interests of the force were certainly not promoted by the likes of Wedderburne, Gordon or Jones-Llewellyn. The latter's eleven-year term of office is particularly difficult to account for: in fact it must be said that the interests of Jones-Llewellyn were put above the general interests of the force. It can only be surmised that 'a common bond of gentility' kept him at Herbert's side, for on the whole the Chief Constable was committed to a high standard of right and wrong. This could prove costly. His hasty removal of Inspector Edwards, who appears to have worked hard, and his tolerance of Jones-Llewellyn, whose idleness and misconduct were legendary, and no doubt influenced those beneath him, was not conducive to the fledgling force, as will be seen in the following chapters.

In choosing the rank and file, Herbert tempered any lofty idealism he may have had. It was the only option, as police forces were being established nationwide and industrial wages in Monmouthshire were high at mid-century, despite protests from the Boards of Guardians to the contrary. The new force comprised a large proportion of industrial labourers from the burgeoning valley communities. These men did not fit the ideological profile of rural recruits 'fresh from the country ... [with] neither connections nor vested interests in the terrain they were to patrol'.<sup>144</sup> Being local, many of the new recruits *did* have a vested interest in the communities they were sent to police. In one sense they were an asset to a chief who knew little of the industrial valleys at the time of his appointment. But, as a proportion of the men had already served those communities as policemen, not only were they known to the local people and to the magistrates who sat on the police committee, or issued warrants, they undoubtedly imposed their past experiences upon the new job. Inspector Sidney Short's was a case in question.

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<sup>144</sup> Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman*, p. 49.



Herbert himself was well-known in county circles; not only was he chosen by the local elite, he was one of them. Therefore, in looking for an answer to the relative silence that greeted the arrival of the new force, the fact that the chief was a local man and the new police were not altogether new, seems the most obvious. George Eliot's maxim, 'we do not expect people to be deeply moved by what is not unusual',<sup>145</sup> fits the bill exactly. By 1857, much of the ground had already been cleared and the arguments for and against the new police were, for the most part, exhausted. The attitudes and assumptions of the governing elite changed little over the larger period of this study. Elitism continued to dominate power politics, though the democratic idea called this into question in the closing years of the century. But democracy only slowly permeated beliefs, there was no dramatic and decisive turning point.

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<sup>145</sup>G. Eliot, *Middlemarch* (London: Oxford University Press, 1947), p. 207.

Undated photograph of Constable Sydney Banks



Source: GPA: Print reproduced, with the kind permission of the Gwent Police, from a scrapbook of assorted prints (compiler unknown).

Banks, a former soldier, joined the Monmouthshire Constabulary on 18 June 1894, at the age of twenty-five. In October 1905 Banks, by then a sergeant, was dismissed for 'persistent lying'. He had served for eleven years with a hitherto clean disciplinary slate.

## Chapter Three

### Organisation and Practice: developing the infrastructure and day-to-day duties.

Creating a county constabulary with little prior planning and a non-existent infrastructure was deeply problematic for the Chief Constable. Consequently there was no rushing river of change in policing in Monmouthshire after 1857. In stark contrast to the rapid development of industry, police reform seeped in quietly and spread itself gently over the fifty-seven-year period of this study. Nonetheless, industrial growth and economic expansion were crucial to the dynamics of development and change within the force, not least because industrialisation was accompanied, at times, by serious political tensions. The provision and placement of police buildings, the distribution of the men, the periodic adjustments to that distribution, and the day-to-day duties of the constabulary, were all bound to the revolution in industry, and to the social and political impact this had both locally and nationally. The structure of the force cannot be separated from these influences.

Influences wrought by industrialisation and national politics determined operational strategies, not just in the industrial heartland of Monmouthshire, but throughout the county generally. Political activity in the industrial communities frequently impacted upon policing practices in the rural communities by depriving small towns and villages of policemen. Other national concerns also caused dislocation. The Fenian outrages in London and other cities in the 1860s, for example, caused a considerable ripple effect in Monmouthshire and a temporary hiatus in the normal day-to-day practice of policing. Under Home Office direction policemen were

temporarily turned into government spies and informers and sent to watch for landings along the coast of the Bristol Channel.<sup>1</sup>

The chapter, in tracing the organisation, development, and activity of the constabulary between 1857 and 1914, considers the challenges that were encountered along the way and how these were overcome. Faced with a lack of money, infrastructure and policing skills, the road ahead must have seemed daunting for Herbert. However, despite enormous problems progress was made, though the contours of that progress meandered considerably. While promotional opportunities are intricately bound to the chapter's themes, they are also pivotal to the final chapter and so to avoid overlap have been consigned to it. This chapter is also divided into two sections. Section one examines the development and expansion of police property and divisions, and section two considers the day-to-day duties and obligations of the men.

For efficiency in organisation and practice, top-class administrators are required. Superintendents, in particular, need management skills. But, as has already been demonstrated, in the early years of the Monmouthshire force, as in other forces, 'the material itself was not promising'.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, little attention was paid to the training of the rank and file, and the period of training was extremely brief.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, the validity of the statement that the general structure of policing was radically altered following the Police Act of 1856 is again questioned in this chapter.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> GPA: Secretary of State's Letters, 1857-1879; letters of 28 September 1867 and 19 December 1867.

<sup>2</sup> Radzinowicz, Vol. 4, p. 166.

<sup>3</sup> In 1857 a Monmouthshire recruit's training lasted between three days and a week (very occasionally it was extended). The situation not dissimilar to the early years in the Metropolitan force where, as Shpayer-Makov found, there was no formal training period: Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman*, p. 98.

<sup>4</sup> Steedman, *Policing the Victorian Community*, p. 9

Following on from Chapter Two, it is argued that given the hasty preparation that necessarily followed the 1856 Police Act, and the parsimony of the magistrates, a well organised police force could not develop rapidly. The overall aim of the chapter, however, is to offer, from the organisational experiences and practices of the Monmouthshire force, a local perspective that can be placed within the wider picture of police reform, and the debates that surround it.

#### Organisation:

With the recruitment of a body of men came the problem of accommodating them. As police property represented a great burden of expenditure on the county purse, the magistrates in quarter sessions initially took no measures to provide either stations or lockups. The Chief Constable was forced to employ temporary measures and billet his men in rented cottages, which were adapted to serve as stations, or in lodgings. Quarter Sessions reports provide abundant evidence of Herbert's constant quest for accommodation. In June 1858 he complained:

The total lack of County Stations and Lockups is ... a serious drawback to the proper working of the Force and is in populous districts a *source of great expense to the county*.<sup>5</sup>

Four months later:

The absence of Stations in those parts of the County where house accommodation is scarce is so great an inconvenience that at times it is almost impossible to carry on the Police duties.<sup>6</sup>

The following year the Abergavenny lockup, rented at a cost of five pounds per annum, required the 'immediate attention' of the magistrates. According to Herbert, the

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<sup>5</sup> GRO: Report of the Chief Constable to the Magistrates in Quarter Sessions, 26 June 1858: QS/Cons R 0007-32.

<sup>6</sup> GRO: Report of the Chief Constable to the Magistrates in Quarter Sessions, 18 October 1858: QS/Cons R 0007-33.

building which consisted of 'three dark, damp, unwholesome cells' was 'infested with rats, and totally unfitted for the detention of even the greatest Criminal'.<sup>7</sup> In the opening years of the new constabulary, therefore, and in stark contrast to the county's borough towns, the complete absence of police property presented a rather sorry picture.

As already highlighted, there were three other forces operating in the county in 1857; the borough forces of Newport and Monmouth, and the Pontypool town and parish police of Trevethin; all were equipped with stations and cells. The Newport police were exceptionally well provided for with headquarters, courthouse and nine good cells adjoining the town hall, and an auxiliary station situated elsewhere in the borough. Herbert, on the other hand was obliged to set up headquarters in the town hall at Usk, in a room that had to be vacated when the court was in session.<sup>8</sup> 'I am not aware that any other Chief Constable is so circumstanced', he complained.<sup>9</sup> But his situation was not unique; police property was at a premium elsewhere and Captain McHardy, of the Essex force, began his career in a vacant room at the county's Springfield gaol.<sup>10</sup>

Restricted budgets hampered police forces for decades. In 1894 the *Police Chronicle* pointed out that '[t]he duty of providing suitable police buildings has been one of slow growth owing to the expenditure involved',<sup>11</sup> and contemporary reports of the HMICs frequently allude to the problem. Many police buildings were condemned

<sup>7</sup> GRO: Report of the Chief Constable to the Magistrates in Quarter Sessions, 25 June 1859: QS/Cons R 0007 35.

<sup>8</sup> GRO: Report of the Chief Constable to the Clerk of the Peace, 31 March 1857: QS/Cons R 0007 24.

<sup>9</sup> GRO: Report of the Chief Constable to the Magistrates in Quarter Sessions, 18 October 1858: QS/Cons R 0007 33

<sup>10</sup> B. Tabrum, *A Short History of the Essex Constabulary* (Essex: Essex Constabulary Publication, 1911), p. 28.

<sup>11</sup> *Police Chronicle*, 28 April 1894

for dampness, defective construction and bad design. Station houses had to function both as family homes and detention centres and there might be little to enforce the separate roles. Gender differences were always a burden in these situations.

Some of the constabulary stations have only one cell and, in the event of prisoners of both sexes being apprehended ... for the night ... it entails the private apartments of the constable being occupied by one or more of the prisoners, which can hardly be considered safe custody, as the constable may at any moment be called away for duty elsewhere.<sup>12</sup>

In the absence of lockups prisoners were also confined in some novel ways:

When a constable finds it imperative ... to apprehend a drunken & violent man, in most cases he must either confine the unhappy wretch in a dark, unhealthy vault or dungeon or else chain him to his kitchen grate.<sup>13</sup>

But again, in this respect, Monmouthshire was not unique. The acquisition of police property in Caernarvonshire was also a protracted affair. With no cell or lockup in Llanllyfni, on 'fair days and at other times, prisoners were locked up in a cowhouse, and no immediate steps were taken to remedy this'.<sup>14</sup>

The weak infrastructure was obviously detrimental to smooth operations and undermined the vitality of the force. This was particularly evident in the mining districts. In 1857, a solitary lockup at Tredegar, privately owned and rented by the force, was all that was available for the confinement of prisoners in the valley towns. Prisoners from Rhymney, Blaina and Ebbw Vale were marched across the mountain for detention there. In some cases this involved an eighteen mile hike, during which escapes were not unknown. In a report to the magistrates in 1860, Edmund Herbert announced:

<sup>12</sup> HMIC Report on Monmouthshire 1898.

<sup>13</sup> GRO: Chief Constable's Report to the Magistrates in Quarter Sessions, 4 June 1858: QS/Cons R.0007  
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<sup>14</sup> J. O. Jones, *The History of the Caernarvonshire Police Force, 1856-1900* (unpublished MA thesis: University of Wales Bangor, September, 1956), p. 115.

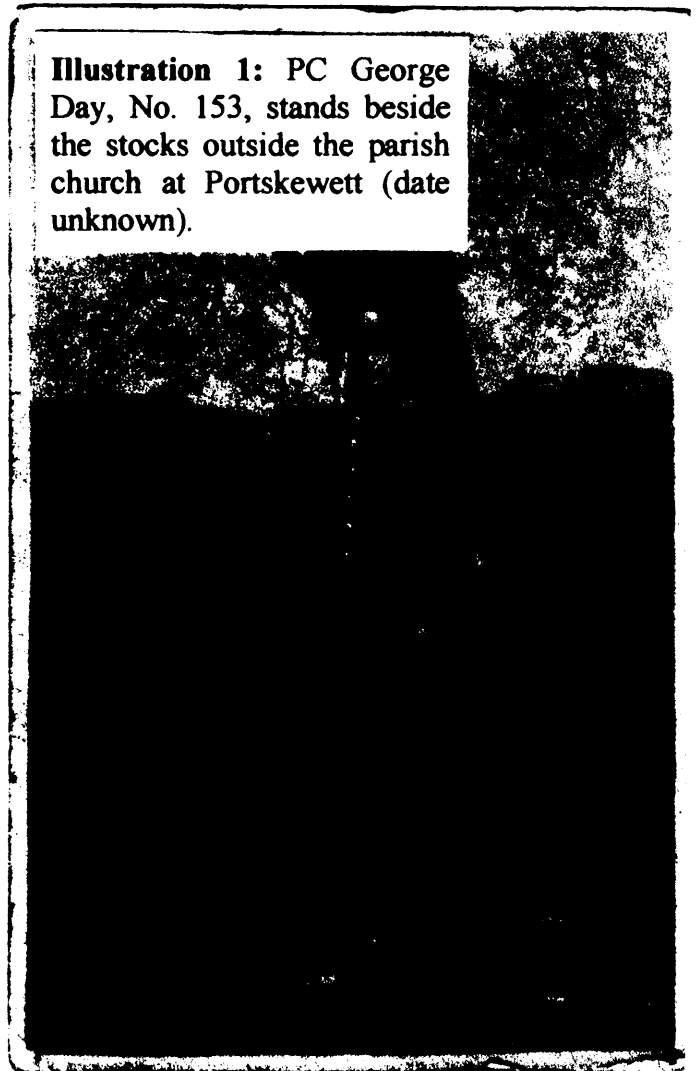
I regret to have to inform you that a prisoner recently committed for trial on a charge of larceny, when being marched over the mountain from Blaena [sic] to Tredegar ... escaped from custody and notwithstanding every exertion up to the present time has not been heard of.<sup>15</sup>

The press added their concerns:

A matter of urgent need ... is that a house of detention should be immediately provided [at Rhymney] ... It is monstrous to expect that on a pay night, when a periodic madness reigns in every tavern, policemen can preserve order, when they may have to escort two or three violent inebriates to Tredegar, a task that can not be accomplished except at a cost of 4 hours absence, during that precise time in every month when their presence is most urgently required.<sup>16</sup>

There was also a feeling in Tredegar that the police in the adjoining valley towns *should* make their own arrangements. Tredegar was not equipped for the perpetual procession of prisoners, particularly as those who failed to pay their fines might be treated to a six-hour spell in the stocks, as was the case with one inebriate in 1858. The 'old-fashioned instrument of terror was accordingly brought out into the Circle and in the sight of thousands this martyr to John Barleycorn was laid up by the heels'.<sup>17</sup> Such exhibitions irritated the business fraternity who perceived them as an impediment to trade, for they invariably drew crowds and hampered the free movement of the townsfolk. But another nine

**Illustration 1:** PC George Day, No. 153, stands beside the stocks outside the parish church at Portskewett (date unknown).



<sup>15</sup> GRO: Chief Constable's Report to the Magistrates in Quarter Sessions, August 1860: QS/Cons R 0007 44.

<sup>16</sup> *Merthyr Telegraph*, 11 July 1857.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 23 June 1858.



years were to elapse and two prisoners were to die in the lockup at Tredegar before a purpose-built station was erected in the town.

In January 1859, Chepstow was in danger of losing its newly-established station, which comprised four small rooms and two cells, because

an increased rent is now asked which the sergeant declines, giving as he considers that he is already paying a high rent for little accommodation and that he is not called on to provide a Lockup for the use of the County.<sup>18</sup>

As a temporary expedient in 1858, the Chief Constable had suggested to the magistrates that the twelve pounds allocated annually to each petty sessional division for the hire of premises to act as courtrooms, might instead be used to rent houses or cottages to serve as police stations. Authority to do this was granted and the situation at Chepstow was thus alleviated. Temporary stations were established at Chepstow and Abergavenny the following year, which could also be used as petty sessional courts, though in his report of December 1860, Edmund Herbert regretted that 'there are still in this County five Petty Sessional Courts wh[ich] are regularly held in Public houses'.<sup>19</sup>

Numerous houses were offered to the chief constable for rental, some in an uninhabitable condition. In a letter to the Clerk of the Peace in November 1858, Herbert complained:

I believe every man in Abergavenny thinks his house admirably suited for Police Offices if I am to judge by the number of letters I have received – I think I know Davies' premises, if they are those I mean [they] are very well adapted to being pulled down but for nothing else – Believe me.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> GRO: Chief Constable's Report to the Magistrates in Quarter Sessions, 3 January 1859: QS/Cons R 0007 34.

<sup>19</sup> GRO: Chief Constable's Report to the Magistrates in Quarter Sessions, 31 December 1860: QS/Cons R 0007 46.

<sup>20</sup> GRO: Letter from Edmund Herbert to Charles Protheroe, Clerk of the peace, 29 November 1858: Cons Misc. P 00010 12.

Whether this reflected the owner's estimation of the police is a moot point. Poor public relations were occasionally alluded to when police housing was being considered, as this extract relating to Rhymney demonstrates:

Such is the intense dislike felt for the uniform in this place, and the high rates of accommodation, that a respectable lodging is out of the question, and one of the ordinary class would be intolerable.<sup>21</sup>

But 'ordinary class' accommodation was what Monmouthshire policemen got and occasionally there *was* trouble. In June 1858 a Tredegar constable was summonsed and heavily fined for 'striking a girl who was quarrelling in the street with his own children'.<sup>22</sup> And when a Blaina constable, living in lodgings, was accused of 'being drunk and incapable of doing his duty', it was found that the evidence against him had been 'got up'.<sup>23</sup> It was inevitable that some people would be hostile towards the police; parish constables had not been immune from assault and, as was demonstrated in Chapter One, men and women alike readily resorted to violence. Court records, however, give no indication that the police were systematically singled out for attack, and constables themselves were not blameless. Perhaps driven by memories of a past life, or brutalised by it, they were apt to forget that they were now peace officers, and meted out a good deal of unnecessary violence to prisoners, ordinary members of the public, and each other – a topic that is discussed more fully in the final chapter.

In an effort to minimise trouble, the Chief Constable recommended that 'measures be adopted to remedy [the] evil' of men living in ordinary lodgings.<sup>24</sup> One way it seems was to house them together, or in close proximity to one another, to rent, where possible, a row of houses or houses closely situated in the same street, or just around

<sup>21</sup> *Merthyr Telegraph*, 11 July 1857.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 5 June 1858.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 13 February 1858.

<sup>24</sup> GRO: Chief Constable's Report to the Magistrates in Quarter Sessions, 26 June 1858: QS Cons R 0007 32.

the corner from each other. Taylor recognised this trend in Middlesbrough, where 'by the early twentieth century a number of clusters of police residences can be identified'.<sup>25</sup> While he suggests we 'should not read too much into this', he also believes a 'sense of shared experience and common identity' probably did lead policemen to congregate in this way.<sup>26</sup>

In Monmouthshire towns, clustering of police accommodation was evident almost from the beginning. As early as 1861, clusters of police houses can be identified in Census returns. In that year, five of Tredegar's six policemen can be traced to the same street, as can five policemen in Usk. In the 1871 Census, a sergeant and four constables were found to occupy four separate houses in the Lower Bridge Street area of Pontypool, while the deputy chief constable and two ordinary constables resided at the station in Hanbury Road.<sup>27</sup> The statistics also clearly demonstrate how few policemen had the luxury of separating work from family life. At the time of the 1871 Census, for instance, Tredegar's Georgetown Station housed three policemen, two wives, nine children, two domestic servants, and three prisoners – a total of nineteen in all. Had the superintendent been at home that night, there would have been twenty.<sup>28</sup>

Given this type of living arrangement and the strictures placed upon police wives and families – wives and children were not encouraged to work – it is perhaps easy to see why police culture grew to be so inward-looking. In Monmouthshire, as in other county forces, wives tended to act as matrons and attend female prisoners in the cells. Very occasionally a police wife used her capabilities in other ways; Constable John

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<sup>25</sup> Taylor, *Policing the Victorian Town*, p. 134.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Data obtained from the 1861 Census: 578b Bedwellty (Monmouthshire), RG9/3998; the 1871 Census: 580 Bedwellty (Monmouthshire) RG10/5321.

<sup>28</sup> Census of 1871: Bedwellty (Monmouthshire) RG10/5321.

Mills' wife, for example, was committed as a prostitute at Tredegar in March 1875 and at Newport in May of the same year. Rather than leave her, Constable Mills resigned the force.<sup>29</sup>

In 1860 and 1881 respectively, the Trevethin and Monmouth borough forces were amalgamated with the county constabulary. With the amalgamations came property. The Trevethin police had never met the government's requirements for efficiency. Five in number, with a casual system of no fixed duties and no supervision other than twice weekly meetings at the town hall, the Trevethin force was not believed to be 'properly constituted'.<sup>30</sup> As Parris explains: 'The test of efficiency in discipline was that a force should have enough superior officers to supervise constables on duty continuously and regularly'.<sup>31</sup> The HMIC also believed that Trevethin's one superintendent and four unregulated constables were wholly ineffective in an area of over eleven thousand acres, with a population of almost sixteen thousand at the time of the 1851 Census. Sitting in Monmouthshire's industrial heartland, Trevethin was therefore regarded as the Achilles heel in the system of police control in the county.

The first Inspectors of Constabulary, in particular Major-General Cartwright, had urged from the start the amalgamation of small borough forces with the county constabularies but, argued Parris, 'no Home Secretary made a determined effort to persuade them all to take this step'.<sup>32</sup> Steedman asserts, however, that the Home Office's refusal to concern itself with the consolidation question 'was not an abnegation of responsibility, but a clear refusal to interfere in the financial and legal structure of

<sup>29</sup>GRO: Monmouthshire Constabulary Recruitment Register 1858-85: D3298.2, and GPA: *Defaulters' Book*, p. 350.

<sup>30</sup> Reports of the HMIC, 1857.

<sup>31</sup> H. Parris, *Constitutional Bureaucracy* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1969), p. 231.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 232-233.

local government'.<sup>33</sup> In other matters of procedure, such as pay, clothing, and police buildings etc., the Home Office played an active part, and in managerial matters not adequately covered by the Police Act of 1856, it 'gave the final decision to local interpreters of the law'.<sup>34</sup> In her discussion Steedman points to an oft forgotten factor in the relationship between central and local government of the time; that most parliamentary staff had, at some point, been deputy lords lieutenant, chairmen of Quarter Sessions, or magistrates,<sup>35</sup> which to some extent explained their 'apparent' regard for local autonomy on the subject of policing.

When, after three years, no action was taken by the Trevethin police to rectify their deficiencies, it was on the HMIC's recommendation, and the county magistrates' and Pontypool Corporation's sanction, that Herbert sought and received the Home Secretary's approval (a requisite of the 19<sup>th</sup> Section of 19 & 20 Vic. c. 69) to take over the force. Thus, on 1 April 1860, the parish of Trevethin came under his charge and the county was subsequently divided into four police districts, which more accurately reflected its policing needs. This also meant a reduction in the net cost of the police to the borough, for amalgamation with the county force brought the Treasury's grant-in-aid of a quarter of the cost of pay and clothing.

The Monmouth borough police were amalgamated with the county constabulary in September 1881. By this time some progress had been made by the Home Office in reducing small borough forces, for while consolidation was generally still being promoted, the Municipal Corporation (New Charters) Act of 1877 had also prohibited boroughs of less than 20,000 from establishing new police units. The amalgamation of

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<sup>33</sup> Steedman, *Policing the Victorian Community*, p. 29.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

the county constabulary and the borough force took place after a year of deliberations between the county's Police Committee and the borough's Watch Committee. Compliance was required from both sides and when this was accorded, the five-man borough force was duly transferred to the county, along with its superannuation fund, which the corporation was required to supplement for a further ten years. It was also agreed that a superintendent, a sergeant and not less than five constables would be stationed at Monmouth and that –

four constables shall be told off and directed to attend the ... Mayor, Aldermen and Burgesses upon their attending as a Corporation at church and upon other formal occasions.<sup>36</sup>

Amalgamation brought property. The old Monmouth police station was rented from the Corporation (who declined to donate it to the county) at a cost of ten pounds a year, and the Pontypool station from Mr. Capel Hanbury Leigh, at an annual cost of twenty-pounds. The Pontypool station was practically uninhabitable. The lower part of the building was exceedingly damp, which caused Herbert to complain 'that it will be unfit for occupation during the winter unless a mound of earth and rubbish which adjoins it be removed'.<sup>37</sup> But pressure to house the men apparently outweighed any hazards to their health, for six constables were immediately installed there. Some improvements were carried out, though the place was still regarded as unfit for habitation a year later, which prompted the philanthropic owner to agree 'in a most liberal manner to give a piece of ground and the stone necessary for the Erection of [a new] Building'.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> GRO: Draft Agreement for consolidation of the County and Borough Police Establishments, 29 September 1881: Cons Misc. P 0022 24, 1871–81.

<sup>37</sup> GRO: Chief Constable's Report to the Magistrates in Quarter Sessions, 2 July 1860: QS/Cons R 0007 44.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 29 June 1861: QS/Cons R 0007 48.

Guidance from the Home Office on the construction of stations had existed at the time of the constabulary's formation, but an update was issued via a Whitehall circular in October 1861. All future plans for stations and cells were now to be prepared in accordance with rules laid down in a booklet prepared by the Surveyor General of Prisons. Satisfactory plans would receive a certificate of approval from the Home Secretary.<sup>39</sup> However, the booklet, which sought to standardise practises, was also subject to unannounced modification. In 1870, for instance, plans submitted for a police station at Blaenavon, prepared in strict conformity with the rules laid down in 1861, and hitherto approved for another county station, were returned because 'water closets' in cells were now objected to. 'It is not desirable that there should be a possibility of the emanations from drains and sewers finding their way into an inhabited cell or room'.<sup>40</sup>

From Herbert's point of view, and in every sense, this was a retrograde step and one that would 'cause serious inconvenience to the police service'.<sup>41</sup> Not only would it require staff to be in constant attendance, but the dangers involved in moving violent inebriates in and out of cells would be considerable. However, the recommended solution seemed even more retrograde; '[e]arth closets ... are now generally used', announced the Surveyor General of Prisons, and 'I enclose some lithographed diagrams ... for your guidance'.<sup>42</sup> Home Office involvement was, therefore, not a clear-cut matter at all; attempts to standardise certain practices necessarily encroached upon other

<sup>39</sup> GPA: Circular of 28 October 1861: Secretary of State's Communications, 3 August 1857-14 March 1879.

<sup>40</sup> GPA: Copy of a letter from E. J. Ducane, Surveyor General of Prisons, to the Home Secretary, and sent to the Clerk of the Peace, Monmouth, for the purpose of being set before the County Magistrates, 2 April 1870: Secretary of State's Communications, 3 August 1857-14 March 1879.

<sup>41</sup> GPA: Letter from Edmund Herbert to Under Secretary of State, F. O. Liddell, 15 February 1870: Secretary of State's Communications, 3 August 1857-14 March 1879.

<sup>42</sup> GPA: Copy of a letter from E. J. Ducane, Surveyor General of Prisons, to the Home Secretary, and sent to the Clerk of the Peace, Monmouth, for the purpose of being set before the County Magistrates, 2 April 1870: Secretary of State's Communications, 3 August 1857-14 March 1879.

aspects of policing, and in turn upon local autonomy. Also, in the early days, what has been described as a 'creeping centralisation',<sup>43</sup> designed initially to promote uniformity and efficiency, was not always felt to be synonymous with sensible practice.

In 1862 the Police Committee sought from Edmund Herbert an estimation of the cost of providing police stations throughout the county. Herbert calculated that:

to erect suitable buildings with proper Magistrates Courts, Cells and all requirements as laid down by the Secretary of State and to pay off the original outlay in 20 years, would require rather more than 3/8ths of a penny Police Rate per Annum for that period.<sup>44</sup>

But no major building programme was undertaken and the process of providing purpose-built accommodation remained slow. It took another twenty years before the Chief Constable could state that within the county 'a large expenditure has been and is still being incurred, in providing Police Stations, to repair the omissions of the past',<sup>45</sup> but even then expenditure was rarely sufficient to keep abreast of developments. In 1895 an extension was urgently required at Abertillery station as three single constables living in the station had to 'take their meals in the Sergeant's Kitchen, and use the Charge Room as a living room'.<sup>46</sup> In 1896 the newly rented station at Garndiffaith was described by the HMIC as 'miserable and the cell wretched'.<sup>47</sup> The HMIC again found fault in 1901, this time with the construction of Pontnewydd station, which had 'always been unsatisfactory'. The Chief Constable therefore recommended 'that it be sold and a new station built'.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Emsley, *The English Police*, p. 91.

<sup>44</sup> GRO: Chief Constable's Report to the Magistrates in Quarter Sessions, 30 June 1862, QS/Cons R 0007 52.

<sup>45</sup> GPA: Quarterly Reports of the Chief Constable, from December 1883–July 1901: Report of 1 June 1885.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid: Report of 11 July 1895.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid: Report of 12 October 1896.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid: Report of 15 July 1901.



In the last decade of the nineteenth century, police buildings were constantly on the Standing Joint Committee's agenda. With stations required in all parts of the shire, sites were found at Risca, New Tredegar, St. Mellons, Cwmbran and Monmouth in October 1893 and at Rogerstone in 1895, but it was not until January 1897 that the County Council made financial provision for the police station at Cwmbran, while the land ear-marked for Rogerstone station took three years to acquire. Provision was also made in 1897 for stations to be erected at Nantyglo, Aberbeeg and Llanhilleth, and the trundling wheels of progress did gain some speed during this decade. As the century drew to a close, there were still police stations in an 'unhealthy state from damp',<sup>49</sup> and the fact that many new ones were still required some forty years after the formation of the force, and in places where the police had long since operated, bears testimony to the chronic under-funding that beset the constabulary.

Many of the buildings that were substantial enough at the time of their construction fell into disrepair later as a result of a lack of funds. Quarterly reports of the Chief Constables between 1920 and 1940 highlight some abysmal living conditions. In February 1932, for example, Caerleon station lacked a bath and its windows were rotten. Garndiffaith station was in a 'disgraceful state', with walls so damp that the paper hung from them and lime dust fell out, and because of ill-fitting windows 'the rain drives halfway across the rooms'. Conditions were much the same at Tintern station, while at St. Mellons a 'grate and mantelpiece' waiting to be fitted, had been 'resting ... in one of the Cells' for three years. And a bath, that was also supposed to have been installed three years previously, had never materialised.<sup>50</sup> Policemen serving

<sup>49</sup> GPA: Quarterly Reports of the Chief Constable, from December 1883–July 1901: Report of 8 April 1890.

<sup>50</sup> GPA: Quarterly Reports of the Chief Constable, January 1920–August 1940: Report of 6 February, 1932.

at Croesyceiliog station were further disadvantaged, for their building had no water. During the winter of 1930, they applied to be connected to the water main, which passed the station door, because the water supply 'at present is pumped from a well, and great difficulty is experienced in the winter in keeping the pump from being frozen'.<sup>51</sup> This implies there was no bathroom in the station, and there was certainly no flushing lavatory. In the Monmouthshire Constabulary, therefore, progress did not proceed with Whiggish speed or certainty, it had a far more steady plod, which failed at times to keep abreast of developments. Without doubt, the provision of police property, like Yeats' peace, was a process that came 'dripping slow'.<sup>52</sup> As the twentieth century neared its end penurious echoes still rattled round the corridors of police finance. The 1990 Audit Commission reported: 'No police force has, or will ever have, the resources necessary to fulfil all its possible functions'.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> GPA: Quarterly Reports of the Chief Constable, January 1920-August 1940: Report of 8 November, 1930.

<sup>52</sup> W. B. Yeats, 'The Lake Isle of Innisfree', in A. T. Quiller-Couch (ed.), *The Oxford Book of English Verse, 1250-1900* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1919), poem 864.

<sup>53</sup> Jones, *Crime and Policing in the Twentieth Century: The South Wales Experience* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1996), [hereinafter, Jones, *Crime and Policing in the Twentieth Century*], p. 238.



Undated photograph of the former police station in Georgetown, Tredegar, completed in 1867.



Undated photograph of the Bedwas police station, built in 1910.

Source: GPA: Prints reproduced, with kind permission of the Gwent Police, from a scrapbook of assorted police photographs (compiler unknown).

If reports of the HMIC and the Chief Constable failed in their attempts to secure adequate funding for police stations, it was not possible for the police committee to ignore the need for numerical increases in the strength of the force. With industry and the population in the ascendancy during the second half of the nineteenth century, adjustments *had* to be made to the size and structure of the force and its divisions. By 1870, Blaenavon, Rhymney and Tredegar ironworks all had nine blast furnaces in operation, and over the following decade the demand for steel grew dramatically. Steelworks were established at Ebbw Vale in 1868, Rhymney in 1877, Blaenavon in 1878 and Tredegar in 1882: the Ebbw vale Steel, Iron and Coal Company became the largest firm in South Wales, with branches at Ebbw Vale, Victoria, Sirhowy, Pontypool and Abersychan.<sup>54</sup> With an expanding world economy and world trade, the demand for coal also grew apace, and by 1913 'the South Wales Coalfield [had] become the single largest coalfield in Britain'.<sup>55</sup>

An examination of the growing list of policemen, employed at the works and collieries under 3 & 4 Vic. c.88. s.19, reveals something of that revolution. In 1858, for instance, the force had one works constable, in 1882 there were twelve, and in 1889, fifteen men, a sergeant and fourteen constables, were supplied to the companies. The numbers continued to grow in relation to the works.<sup>56</sup> But the force's inter-relationship with industrial expansion becomes clearer still when the pattern of police divisions and the distribution of the men are examined. Inevitably the large industrial towns required a higher proportion of policemen than those in the eastern aspect of the county,

<sup>54</sup> J. P. Addis, 'The Heavy Iron and Steel Industry in South Wales and Monmouthshire, 1870-1950' (Unpublished PhD thesis: University of Wales, Aberystwyth, 1957), pp. 4-6.

<sup>55</sup> T. Boynes, 'The Coal Industry to 1945' in H. Carter (ed.) *National Atlas of Wales* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1989).

<sup>56</sup> GRO: Constabulary Daily States, 1858-1914: Q/CDS.

particularly in the latter part of the century when the labour movement began to take root. Although, as Stead points out, 'the majority of workmen had not yet fully appreciated the enormous power which they possessed through industrial and political organisations',<sup>57</sup> that power was growing in strength as the nineteenth century drew to a close. The inadequacy of the initial distribution of the force soon became apparent and, hydra-like, divisions were formed, axed, and reformed by the Chief Constable. Table 1 below highlights the changes.

**Table 1:** Divisional changes of the Monmouthshire Constabulary 1857-1899

Date	Divisions of the Monmouthshire Constabulary
1857	Usk; Blackwood
1858	Usk; Blackwood; Newport
1860	Usk; Abergavenny; Pontypool; Tredegar
1881 (Sept)	Usk; Abergavenny; Monmouth Borough; Pontypool; Tredegar
1881 (Nov)	Abergavenny; Monmouth; Pontypool; Tredegar
1882	Abergavenny; Monmouth; Pontypool; Tredegar; Newport
1893	Abergavenny; Monmouth; Pontypool; Tredegar; Risca
1898	Abergavenny; Monmouth; Pontypool; Tredegar; Risca; Blaina
1899	Abergavenny; Monmouth; Pontypool; Tredegar; Risca; Abertillery

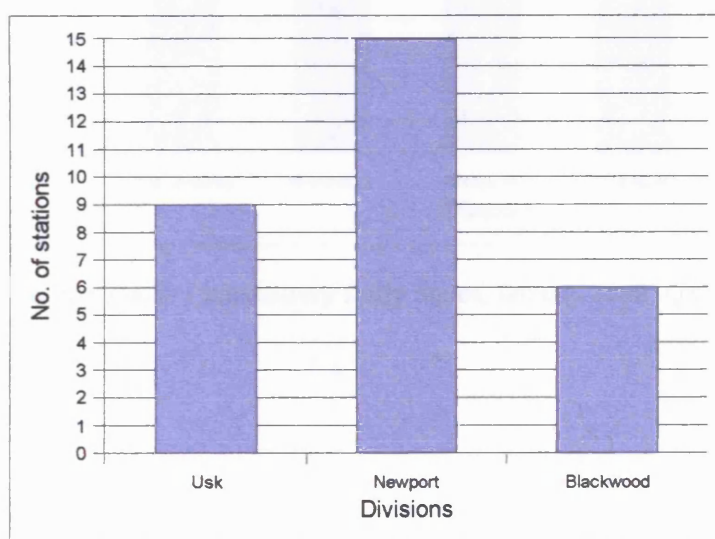
Source: GRO: Constabulary Daily States, 1858-1914, Q CDS: And GPA: Quarterly Reports of the Chief Constable, December 1883 – July 1901.

The *Constabulary Daily States*, from which part of the above table was compiled, are monthly divisional registers that give detailed returns of the number and distribution of the men and their stations. Data for 1857 is missing, as is that from the mid-1880s to the early 1900s. The *Quarterly Reports of the Chief Constable* have been used to fill in the blanks, although details of the short-lived Blaina division have not

<sup>57</sup> P. Stead 'Establishing a Heartland – the Labour Party in Wales' in K. D. Brown (ed.), *The First Labour Party, 1906-1914* (London: Croom Helm, 1985), pp. 64-88.

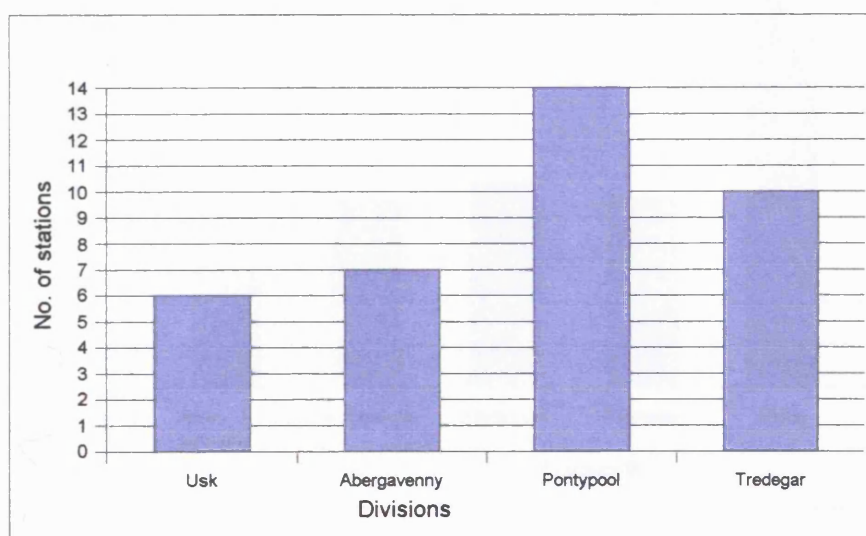
been discovered. For the remaining period of this study, the divisions appear to have remained unchanged after the reshuffle of 1899. From the available registers and reports, the following charts have been assembled. These outline the numerical distribution of stations within the various police divisions of the constabulary between 1858 and 1906.

**Chart 1:** Number of divisions and stations in July 1858

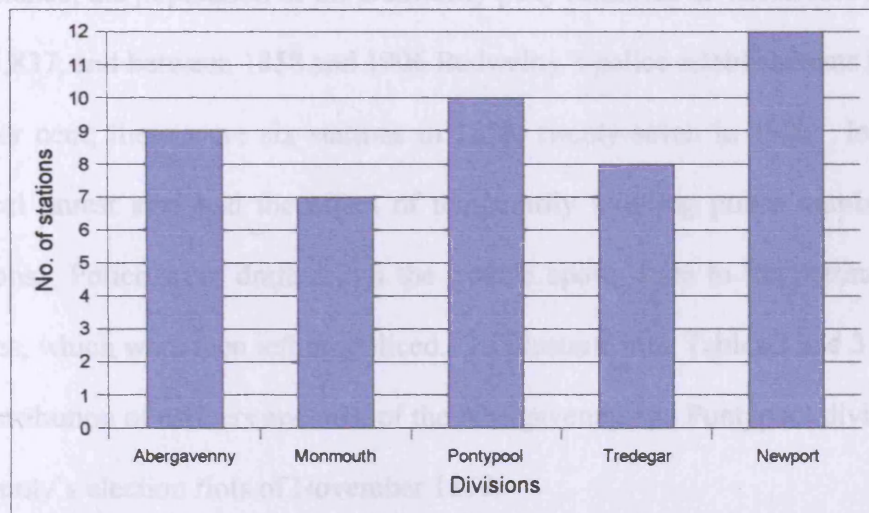


Source: GRO: Constabulary Daily States, July 1858: Q CDS.

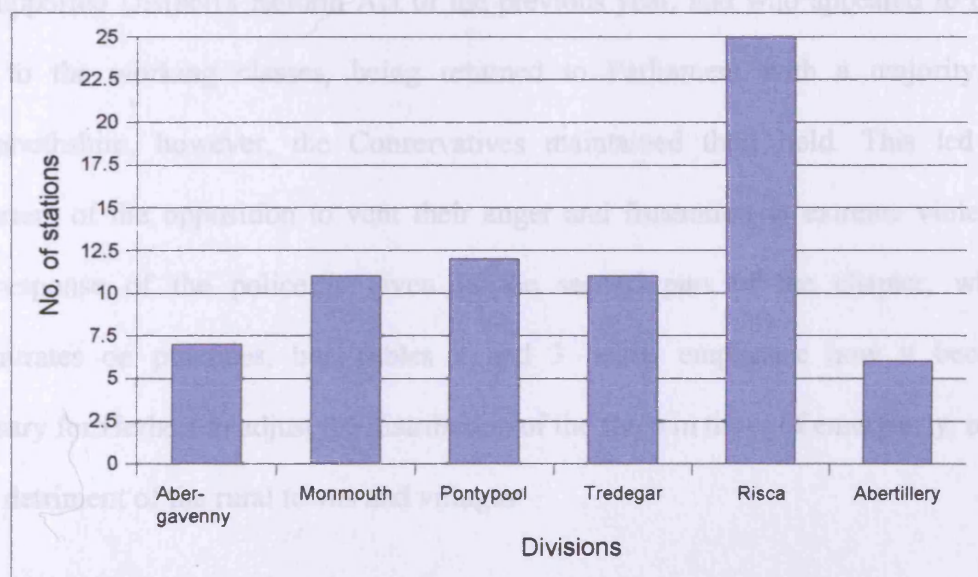
**Chart 2:** Number of divisions and stations, December 1860



Source: GRO: Constabulary Daily States, December 1860: Q CDS.

**Chart 3: Number of divisions and stations, January 1882**

Source: GRO: Constabulary Daily States, January 1882: Q CDS.

**Chart 4: Number of divisions and stations, January 1906**

Source: GRO: Constabulary Daily States, January 1906: Q CDS.

It is clear from the charts that the rising industrial population resulted in frequent augmentation of the force and redistribution of its members. Between 1851 and 1901, for instance, the population of the Bedwellty petty sessional divisions rose from 27,183 to 105,837, and between 1858 and 1906 Bedwellty's police establishments increased by 450 per cent; there were six stations in 1858, twenty-seven in 1906. Industrial and political unrest also had the effect of temporarily swelling police numbers in some divisions. Police were drafted into the trouble spots, often to the detriment of rural villages, which were then left un-policed. To illustrate this, Tables 2 and 3 below show the distribution of officers and men of the Abergavenny and Pontypool divisions during the county's election riots of November 1868.

A revolution had taken place in Welsh politics that year. Until 1868, elections in Wales had been largely contests between leading county families. But, as Ieuan Gwynedd Jones suggested, 1868 witnessed men voting for the first time 'as individuals rather than ... taking their direction from their lord'.<sup>58</sup> This resulted in the Liberals, who had supported Disraeli's Reform Act of the previous year, and who appeared to offer hope to the working classes, being returned to Parliament with a majority. In Monmouthshire, however, the Conservatives maintained their hold. This led the supporters of the opposition to vent their anger and frustration in extreme violence. The response of the police is given in the second part of the chapter, which concentrates on practices, but Tables 2 and 3 below emphasise how it became necessary for Herbert to adjust the distribution of the force in times of emergency, often to the detriment of the rural towns and villages.

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<sup>58</sup> I. G. Jones, *Explorations and Explanations: Essays in the Social History of Victorian Wales* (Llandyssul: Gwasg Gomer, 1981), p. 296. See also K. O. Morgan, *Wales in British Politics, 1868-1922* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1963).



**Table 2: Allocation of the Abergavenny Division on 30 November 1868.**

Station	Rank	Collar No.	Name	Remarks
Abergavenny	Sgt	44	W. Edghill	
	1CC	11	W. Hopkins	From Llanarth
	2CC	77	J. George	From Govilon
Govilon	—	—	—	Absent on duty
Llanover	—	—	—	Absent on duty
Llanfihangel	1CC	17	W. Nicholls	
Crossash	Sgt	40	G. Birden	
Grosmont	4CC	55	W. Smith	
Llantillio	—	—	—	Absent on duty
Raglan	—	—	—	Absent on duty
	3CC	69	J. Richards	
Llanarth	—	—	—	Absent on duty

Source: GRO: Constabulary Daily States, 30 November 1868, Q CDS.

Table 3: Allocation of the Pontypool Division on 30 November 1868

Station	Rank	Collar No.	Name	Remarks
Pontypool	Supt		William McIntosh	
	Supt		David Jones-Llewellyn	From Usk on 25 <sup>th</sup>
	Sgt	1	Charles Young	Ditto
	Sgt	9	John McEvoy	Ditto
	Sgt	54	George Gough	From Newport on 24 <sup>th</sup>
	ICC	25	James Pettitt	From Raglan on 28 <sup>th</sup>
	ICC	46	Dennis Steed	From Usk on 26 <sup>th</sup>
	ICC	71	William Pugsley	From Newport on 24 <sup>th</sup>
	ICC	97	Thomas Lloyd	From Usk on 25 <sup>th</sup>
	ICC	80	John Coles	From Abercarn on 26 <sup>th</sup>
	ICC	85	James Burns	From Maesycwmer on 26 <sup>th</sup>
	ICC	90	Henry Burrows	From Newport on 24 <sup>th</sup>
	2CC	13	Walter Taylor	From Llantarnam on 27 <sup>th</sup>
	2CC	45	Mark Matthews	
	2CC	52	Charles Rogers	
	2CC	94	James Hart	
	2CC	74	Jeremiah Crowley	From Crumlin on 26 <sup>th</sup>
	2CC	82	Charles Price	From Caerleon on 27 <sup>th</sup>
	2CC	92	John Jones-Bevan	From Llantillio on 28 <sup>th</sup>
	3CC	39	Henry Gardner	From Risca on 24 <sup>th</sup>
	4CC	78	Benjamin George	
	4CC	83	William Brown	
	4CC	98	John Agg	
	4CC	4	Jonah Chivers	From Usk on 25 <sup>th</sup>
	4CC	6	Rees Roberts	From Newport on 24 <sup>th</sup>
	4CC	19	Francis Allen	From Blackwood on 26 <sup>th</sup>
Aberystwyth	Sgt	29	Joseph Basham	From Pontypool on 24 <sup>th</sup>
	ICC	62	John Lewis	
	ICC	63	Thomas Batten	From Cwmbran on 25 <sup>th</sup>
	2CC	76	Thomas McGrath	
Cardiff	3CC	15	James Brearly	From Cwmbran on 25 <sup>th</sup>
	3CC	70	George Rendell	From Pontypool on 24 <sup>th</sup>
Cardiff	ICC	58	Charles Guinea	
	3CC	84	Alfred Watkins	
Blaenavon	Supt		William Freeman	From Abergavenny on 25 <sup>th</sup>
	Sgt	16	John Hale	From Risca on 27 <sup>th</sup>
	Sgt	89	John Coombes	
	ICC	3	Charles Davies	From Whitson on 27 <sup>th</sup>
	ICC	35	John Carey	From St Mellons on 27 <sup>th</sup>
	ICC	49	Edmund James	From Bassaleg on 27 <sup>th</sup>
	ICC	87	Thomas Herbert	From Magor on 27 <sup>th</sup>
	ICC	12	Richard Jones	From Abergavenny on 25 <sup>th</sup>
	ICC	42	Evan Williams	From Llanover on 25 <sup>th</sup>
	ICC	59	George Dare	From Aberdare on 25 <sup>th</sup>
	2CC	8	Edward Lawrence	
	2CC	61	Thomas Hill	From Abergavenny on 25 <sup>th</sup>
	2CC	64	John Adams	Ditto
	3CC	7	Daniel Rutter	Ditto
	3CC	96	Isaac Pritchard	
	4CC	21	George Nicholas	From Machen on 27 <sup>th</sup>
	4CC	57	Cornelius Pritchard	From Usk on 25 <sup>th</sup>
Blaenavon Works	ICC	48	William Priest	Appt. 3 & 4 Vict. c. 88 s. 19
	ICC	60	Francis Lewis	Ditto
Caerleon	Sgt	68	Thomas Povall	
Llantarnam	0			At Pontypool
Cwmbran	0			At Pontypool
Cwmbran Works	ICC	75	Giles Vaun	Appt. 3 & 4 Vic. c. 88 s. 19
Newport	Insp		Sam Sheppard	
	3CC	86	James Roberts	
	0			
Risca	0			3 men at Pontypool from Newport
Pontyminster Works	2CC	73	James Seyes	2 men at Pontypool + 1 at Blaenavon from Risca
Machen	ICC	23	Samuel Benfields	Appt. 3 & 4 Vic. c. 88 s. 19
Bassaleg	0			At Blaenavon
St Mellons	0			Ditto
Magor	0			Ditto
Whitson	0			

Source: GRO: Constabulary Daily States, 30 November 1868: Q CDS

It was perhaps fortunate that Superintendent William McIntosh was in charge of the Pontypool division, for inspirational leadership was required in situations like that of November 1868. Herbert could certainly rely upon McIntosh; the superintendent was very highly regarded. When he died in 1880, the county Bench and many local solicitors drew attention to his exceptional abilities and conscientiousness.<sup>59</sup> As leadership and direction undoubtedly influenced the response of the police to the public, and thus the response of the public to the police, it was critical that the right men managed riotous situations since, as Edward Wise reminded the police, 'the first right of a citizen of this country is the enjoyment of public peace and order'.<sup>60</sup>

## Practice

From the outset, the new police were concerned with the prevention of crime and the preservation of order. Prevention of crime, in particular, was a forcefully direct argument and inculcated into police consciousness by constant repetition. It was hailed as the principal task of the Metropolitan Police in 1829: 'It should be understood at the outset, that the object to be attained is "the prevention of crime"',<sup>61</sup> and perpetually 'reiterated in the instructions given to men joining the provincial forces'.<sup>62</sup> The Metropolitan Police, as Shpayer-Makov informs us, 'served ... as a model for the borough and county police forces established all over the country in the three decades following 1829'.<sup>63</sup>

As one of the first instructions issued to the new Monmouthshire recruits, crime prevention was to be effected by 'unremitting zeal and attention on the part of every

<sup>59</sup> *Monmouthshire Beacon*, 27 November 1880.

<sup>60</sup> E. Wise, *The Laws Relating to Riots and unlawful Assemblies* (London: Shaw and Sons, 1848), p. xii,

<sup>61</sup> *The Times*, 25 September 1829.

<sup>62</sup> Emsley, *The English Police*, p. 70.

<sup>63</sup> Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman*, pp. 1-2.

man ... in the discharge of his duties', which, in general terms, consisted of 'constant vigilance, judgement, and discretion'.<sup>64</sup> Discretion was an all important quality, as directions could not be given for every duty a policeman might be called upon to perform, or for every difficulty he might encounter. But, writes Steedman,

it was heavily qualified as a virtue, hedged around with reminders of the structure of the force, and the particular claims of the "respectable" when a constable came face to face with them.<sup>65</sup>

'What was bought' in the class society of mid-Victorian Britain, when a rural labourer signed-up to become a policeman was 'his understanding and acceptance of a set of social relationships'.<sup>66</sup>

Failure to understand or accept those relationships could be costly. When, for example, the Monmouthshire constable James Love stated that a reverend gentleman had been 'under the influence of drink', he was immediately removed to another station at his own expense.<sup>67</sup> A similar fate befell Constable Watkins who, from 'want of discretion and sense', told 'a respectable man ... that he was suspected of Fowl Stealing'.<sup>68</sup> Sergeant Guinea, who allegedly failed to make sufficient enquiries before arresting a 'resident', was ordered to pay the complainant 20 shillings, his lawyer 21 shillings, and then make a private apology.<sup>69</sup> And, as has been shown, in the case of Inspector Pennymore, whose apparent indiscretion inflamed the wrath of a Tredegar solicitor, the word of the solicitor was publicly accepted.

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<sup>64</sup> Herbert, *Orders and Regulations*, p. 4.

<sup>65</sup> Steedman, *Policing the Victorian Community*, p. 6.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

<sup>67</sup> *Defaulters' Book*, p. 478.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 324.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 227.

As Emsley points out, 'some members of the gentry seemed to think that they stood in a completely different relationship to the police than the working class'.<sup>70</sup> This was clearly the case in Monmouthshire and the Chief Constable, if not the agent of that belief, certainly helped perpetuate it. In the period before the First World War, argues Perkin 'an invisible fence, marked only by the raised eyebrow or the blank stare of non-recognition, separated the rich and the powerful from the common herd even more in the country than in town'.<sup>71</sup> As chief constables were invariably an integral part of the county set and bore all the hallmarks of their class, this was likely to compromise impartiality. Argus-eyed in the command of the force, Edmund Herbert allowed few of his 'common herd' of constables from 'the sinful world of the "roughs"',<sup>72</sup> to buck the system and escape penalty, but there was always a readiness amongst some to have a go.

Following a visit by PCs Onions and Francis to the home of Captain Walbridge in May 1861, an obscene drawing was discovered on the military gentleman's wall. However, as the constables' guilt could not be proved, both escaped with a caution. But it is not always easy to distinguish contempt from ineptitude, as in the case of Constable Goggin who, in 1912, was reprimanded for allowing an Usk thoroughfare to be obstructed and Sir Henry Mather-Jackson to be stuck there in his car. Because Goggin took 'no steps to remove [the] obstructions (Horses, Vehicles, etc.), until told to do so by Sir Henry, who had to get out of his car to lead a restive horse past [it]',<sup>73</sup> he was threatened with periodic assessments and the likelihood of being asked to go if he did not improve. Goggin, a policeman of one year's standing, duly resigned.

<sup>70</sup> Emsley, *The English Police*, p. 79.

<sup>71</sup> H. Perkin, *The Rise of Professional Society, England since 1880* (London: Routledge, 1990), p. 76.

<sup>72</sup> The term belongs to Gwyn A. Williams.

<sup>73</sup> *Defaulters' Book*, pp. 108, 126 & 371.

Impartiality was the guiding principle of police legitimacy; its key, 'the presentation of an image of non-partisanship'.<sup>74</sup> This seems a somewhat spurious concept, though in his study of poaching, Jones stated that in the early nineteenth century 'certain chief constables instructed their men not to patrol [game] preserves, nor to lay information against those found on or near them'. This, he suggested, 'reflected the concern felt in Wales, Suffolk and elsewhere that the new rural police must not become simply personal servants of great landowners'.<sup>75</sup> However, it was generally believed that many magistrates were game preservers and, claims Steedman, following the Poaching Prevention Act of 1862, 'a large and influential section' of them actively proposed that policemen *should* 'provide an effective force against poachers'.<sup>76</sup> Some Caernarvonshire magistrates shared this view and the issue, discussed in 1883 by that county's local Board of Guardians, was reported thus in the *North Wales Chronicle*:

A Guardian said that he had been told by a member of the Caernarvonshire police force that eleven police constables had been employed to watch a river in S. Caernarvonshire to see whether night poaching was carried on in that district. The lowest paid constable thus employed received 20/- a week, and that the police were driven in a car at the cost of the county to take up their posts to watch the river.<sup>77</sup>

The Poaching Prevention Act had, in fact, only empowered the police to stop and search suspects on the public highway, not on private land. Game and the means of procuring it could be confiscated and summonses served, but the police were not authorised to take suspected poachers into custody.<sup>78</sup> However, the willingness of the police in some districts to collude with the landowning gentry inevitably generated the belief that class bias did govern their operations. And, as policemen and landowners occasionally colluded privately, unbeknown to their chief constables, the belief was

<sup>74</sup> Reiner, *The Politics of the Police*, p. 56.

<sup>75</sup> Jones, *Crime, Protest, Community and Police in Nineteenth Century Britain*, p. 78.

<sup>76</sup> Steedman, *Policing the Victorian Community*, p. 30.

<sup>77</sup> J. O. Jones, 'The History of the Caernarvonshire Police Force, 1856-1900' (Unpublished MA thesis: University of Wales, Bangor, September 1956), p. 174.

<sup>78</sup> P. B. Bicknell, *Police Officers Manual* (London: Shaw & Sons, 1877), pp. 116-117.

sustained. In February 1861, for instance, in an anonymous letter to Edmund Herbert, Inspector Sidney Short was accused of '[r]eceiving £1 per Annum from Mr. Williams for looking after his woods'.<sup>79</sup>

To prevent further misunderstanding, the limitations of the Poaching Prevention Act of 1862 were clearly spelled out to the Monmouthshire men in a General Order of September 1862, though such was the Chief Constable's own interest in the matter that he 'reserve[d] to himself the power of authorizing summonses to be applied for', whilst also undertaking the extra and unpaid duty of conservator of rivers, under the Salmon Fisheries Act of 1861.<sup>80</sup> And such was the Chief Constable of Denbighshire's personal interest in the preservation of game, that in June 1849 he delayed a public meeting at Wrexham, which had been called to discuss the inadequacies of his force, by being 'detained elsewhere inspecting a fox trap'.<sup>81</sup>

Reiterated times over in General Orders from the Chief Constable, the duties and powers of a policeman were also clearly defined in the force's handbook, which had to be carried at all times for guidance. Detailed accounts of all duties and occurrences were kept in station diaries, and the officers in charge of stations also recorded the times and places of visits to constables under their charge. At the head of each day's entry a note was also made of the hours of duty, the name and number of the beats, and the nature of the duty performed by each constable.<sup>82</sup> In turn, each constable recorded

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<sup>79</sup> *Defaulters Book*, p.122.

<sup>80</sup> GPA: *Pontypool Division General Order Book*, June 1858 – April 1866: General Order No. 103, 12 September 1862.

<sup>81</sup> F. Clements, 'The Relationship between the New Police and the People of Denbighshire, 1839 – 1891' (Unpublished MA dissertation: Open University, 1999), p. 27.

<sup>82</sup> GPA: *Tredeggar Station General Order Book*, July 1857 – February 1864, General Order of 10 January 1859.

his daily round in a personal journal, which was subject to inspection by his superiors and the superintendent of the division.

Petty sessional reports in the contemporary press give some indication of the tasks that occupied the local constable on the beat; most cases involved theft, violation of the licensing laws, assaults, drunken brawls and other public order offences. Many took place in the poorer working class districts where, Emsley believes, the police were directed to control 'the boisterous popular culture which so offended Victorian sensibilities'.<sup>83</sup> At the Tredegar Petty Sessions of November 1857 'Daniel Lewis, a boy of about fourteen years of age, was charged by PC 35, with playing pitch and toss on the Sabbath. The Bench wished the Superintendent clearly to understand that they very much commended the policeman for bringing such cases before them'.<sup>84</sup>

In order that police activity should not create tension between the police and the public, Herbert warned his men from the start that 'exercising austere authority upon every little occasion ... [would] excite the ill-feeling of all observers'.<sup>85</sup> Several cautions were issued about the proper use of the truncheon, and senior officers were directed to report any man using it unnecessarily. In July 1858, after several constables had been summoned before the magistrates and fined for assault, Herbert again felt the need to remind his men that they were employed as 'guardians of the peace and not prize fighters'.<sup>86</sup> But complaints about police interference lived on, and Jones, looking at crime and society in the twentieth-century, argued that while '[p]opular culture has

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<sup>83</sup> Emsley, *Crime and Society in England*, p. 240.

<sup>84</sup> *Merthyr Express*, 7 November 1857.

<sup>85</sup> Herbert, *Orders and Regulations*, p. 50.

<sup>86</sup> GPA: *Tredegar Station General Order Book*, July 1857 – 4 February 1864: General Order of 20 July 1858.



often been accompanied by violence of some kind ... this was in part the responsibility of over-zealous police'.<sup>87</sup>

Over-zealousness on the part of the Newport Borough Police, for instance, was blamed for mob violence in the town on bonfire night 1868. By confiscating a tar barrel that was being rolled down Commercial Street, in time-honoured fashion, the police provoked a riot, which led to the Town Hall being attacked and its windows smashed.<sup>88</sup> But on the same night seven years later, the Newport mob got their retaliation in first. On this occasion two borough constables were stoned and one succumbed from blood loss.<sup>89</sup> By contrast, intelligent handling of a tense situation saved the day at Usk on the fifth of November 1858. At dusk, a mob of around a hundred and fifty had gathered on the town bridge to drag a lighted tar barrel around the streets. By attempting to prevent them the duty sergeant and his constable were showered with stones, and when the superintendent arrived on the scene the ringleaders were armed with bludgeons. Wisely, the county officers adopted a conciliatory approach, and the crowd dispersed after two hours leaving behind just one smashed window pane. The ringleaders were then proceeded against by summons. This was good management and the magistrates were fulsome in their praise of the county police.<sup>90</sup>

But not all county policemen handled situations as competently as the Usk superintendent and warnings, fines and demotions failed to eliminate their over-zealousness. Several overtly violent men remained in the force during the period of

<sup>87</sup> Jones, *Crime and Policing in the Twentieth Century*, p.129.

<sup>88</sup> *Merlin*, 7 November 1868.

<sup>89</sup> *Star of Gwent*, 13 November 1875.

<sup>90</sup> GPA: *Superintendent Handyside's Journal*, August 1858 – August 1859: extract drawn from an entry of 5 November 1858.

this study; it can only be supposed, therefore, that they had other redeeming qualities as policemen. If Thomas Lewis, who joined in September 1858, had any redeeming qualities they have not been recorded. In a career that spanned eleven years he was reported seven times for either bullying or assaulting prisoners. On one occasion his victim was a woman, on another it was an old man, and on more than one occasion he took a beating himself. Two anonymous letters were received about his conduct, which was described as 'overbearing'. In the end alcohol got the better of him. However, he was on report for either drinking or being drunk eight times before his dismissal,<sup>91</sup> which suggests that Edmund Herbert looked beyond his faults and saw a tough policeman with potential. Indeed, reports against this ill-disciplined man unwittingly suggest that he was consistently hard-working, but as he was never wholly controllable his long-term future in the force was always in jeopardy.

Cowardice was deplored even more than over-zealousness. For this failing PC Thomas Jones received immediate dismissal in June 1863, and in May 1895, Sergeant John Thomas was demoted to the rank of constable in the first class.<sup>92</sup> Given the rawness of life in parts of the heavily populated industrial towns, particularly in some of the Irish enclaves, policemen assigned to these areas were expected to be tough. They were also expected to exercise their discretion wisely as help was not always readily available. Sergeant Thomas was demoted for ordering the release of a man being escorted to Blaenavon station, because he feared assault from a disorderly crowd following behind. He was therefore branded a coward. Others proved more capable. In 1881, for example, two Ebbw Vale policemen were forced to intercept warring parties in an Irish enclave in order to arrest a man who had just killed his sister-in-law.

<sup>91</sup> *Defaulters Book*, pp. 50, 51, 53 & 198.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 31 & 379.

Greeted by 'carnage and destruction' and a group of people in a state of high excitement (the woman's brachial artery had been severed with a razor), they nonetheless managed their task without creating any further trouble. Yet so intense had been the fighting at the time of the incident, that the jury, who were taken to the crime-scene during the trial, described the place as resembling 'a shambles' and 'a besieged dwelling in war-time'.<sup>93</sup>

Toughness was certainly needed in policemen. As Taylor argues for Middlesbrough, policing was 'a dangerous activity'. In the 1860s, recorded assaults on the police in that town 'averaged almost 60 a year ... when the size of the force averaged 30 men'.<sup>94</sup> But Emsley believes 'Victorian policemen probably did not always report assaults'. Masculinity found expression in physicality and occasionally 'the policeman responded to provocation with physical toughness and aggression and even by getting his retaliation in first'.<sup>95</sup> But misapplication of the rules could prove costly, as was the case in Monmouthshire in 1911, the year that PC Hosea Pope entered into an affray with a local 'ne'er-do-well' and died at the scene as a result.

In 1911, the out-stations and sub-divisional stations were still not connected by telephone. The men who ran them needed to exercise their discretion carefully, and had frequently to deal with incidences single-handedly, as help might be several hours coming. Pope managed the police station at Aberbeeg single-handedly. The 'busy and prosperous' town was said to be 'as rough as any similar sized place in the valleys' and housed a colliery, a brewery, and a railway depot, which provided employment for

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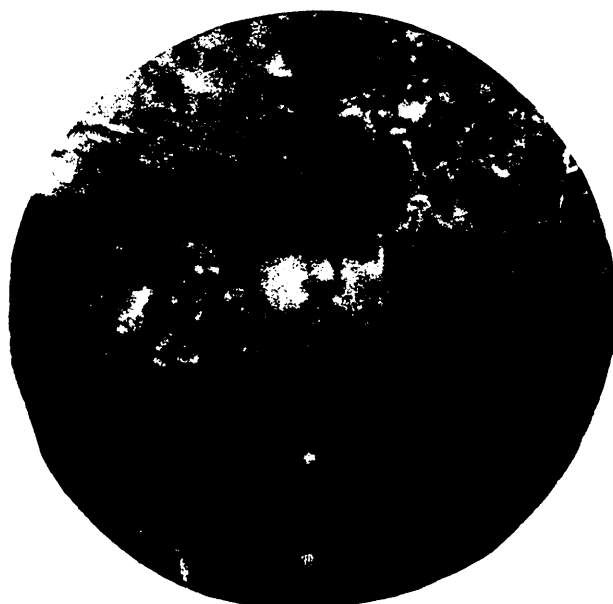
<sup>93</sup> *Merthyr Express*, 17 September 1881.

<sup>94</sup> Taylor, *Policing the Victorian Town*, p. 87.

<sup>95</sup> Emsley, *Hard Men*, p. 133.

several hundred men.<sup>96</sup> A veteran of the Boer War, Pope seemed more than capable of handling the roughs, and his station cells were not infrequently full.<sup>97</sup> On the night he died, it appears that he had taken it upon himself to march a local nuisance to some dark part of the town and teach him a lesson. His wily opponent, however, got the better of him.<sup>98</sup> 'It may be here observed', ran a line in the rule book, 'that the efficiency of a Constable, in any locality, will greatly depend upon his own individual bearing and conduct'.<sup>99</sup> Pope's had hitherto been excellent and he was well-respected by the people of Aberbeeg, but he had ignored one of the cardinal rules laid down for a constable – that he was powerless to interfere when no crime was being committed or there was no evidence of intent.<sup>100</sup> It was a fateful breach of the rules, but news of the popular constable's death raised 'hue and cry', and a willing assistance from the public in the capture of the accused.

Constable Hosea Pope, No. 142, who died at Aberbeeg in 1911.



<sup>96</sup> *Guardian: Journal of the Gwent Constabulary*, Winter 1974, p. 1.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>98</sup> A post-mortem examination found the constable's heart to be diseased. This, coupled with the fact that Pope had interfered when no crime was being committed, led to the defendant being charged with manslaughter, rather than murder.

<sup>99</sup> Herbert, *Orders and Regulations*, p. 49.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 25-35.

Such concerted community action in defence of law and order had a long history.

An example taken from 1868, when the country's fears and suspicions were aroused by an abortive attempt at insurrection by Irish terrorists, helps to illustrate the point. The spectre of flame-throwing Fenians about to storm the town of Monmouth was symptomatic of the panic caused by the event:

On Saturday last a messenger arrived in Monmouth on horseback, breathless and without a hat, to announce that Fenians were on their way to Monmouth, and that they had called at Mr William Blower's the Mill House farm at Dingestow, and finding no person at home but the servant girl, had set the house on fire and nearly killed the girl. Mr Blower, without a moment's loss of time, rode home followed by the police and Dr Andrews; the news went through the town like "wildfire". The farmers and their wives were panic stricken, and business done or not, they packed up and hurried off to their respective homes. The Fire Brigade met at the engine house, and everything was put in readiness ... The special constables, numbering 250 ... each supplied with a "bran new staff" ... were about to march towards Dingestow ... when PS Waters, County Constabulary, arrived ... to say their services were not required; because the house was not set on fire by Fenians or by "Greek Fire", but that Mr Blower's servant girl had taken down her master's powder flask, out of curiosity ... and by so doing shook some powder in the fire, and hence the explosion, which sadly burned the girl's eyes and she now lies in a precarious state.<sup>101</sup>

Deliverance, in the shape of the sergeant of the county force, backed up by a handful of borough constables, no doubt reflected positively on the public's perception of the police; a perception that was ultimately to lead to the constabulary becoming an accepted part of everyday life in the shire. And the ordered mustering and arming of a substantial body of special constables, ready and willing to cooperate and assist the police in the defence of their community and march together like an army towards the foe, reinforces that acceptance. On the other hand, when the police were forced to come between opposing factions of the same community, where passions were already heightened and anger needed venting, they proved ready targets. But this may have reflected, as Taylor suggests, 'hostility to any form of intervention rather than opposition to the police *per se*'.<sup>102</sup> As Radzinowicz emphasised:

<sup>101</sup> *County Observer & Monmouthshire Central Advertiser*, 11 January 1868.

<sup>102</sup> Taylor, *Policing the Victorian Town*, p. 79.

The great crowds involved in the later disorders were brought together to demonstrate in favour of political and social reform rather than against the police as such. Inevitably the role of the force as a bulwark against disorder brought it into conflict with the crowds. Inevitably policemen suffered as the most immediately vulnerable representatives of authority.<sup>103</sup>

The election riots of November 1868, just ten months after the Monmouth incident, illustrate Radzinowicz's point. Ultimately, of course, constabularies were ill-equipped to deal with large-scale lawlessness on their own. At such times help was sought, not only from specially sworn in constables, but other police forces and the military. The fury of passion unleashed by the failure of the Liberal candidate in Monmouthshire, had a domino effect on the industrial towns in the region, and one town followed another in anarchic disorder: Tredegar, Blaenavon, Abersychan, and Pontypool all erupted as news of Colonel Clifford's defeat was made known. Blaenavon witnessed the greatest intensity of violence and, according to a report of the Chief Constable, '[h]ad it not been for the opportune arrival of the military ... the destruction of property would have been enormous'.<sup>104</sup> Miraculously, loss of life was small; a Tredegar boy was run down and killed in the town when the mob set an omnibus in motion, and a Blaenavon rioter broke his neck in a fall. But the situation might yet have been worse; at Abersychan four policemen came close to losing their lives when, overpowered by the mob and forced to take refuge in the cellar of a public house, an attempt was then made to burn the building down.<sup>105</sup>

In the run-up to the election, Herbert had issued a number of instructions for the direction of his force, and the men were encouraged to study certain sections of their rule books. Three days before the polls, constables were warned to 'take care not to interfere too readily or until absolutely necessary, lest by doing so they should create a

<sup>103</sup> Radzinowicz, Vol. 4, pp. 189-90.

<sup>104</sup> GRO: Chief Constables Report to the Justices in Quarter Sessions, 4 January 1869, QS/Cons R 7-84.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

disturbance instead of preventing one'.<sup>106</sup> Tolerance and forbearance towards everyone was urged and a reminder was issued that truncheons were for emergency use only and strictly for self-defence. While, as already stated, it was important that policemen operated within legal limits, just how important it was in a riot situation is neatly summed up in a quote by Steedman, from a Home Office memorandum:

A policeman who has the duty of suppressing a riot is in a very difficult position, for if by his acts he causes death, he is liable to be indicted for murder ... and if he does not act he is liable to an indictment ... for neglect. He is therefore bound to hit the precise line of his duty.<sup>107</sup>

In the event, the Monmouthshire police do appear to have 'hit the precise line' and conducted themselves well. It seems that as political protest degenerated into alcohol-fuelled anarchy, the unfolding chaos was neither specifically initiated nor accelerated by the police presence, as was allegedly the case in the borough of Newport election disturbances. Also, at eighteen other polling venues in the county perfect order was maintained. Parris has suggested that there was 'a link between public order and police efficiency'; police efficiency in this case being measured by the proportion of policemen to population. He cites a number of chronically inefficient counties and boroughs that had experienced 'periodical anarchy' until their police forces were certified efficient by the HMIC.<sup>108</sup> But the causal chain had many links, and in Monmouthshire and Glamorgan, where periodic lawlessness prevailed even though the forces were judged efficient, industrial relations were invariably to the fore.

With the establishment of a uniform system of police in 1856, it had been thought that the use of the military in civil disturbances would lessen, because the police would take over their role. Soldiers, unlike policemen, were armed and therefore more likely

<sup>106</sup> GPA: Memo to Superintendents, May 1859 – October 1879, Memo 78, 21 November 1868.

<sup>107</sup> Steedman, *Policing the Victorian Community*, p. 33.

<sup>108</sup> H. Parris, *Constitutional Bureaucracy* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1969), p. 239.

to inflict fatal injuries when dispersing crowds, and it was also believed that their presence often exacerbated trouble. Crowd control was not popular with the troops either for the soldier, like the policeman, could be indicted for murder if a fatality occurred. The soldier trod “a path as narrow as the sword-edge that leads to Mahomet's paradise, without any better reward before him than a formidable purgatory”.<sup>109</sup> In Monmouthshire he continued to tread it, for as the end of the century beckoned, industrial unrest increased and troops continued to be requisitioned.

Mutual aid agreements, as laid down by Section 25 of the Police Act of 1890, were entered into, but they were seldom enough in riotous circumstances. As Herbert had long understood his force to be 'quite powerless' in serious breaches of the peace, a degree of reciprocity had developed early between the Monmouthshire and neighbouring forces. Fifty members of the county constabulary had assisted the Newport force during the 1868 Borough Election. And Newport and Cardiff borough forces lent men during the labour disturbances of 1893. Likewise Monmouthshire men served with the Glamorganshire force during the Tonypandy riots of 1910. However, the cost to a county or borough could be considerable or might fall, in part, on the policemen themselves. In 1868, for instance, members of the Monmouthshire constabulary had to fund part of their secondment to the Newport borough force.

The charges made at Newport for the Subsistence & Lodging of the Sergeants and Constables on duty at the Borough Election, being in excess of the amount allowed by the County for Special Duty, the difference will now [have] to be paid by the Sergeants and Constables themselves.<sup>110</sup>

Each man was required to pay two shillings and ninepence ha'penny which, for constables at the lower end of the pay-scale, roughly amounted to a day's pay. Twenty-

<sup>109</sup> Quoted in D. Williams, *Keeping the Peace* (1967), 33, and cited in J. Morgan, *Conflict and Order* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), p. 34.

<sup>110</sup> GPA: Abergavenny Division General Order Book, 1 October 1868 – 27 August 1877: Memorandum to Superintendents, 1 February 1869.



five years later, the cost of policing the 'autumn strike in the Western Valleys', was estimated at £3,561,<sup>111</sup> though it is not known whether policemen were made personally responsible for any part of the expenses. Following the policing of this strike, claims were made for compensation; a Cardiff policeman was said to have been incapacitated by cold and exposure, and a Newport officer put in a claim for seven pounds, seventeen shillings and sixpence, for time off from sunstroke. Understandably, the paradox raised a few eyebrows amongst members of the police committee. But, by the 1890s policemen knew they had rights as workers and *could* make claims. However, not all strike duty expenses were met by the county; in 1893, claims from the Cardiff and Newport borough forces for the services of their police were passed on to the Ebbw Vale Steel, Iron and Coal Company. Policemen were not unaffected by these events either. Shpayer-Makov has described how 'the rising tide of labour organisations in the latter part of the century' led to Metropolitan policemen adopting 'more modern strategies' of collective bargaining themselves.<sup>112</sup> How the Monmouthshire men responded to disaffection within the force is a theme that is explored in the final chapter of this work.

As the nineteenth century progressed, leadership of the force was strengthened not only by the recruitment of more able superintendents, but also by the promotion to that post of long-serving, reliable policemen. Captain Vincent Parker, who was appointed superintendent in December 1880, was an ex-civil servant and a military officer of almost twelve years standing when he joined the force. Put in charge of the Tredegar division, he appears to have exhibited all the qualities suited to a man of his station and was frequently singled out for special praise. In December 1885, following

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<sup>111</sup> *Abergavenny Chronicle*, 19 January 1894.

<sup>112</sup> Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman*, p. 250.

the General Election of that year, his 'zeal, energy and tact ... in carrying out all the details of the Police arrangements in his district', were said to be 'deserving of special commendation'.<sup>113</sup> In contrast to the Election of 1868, perfect order was preserved, but this probably had as much to do with the experiment of closing the pubs in Tredegar and Pontypool on the afternoon of Polling Day as it did with the Captain's excellent command.

There is no doubt that professionalism had now begun to permeate the force, though not all highly regarded officers managed crowd control as efficiently as Captain Parker. Victor Bosanquet, for example, was more combative and as a result often generated profound hostility from various sections of the public and the press.<sup>114</sup> Much ill-feeling resulted from his handling of the crowds in Pontyminster during a period of industrial strife at the town's Tin and Steel Works, in the latter part of 1893. On the occasion in question, Bosanquet had been in charge of a contingent of county constables guarding the 'Works' during a strike. A large crowd had assembled with the intention of removing Scottish strike-breakers imported by the managers, and Bosanquet, acting on written orders from the managers, refused any communications between the 'Scotchmen' and the crowd. The crowd became restive, a missile was thrown, Bosanquet was struck on the mouth and his lip was cut open. At this point he gave orders for the police to draw their staves and charge. In the ensuing melee thirteen staves were broken and a good many people were injured.

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<sup>113</sup> GPA: Quarterly Reports of the Chief Constable, December 1883 – July 1901: Report of 28 December 1885.

<sup>114</sup> Victor Bosanquet was appointed superintendent in July 1887, he took up the post of Chief Constable on 1 January 1894, following Edmund Herbert's retirement.

At the Monmouth Assizes eleven men, who the police had picked out as ringleaders, were given sentences ranging from six to nine months. But there was a sense that the police 'in the excitement of the moment had come down upon those nearest to them' whether or not they had participated in the riot.<sup>115</sup> There was also a feeling that Bosanquet had completely mishandled the situation; his ordering of the baton charge seemed too much of a knee-jerk reaction to his having been hit in the mouth by a missile. Emotive and overtly partisan reports in the press made much of this, but they were countered by the opinions of the sentencing judge, the HMIC, and other press reports.<sup>116</sup> Nevertheless, it was an inauspicious start to Bosanquet's chief constablenesship, which began on 1 January 1894, particularly as an appeal to the Home Secretary resulted in the rioters' sentences being shortened. Also, in the published report of the Monmouthshire County Council's March meeting, contrasts were drawn between Herbert's 'quiet way' of managing the labour troubles of the previous August, and 'the "butchering" of the poor fellows at Pontyminster by this sprig of a Chief Constable'.<sup>117</sup>

A good deal of correspondence with the Home Office occurred over disturbances or likely disturbances in the provinces. Indeed, as Steedman points out, '[i]n the early 1860s the first reaction of a local authority facing disturbance was communication with the Home Office'.<sup>118</sup> In Monmouthshire, the Fenian panic of the late 1860s had brought forth a rush of orders from Whitehall. In September 1867, a confidential circular advised the Chief Constable to send plain-clothed policemen amongst the Irish population to act as spies, as a precaution against any sudden outbreak of Fenian

<sup>115</sup> *South Wales Weekly Argus*, 21 February 1894.

<sup>116</sup> For the various accounts see *South Wales Weekly Argus*, 21 February 1894, and *South Wales Daily Star*, 23 May 1894.

<sup>117</sup> *Abergavenny Chronicle*, 23 March 1894.

<sup>118</sup> Steedman, *Policing the Victorian Community*, p. 32.

activity. It was imperative, the Home Secretary argued, that 'a system should be established by which a constant Watch should be kept on Persons believed to belong to such Organization, and regular information transmitted to this Office'.<sup>119</sup> In December of that year a man arrested for larceny in Tredegar was subsequently sent to Ireland on a charge of treason. 'It appeared from enquiries that he had been engaged in the attack upon the Police Barracks in Killmallock in March last'.<sup>120</sup>

Also in December 1867, the force was put on high alert by news from the Home Secretary that a 'Danish Brigantine' was about to off-load some thirty or so American Fenians on the shores of the Bristol Channel.<sup>121</sup> A detachment of police was immediately sent to watch the coast, but the danger passed and the constabulary was given the stand-down the following January. When the cost of the operation was ascertained, Edmund Herbert requested remuneration from the Government, but the Under Secretary replied:

I am to inform you that the Secretary of State has no fund out of which he can order payment of these expenses incidental to the watching by the Police of the Coasts of Monmouthshire ... they must be paid in the same way that ordinary Police expenses are paid.<sup>122</sup>

These examples not only serve to illustrate the accessibility of Home Office guidance and advice to nineteenth-century police forces, they also demonstrate the extent to which a force could become the strong executive arm of central government in times of a perceived national emergency. Some historians would view this as evidence of growing centralisation, though Ogborn suggests that central-local relations

<sup>119</sup> GPA: Secretary of State's Letters 1857-1879: Letter 48, 28 September 1867.

<sup>120</sup> GRO: Chief Constables Report to the Magistrates in Quarter Sessions, December 1867: QS/Cons R 0007 81.

<sup>121</sup> GPA: Secretary of State's Letters, 1857-1879: Letter 49, 19 December 1867.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid., Letter 60, 10 July 1868.

are more complex than the 'orthodox dualistic' analyses presented in histories of the nineteenth century:

Local states neither simply retained old powers, nor saw them drain away towards the centre. By virtue of their position within the state apparatus they were actively involved in the process by which the historical geography of administrative power was transformed, and their own role along with it.<sup>123</sup>

The situation, as has been demonstrated, was complex. A county chief's autonomy could be encroached upon at any time by central government, but likewise, from the latter years of the nineteenth century onward, central government might also be instrumental in increasing a county chief's autonomy of action, as was the case in Monmouthshire. Overall, it amounted to a 'creeping centralisation'. The state's 'visibility and intervention' increased,<sup>124</sup> with successive changes in legislation.

In addition to law-keeping, the police were assigned a service-role. One of the reasons, as Storch reveals, is that 'a new standard of decorum in public [had] percolated increasingly strongly into the consciousness of rural gentlemen in the second half century or so before 1850'.<sup>125</sup> The Victorians, according to Croll, were 'wedded to the concept of urban civilisation',<sup>126</sup> and for the establishment and maintenance of good order and well-regulated communities, the police were called upon to perform a complexity of tasks. Policemen were used as assistant poor law relieving officers, as enforcers of the licensing laws and nuisance laws, they were entrusted with the task of inspecting common lodging houses and weights and measures. Many of the tasks had eighteenth and early nineteenth century antecedents, though after the formation of the

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<sup>123</sup> M. Ogborn, 'Local power and state regulation in nineteenth century Britain', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, New Series, 17, 2, (1992), pp. 215-226.

<sup>124</sup> H. Shore, 'Crime, Policing and Punishment', in C. Williams (ed.), *A Companion to Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), p.393.

<sup>125</sup> R. D. Storch, 'Policing Rural England Before the Police', D. Hay and F. Snyder (eds.), *Policing and Prosecution in Britain 1750-1850* (Oxford, University Press), p. 261.

<sup>126</sup> A. Croll, 'Street disorder, surveillance and shame, regulating behaviour in the public spaces of the late Victorian British town', *Social History*, 24, 3, (1999).

new constabularies the policing of moral behaviour was intensified. The police were given the responsibility of generally supervising 'those aspects of working-class culture that ran counter to respectable pastimes or undermined industrial discipline'.<sup>127</sup> 'The state extended its powers to reform the morals of the people'.<sup>128</sup>

But, this was not simply because of the changing concepts of decorum. It was, Reiner believes, 'to secure legitimacy for more coercive policing functions'.<sup>129</sup> Thompson, however, questions the degree policy makers and coercive agencies actually played in the process of social transformation. In his view 'the working classes were a great deal more than puppets on the end of bourgeois strings':

a tradition of relaxation, enjoyment and pleasure which was carried into industrial society, was never extinguished, and was vigourously expressed in old forms and new, in pub and club, gambling and football ground, music hall and seaside resort, preserving the practical pursuit of happiness from the clutches of the moralists.<sup>130</sup>

Croll also suggests that the 'social control' thesis tends not only to ignore the fact that there was 'a sizeable group within the working class possessed of a strong desire to "self-improve" and spend its leisure time in a rational fashion', but that policemen 'could exercise their own discretion when it came to enforcing the law'.<sup>131</sup> Police power was certainly extended by legislative developments over the period covered by this research. But, as will be demonstrated in Chapter Five, difficulties arose from the various ways discretion and duty were interpreted, particularly by the witless and wily members of the force, recruited in good number initially, who were effortlessly bad at

<sup>127</sup> A. Croll, 'Street disorder, surveillance and shame, regulating behaviour in the public spaces of the late Victorian British town', *Social History*, 24, 3, (1999).

<sup>128</sup> Taylor, *The New Police*, p. 91.

<sup>129</sup> Reiner, *The Politics of the Police*, p. 69.

<sup>130</sup> F. M. L. Thompson, 'Social Control in Victorian Britain', *Economic History Review*, New Series, 34, 2, May 1981, pp. 189-208.

<sup>131</sup> A. Croll, 'Popular Leisure and Sport', in C. Williams (ed.), *A Companion to Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2006), p. 404.

exercising that power.<sup>132</sup> Enforcing the Licensing Laws was a case in point.

Prior to 1856, police had been used as poor law relieving officers in large boroughs,<sup>133</sup> and the old high constables of counties 'had a variety of tasks; the most important of which was supervision of the collection of the county rates'.<sup>134</sup> This service role increased after 1856 because, as Steedman points out, the County and Borough Police Act empowered magistrates 'to oblige the police to perform work other than that involved in keeping the peace'.<sup>135</sup> The extra duties performed by the Monmouthshire Constabulary in 1877 are listed below.

**Table 4:** Extra duties performed by members of the Monmouthshire Constabulary in 1877

Extra duties	No. of men	Allowances
Inspectors of low lodging houses	1 Superintendent 1 Sergeant	£5 per annum Nil
Inspectors of weights and measures	4 Superintendents 2 Inspectors	2 Supts @ £18: 2 Supts @ £12/annum £10 each per annum
Inspectors of cattle under the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act	Chief Constable's 4 Superintendents 2 Inspectors 7 Sergeants	£50 per annum Nil Nil Nil
Conservators of rivers Assistant relieving officer of vagrants	Chief Constable 1 Inspector	Nil £6 per annum
In lieu of javelin men	1 Superintendent 2 Sergeants 14 Constables	With special duty allowances Ditto Ditto

Source: Report of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Constabulary, September 1877.

<sup>132</sup> Many entries in the *Defaulters Book* and recruitment registers confirm this point, as is demonstrated in Chapters Four and Five.

<sup>133</sup> Steedman, *Policing the Victorian Community*, p. 57.

<sup>134</sup> Emsley, *Crime and Society*, p. 217.

<sup>135</sup> Steedman, *Policing the Victorian Community*, p. 53.

Steedman rightly suggests that many chief constables believed that the service role too often took policemen away from their “proper” duty as guardians of the peace.<sup>136</sup> Herbert certainly found the service role 'disagreeable', and amongst union guardians in the county there was a 'strong expression of opinion ... against the employment of the Police as Assistant Relieving Officers for Vagrants', because it increased the numbers applying for relief and thereby added to the ratepayers' burden.<sup>137</sup> The Monmouthshire guardians appear to have viewed poverty and crime as inseparable bedfellows and the mobile poor as an alien and criminal group. They had thought that by using the police as assistant relieving officers for vagrants, the number of applicants would be greatly reduced. Herbert believed that such an idea 'could only have been based upon the assumption that the majority of the applicants belonged to the criminal classes', which in his opinion was not the case. Gradually, however, legislative changes loosened the ties between the police and magistrates. Policemen were used less as local government servants as more administrative duties were passed directly to them from central government.

In relation to the job that they did and the number of hours they worked, policemen were poorly paid. In August 1857, four months after the establishment of the force, Monmouthshire constables were divided into three classes, with proportional weekly wages: first class constables received twenty-one shillings, second class constables, twenty shillings, and those in the third class, eighteen shillings.<sup>138</sup> Food, fuel and accommodation had to be paid for out of this and, in many cases, families too.

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<sup>136</sup> Steedman, *Policing the Victorian Community*, p. 54.

<sup>137</sup> GRO: Chief Constable's Report to the Magistrates in Quarter Sessions, 19 October 1868: QS/Cons R 0007-85.

<sup>138</sup> Reports of the HMIC, September 1857.



Deductions for fines, when they occurred, could also cut deeply into a constable's budget.

Working in a new public-service occupation, policemen joined that growing group of workers defined as semi-skilled whose wages, according to the contemporary observer Samuel Laing, were 'just about sufficient for subsistence'.<sup>139</sup> Burnett also suggests that '[t]he wage of an urban semi-skilled worker in regular employment in mid-nineteenth century was around 15s to £1 a week', the 'comfort line' coming at 'something over £1 a week'.<sup>140</sup> Though paltry, policemen's wages were not subject to the economic fluctuations of trade and industry and men who had served for over fifteen years could retire on a pension of half pay, or two-thirds pay for service of twenty-five years and over. In each case the claimant had to be either sixty years of age, or certified unfit and incapable of further duty. Claims, nevertheless, were subject to the approval of the Chief Constable and the police committee, and some long-term contributors to the superannuation fund did find themselves denied a pension. Nothing was absolute until the Police Act of 1890.

Low pay was an issue throughout the period under investigation. In 1877 the Chief Constable, in answer to a Home Office enquiry, calculated that the weekly wages of Monmouthshire recruits, prior to their entering the force, was between sixteen and twenty-three shillings, whereas the weekly pay of the lowest class constable was twenty-two shillings and sixpence, which, according to reports of the HMIC, was one shilling and sixpence below the national average for county forces.<sup>141</sup> Wall contests

<sup>139</sup> J. Burnett, *A History of the Cost of Living* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1969), p. 251.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 263.

<sup>141</sup> GPA: Secretary of State's Letters 1857-79: Copy of Circular, with answers supplied by Edmund Herbert, sent to HMIC on 29 November 1877.

that it was not until the Police Act of 1919, that police pay 'ceased to be comparable with that of an agricultural labourer'.<sup>142</sup> But, as Steedman stresses, agricultural labourers worked on average five and a half days a week and policemen seven, which brought some policemen's wages to below those of the agricultural labourer.<sup>143</sup>

To compound the problem, restrictions were also placed both on police wives working and policemen benefiting financially from any employment outside the bounds of constabulary work. In exceptional circumstances only might a gratuity be kept; in cases of remarkable heroism, for instance, or for outstanding service to the force. In most instances, however, gratuities were redirected to the superannuation fund, for it was generally believed that allowing them to be retained might lead to partiality and neglect of everyday responsibilities. In short, policemen were not allowed to profit in any way from their position.

The Constables will bear in mind that ... they are not only forbidden to receive money but also any description of remuneration – any member of the Force receiving presents of Game or anything else from any but a personal friend and retaining the same for his own use without the permission of the Chief Constable will be considered to have committed an infringement of Order 5 and will be dealt with accordingly.<sup>144</sup>

Although pay and conditions had caused some unrest in forces prior to the 1856 Police Act – Manchester and Hull police had taken strike action over pay in 1853 – it was a relatively unusual occurrence. Steedman suggests that 'the first offensive in the "police wages movement" came in Birmingham in 1871', when the police of that city petitioned the watch committee, through their Chief Constable, for a number of concessions.<sup>145</sup> Some isolated police strikes occurred thereafter and petitions for higher wages increased, though the demands were never ambitious. In general they called for

<sup>142</sup> Wall, *Chief Constables*, p.57.

<sup>143</sup> Steedman, *Policing the Victorian Community*, p. 113.

<sup>144</sup> GPA: Tredegar Station General Order Book, October 1866 – November 1875; G.O. 1 February 1867.

<sup>145</sup> Steedman, *Policing the Victorian Community*, p. 135.

the standardisation of pay and conditions of service. In April 1872 the Glamorgan force petitioned its finance committee: 'The object of the memorial was a demand, as there was everywhere else, for an increase of wages'.<sup>146</sup> And in October of the same year the Monmouthshire force made a successful bid for an increase in their pay. But it was standardisation that particularly interested Edward Willis, the HMIC for the Southern District, in 1872. In his annual report to the Home Secretary, he urged: 'The general subject of pay and numbers is ... deserving of consideration. At present one place bids against another for men, by offering better pay'.<sup>147</sup>

**Table 5: Hierarchy and pay in the Monmouthshire Constabulary, 1877**

1877
<b>Yearly pay in pounds, shillings and pence (£sd)</b>
Chief Constable - £450
Deputy Chief Constable - £200.15s
2 <sup>nd</sup> Class Superintendent - £187.1s.3d
3 <sup>rd</sup> Class Superintendent - £156.12s.11d
4 <sup>th</sup> Class Superintendent - £141.8s.9d
1 <sup>st</sup> Class Inspector - £142.19s.2d *
2 <sup>nd</sup> Class Inspector - £118.12s.6d
3 <sup>rd</sup> Class Inspector - £114.1s.3d
<b>Weekly pay in shillings and pence</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> Class Sergeant - 33s.10d
2 <sup>nd</sup> Class Sergeant - 32s.8d
3 <sup>rd</sup> Class Sergeant - 31s.6d
4 <sup>th</sup> Class Sergeant - 30s.4d
1 <sup>st</sup> Class Constable - 29s.2d
2 <sup>nd</sup> Class Constable - 28s
3 <sup>rd</sup> Class Constable - 27s.5d
4 <sup>th</sup> Class Constable - 26s.10d
5 <sup>th</sup> Class Constable - 26s.3d
6 <sup>th</sup> Class Constable - 25s.1d
7 <sup>th</sup> Class Constable - 23s.11d
8 <sup>th</sup> Class Constable - 22s.2d
* The 1 <sup>st</sup> Class Inspector acted as clerk to the Chief Constable, for which he was granted £18.5s.0d., in addition to the maximum pay granted to other inspectors.

Source: HMIC Report of 1877.

<sup>146</sup> *Merthyr Telegraph*, 12 April 1872.

<sup>147</sup> HMIC Reports of 1872.

The hierarchical system, however, was not static and various adjustments were made to control and motivate the workforce by financial means. For example, by 1897 the sergeant classes had grown to eight, while the constable classes had shrunk to three, but within the top constable class there were five pay grades. See table 6 below.

**Table 6: Hierarchy and pay in the Monmouthshire Constabulary, 1897**

1897
<b>Yearly pay in pounds, shillings and pence (£sd)</b>
Chief Constable - £400
Deputy Chief Constable & Chief Clerk - £214.8s
1 <sup>st</sup> Class Superintendent - £200.15s
2 <sup>nd</sup> Class Superintendent - £173.7s
3 <sup>rd</sup> Class Superintendent - £168.16s
4 <sup>th</sup> Class Superintendent - £164.5s
1 <sup>st</sup> Class Inspector - £127.15s
2 <sup>nd</sup> Class Inspector - £124.14s
3 <sup>rd</sup> Class Inspector - £115.11s
4 <sup>th</sup> Class Inspector - £109.10s
<b>Weekly pay in shillings and pence</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> Class Sergeant - 37s.4d
2 <sup>nd</sup> Class Sergeant - 36s.9d
3 <sup>rd</sup> Class Sergeant - 36s.2d
4 <sup>th</sup> Class Sergeant - 34s.5d
5 <sup>th</sup> Class Sergeant - 33s.3d
6 <sup>th</sup> Class Sergeant - 32s.8d
7 <sup>th</sup> Class Sergeant - 32s.1d
8 <sup>th</sup> Class Sergeant - 29s.9d
1 <sup>st</sup> Class Constable @ 30s.5d
1 <sup>st</sup> Class Constable @ 29s.9d
1 <sup>st</sup> Class Constable @ 28s.7d
1 <sup>st</sup> Class Constable @ 27s.5d
1 <sup>st</sup> Class Constable @ 26s.3d
2 <sup>nd</sup> Class Constable - 25s.1d
3 <sup>rd</sup> Class Constable - 23s.11d

Source: HMIC Report of 1897.

Published reports of the HMIC and the activity of the press exercised a considerable influence on the police wages movement by unifying policemen in their efforts. Though, as Steedman points out, '[n]one of the action taken by policemen in these years demonstrates anything like a national unionisation of policemen'.<sup>148</sup> An attempt *was* made to form a national union by a disaffected ex-Metropolitan officer, John Syme, in 1913. But the secret and unofficial John Syme League, which became the The National Union of Police and Prison Officers in 1814, disintegrated in 1919.<sup>149</sup> In the same year legislation, in the form of the The Police Act of 1919, prohibited police union activity, and instead proposed 'the formation of a Police Federation to represent the interests of the ranks of inspector and below'.<sup>150</sup> The Desborough Committee's recommendations that 'police pay and conditions of service should be improved, standardised and centrally determined by the Home Secretary'<sup>151</sup> were encompassed in the Act. However, for the men of the Monmouthshire Constabulary, of 1857-1914, this was still wrapped in the future. Nevertheless, as Chapter Five illustrates, the accumulation of their countless grievances and resignations in this period were central to the dynamics of change.

Conditions of service, like pay, remained poor throughout the century. Indeed, Steedman maintains that '[a]s late as 1867 a borough constable spoke of "98 hours work a week" – fourteen hours a day in a seven day week'.<sup>152</sup> In the Monmouthshire force '9 hours and under 15' was considered a day and '15 hours and under 24' was taken as 'a day & night'.<sup>153</sup> Superintendent William Handyside recorded in his journal

<sup>148</sup> Steedman, *Policing the Victorian Community*, p. 136.

<sup>149</sup> Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman*, pp. 253-5.

<sup>150</sup> Wall, *Chief Constables*, p. 56.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid*, p. 57.

<sup>152</sup> Steedman, *Policing the Victorian Community*, p. 122.

<sup>153</sup> GPA: Tredegar Station General Order Book, July 1857-February 1864; G.O. of 1 April 1859.

weekly working hours of between sixty and seventy, though he was always on call.<sup>154</sup> 'He must never spare either himself or his men, when the public service requires his assistance', ran the first instruction to superintendents in Herbert's *Orders and Regulations*.<sup>155</sup> It was an order Handyside embraced diligently. He worked without a break for two-thirds of his twelve month tenure. Of the eighteen days' leave he did take, three resulted from a gashed head and concussion when, on returning to his office from Petty Sessions, his horse fell beneath him.<sup>156</sup>

With weekly rest days still a thing of the future (the Police Weekly Rest Day Act was passed in 1910) the rank and file were very much at the mercy of their superior officers. It was the duty of the superintendent to see that each constable had his share of rest and that no favouritism was shown by the sergeants and inspectors. But, as Emsley points out, in hierarchical institutions there were always men of senior rank who were 'tempted to abuse their authority and bully some subordinates while showing favouritism to others'.<sup>157</sup> Monmouthshire officers were not immune to such behaviour and several failed to lead by example. Sergeant Beavan's 'want of tact and bad temper in his dealings with, and management of, constables under him' led to his removal from Risca station.<sup>158</sup> And numerous reports in the force discipline book hint at similar tension, particularly where sergeants are threatened with a beating or challenged to a fight by constables in their charge. However, by a close examination of journals, station diaries, and weekly reports, the Chief Constable could monitor hours of duty. If any attempt 'to deceive the Chief Constable be discovered', he warned, '*Dismissal* will

<sup>154</sup> GPA: The Diary of Superintendent William Handyside, 1 August 1858-6 August 1859.

<sup>155</sup> Herbert, *Orders and Regulations*, p. 14.

<sup>156</sup> GPA: The Diary of Superintendent William Handyside, 1 August 1858-6 August 1859: entry of 24 January 1859.

<sup>157</sup> Emsley, *The English Police*, p.215.

<sup>158</sup> GPA: *Defaulters Book*, p. 610.

be the punishment inflicted'.<sup>159</sup> Despite the warning, men of the Monmouthshire Constabulary found numerous ways of deceiving their chief.

## Conclusion

When the Monmouthshire Constabulary came into being in 1857, the Chief Constable had few grounds for optimism. The new unit lacked a basic infrastructure. Police stations, lockups, and living accommodation were either totally absent or in very short supply, and the chief himself was forced to bivouac in a courtroom in the Usk Town Hall. The situation threatened to derail developments right from the start; growth, operations and organisation were all hampered by it. Unsatisfactory and archaic arrangements for the containment of prisoners took years to rectify, during which time captives not infrequently effected escapes or died. Chronic under-funding was at the heart of the problem. Sir Henry Mather-Jackson, speaking in 1891, explained things thus:

When the police were under the control of the quarter sessions, the magistrates (who were not the chosen representatives of the rate-payers, but were the guardians of the money paid by them in rates, and consequently in spending other people's money were very jealous of the expenditure), perhaps were thought to move rather slowly.<sup>160</sup>

Of course, what Sir Henry did not mention was the fact that the magistrates themselves were amongst the biggest rate-payers of the county and were no doubt 'very jealous' of the way their own money was being distributed. He did suggest, however that things had improved since the County Councils Act of 1888, as half the police committee was now elected by the ratepayers and the business of under-funding was now 'altered'.<sup>161</sup> Indeed, the situation *was* altered for the better as the century drew to a

<sup>159</sup> GPA: Tredegar Station General Order Book, July 1857-February 1864; G.O. of 3 February 1860.

<sup>160</sup> *Monmouthshire Beacon*, 5 September 1891.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*

close, though the problem of under-funding was never entirely overcome and sub-standard police accommodation still created problems in 1914 and beyond.

Of enormous import to the development of the force were the consequences of industrialisation. Varying degrees of strife had existed in the burgeoning industrial towns long before the inauguration of the county constabulary. Some of the towns already possessed what has been described as a 'frontier' quality, and there was some indication in the press that the arrival of the new police would be an unwelcome intrusion. However, there was no fierce outburst. One of the reasons for the fairly passive reception, as mentioned in previous chapters, was that police had existed in the county in one form or another for a very long time, and Monmouthshire had advanced some way towards becoming a policed society by 1857. A form of desensitisation had therefore taken place.

But despite the new constabulary's relatively passive reception, it became necessary to adjust the distribution of the force and its divisions in favour of the industrial towns. Industrial and demographic growth alone would have deemed this necessary as a prerequisite to good order, but the growth in political democracy and radicalism necessitated it further. There were monumental moments of turbulence in Monmouthshire's industrial heartlands, but they were not long-lived. Like Mark Twain's weather, which '[got] through more business in the spring than in any other season',<sup>162</sup> interchanging aspects of conflict and consensus invade the pages of this history. Disjuncture and cooperation between the police and the public could occur

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<sup>162</sup> M. Twain, 'New England Weather': Speech delivered at the New England Society's Seventy-First Annual Dinner, New York City, 22 December 1876, in *Mark Twain's Speeches* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1910): The Weather Doctor © 2006: Google Search, 18 November 2008.



together, during a single event, like that of the 5 November 1858,<sup>163</sup> or during the same year, such as in 1868, when there was both cooperation during the Fenian panic in Monmouth and disjuncture during the election riots.

Policing after 1856 involved a wide range of activities besides those of keeping the peace. Many of these had pre-1857 antecedents, and many were not wholly acceptable to the Chief Constable, who believed that the emphasis in policing should be on law-keeping, and that routine police work suffered as a result of them. Historians have suggested that the service role was specifically designed to secure public consent, but there is no historiographical consensus as to how successful this was. For example, Shpayer-Makov suggests that the middle-class precepts 'officers were tasked with supporting' were never wholly imposed on the working classes, but they 'rendered the policeman more acceptable' to those classes nevertheless.<sup>164</sup> Taylor, on the other hand, asserts that the 'code of behaviour' that constables were charged with enforcing was not only seen as 'alien' by the working classes in Middlesbrough, but it made the police unpopular with them.<sup>165</sup> Thompson takes the view that often 'a yawning gap [existed] between the aims of social controllers and actual achievements', and that the evolution of working class culture during the nineteenth century was 'generated from within' as much as from 'outside proddings'.<sup>166</sup> What cannot be disputed, however, is that regulation and control in the daily life of the nation had come to be expected by the mid-nineteenth century, and the police with their wide-ranging functions were a part of the process.

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<sup>163</sup> See page 132 above.

<sup>164</sup> Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman*, pp. 122-3.

<sup>165</sup> D. Taylor, *Policing the frontier: Middlesbrough c. 1830s to 1860s*, BBC Legacies; BBC.co.uk: 07/05/08.

<sup>166</sup> F. M. L. Thompson, 'Social Control in Victorian Britain', *Economic History Review*, New Series, 34, 2, May 1981, pp. 189-208.

In tracing the development of the constabulary as an institution, it seems that while there was little reason for optimism in 1857, perseverance won the day, though it was not until the inter-war years that the force really began to consolidate the gains of earlier decades. The evidence offered in this chapter again conflicts with Whiggish ideological constructions of straightforward progress. There were to be found in *Organisation and Practice* significant links with the past, in fact continuities appeared often to outweigh discontinuities.

## Chapter Four

### Morbidity and Mortality

Modern police historiography lays much of the blame for morbidity and mortality (sickness and death) in nineteenth and early twentieth century policemen firmly at the door of the police themselves. For example, Steedman, Emsley, and Taylor have all suggested that prolonged beat work not only ruined men's health but, in some instances, killed them. Steedman suggests that in both county and borough forces, 'life expectancy decreased as years of service were clocked up',<sup>154</sup> and Emsley found that '[t]he rigours of the job had a deleterious effect on the health of many men'.<sup>155</sup> Taylor showed that 'some men died whilst working, quite literally exhausted by their job'.<sup>156</sup> Shpayer-Makov agrees:

Clearly, policeman's work environment was a potential health hazard. Throughout the nineteenth century, it was primarily the factor that contemporaries identified and indicated as the cause of widespread illness and discomfort ... the ecology of police work was responsible for the physical deterioration of a large proportion of police employees.<sup>157</sup>

In an attempt to make sense of why men entering the police 'in much better health than the average worker'<sup>158</sup> became ill so frequently, a Royal Commission was conducted. Its report, of 1908, emphasised exposure to the elements and 'physical conflict with offenders'.<sup>159</sup> This chapter will investigate the hypothesis by using, among its main sources of data, death certificates of the men recruited between 1857 and 1914, who died in service, or died very soon after dismissal on ill-health grounds; reports of the Chief

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<sup>154</sup> Steedman, *Policing the Victorian Community*, p. 121.

<sup>155</sup> Emsley, *The English Police*, p. 230.

<sup>156</sup> Taylor, *Policing the Victorian Town*, p. 133.

<sup>157</sup> Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman*, p. 134.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>159</sup> *Police Review*, 3 July 1908.

constables; admission registers; daily attendance registers; station diaries; the force discipline book; and a number of important secondary sources.

The use of death certificates is a completely new source of reference. The death certificates of the Monmouthshire policemen, in conjunction with the sources listed above, will enable a retrospective exploration of the men's past by uncovering features in their history which may have led to a deterioration in their health or, indeed, to their death. Will some features appear more frequently in the histories of the affected men than in those who appear to have remained well? How far were constitutional or environmental factors such as diet, housing, past employment, specific patterns of behaviour etc., responsible for causing disease? Were different phases in the policemen's careers a factor, or different dates? Was there a pattern to disease and death in the force? One of the objects of this chapter is to determine whether specific influences can be isolated and their effects measured.

Weight is added to the need for the study as the conclusions drawn to date in the historiography of policemen's health and wellbeing are undisputed. There has been no research on sickness and death in nineteenth and early twentieth century police forces in Wales. However, Shpayer-Makov's work on the Metropolitan Police addresses the subject in relation to the London force in some detail.<sup>160</sup> Her work has therefore been a constant source of reference in seeking to advance an understanding of the subject.

In a retrospective enquiry, as Bradford Hill states, 'the starting point is the affected person ... and the investigation lies in the uncovering of features in his history

<sup>160</sup> Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman*, Chapter 4.

which may have led to that condition'.<sup>161</sup> In such an inquiry, suggests Witts, 'the investigator is faced with two principal problems. He has to determine the frequency with which patients with the condition under study have been exposed to the suspected cause, but he also has to make some estimate of the frequency which would have been expected if the suspected cause was, in fact, not a cause at all'.<sup>162</sup> In this instance, the suspected cause is policing or, more specifically, police beat work, and the most common conditions said to disable policemen were pulmonary infections and rheumatism.

'Lung disease and acute rheumatism', according to Steedman, 'were the major hazards of the policeman's working life'.<sup>163</sup> Policemen themselves believed they saw a pattern, 'the inclemency of the weather ... tells upon you; you get one cold lodged upon another until at last it affects the lungs'.<sup>164</sup> In the Middlesbrough force Taylor found that, 'the physical effects of prolonged beat work ... [were] painfully clear', and included 'chronic rheumatism as well as illnesses such as pneumonia and ague brought on by the rigours of the job'.<sup>165</sup> However, some terminological clarification needs to be made here. While the term 'acute rheumatism' has in the past been used to describe rheumatic fever, which results from a streptococcal infection and can ultimately lead to heart, joint, and renal disease, it is possible that much of the acute and chronic rheumatism historians have ascribed to policemen, refers to the arthritides, i.e. rheumatoid arthritis, osteoarthritis, gout etc. Of these osteoarthritis was, and still is, the commonest and, until recently, 'was assumed to be an inevitable consequence of ageing

<sup>161</sup> A. Bradford Hill, *Principles of Medical Statistics* (London: The Lancet Limited, 1966), p. 47.

<sup>162</sup> L. J. Witts, *Medical Surveys and Clinical Trials* (2<sup>nd</sup>.Edition, London: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 73.

<sup>163</sup> Steedman, *Policing the Victorian Community*, p. 121.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

<sup>165</sup> Taylor, *Policing the Victorian Town*, p. 133.

and wear and tear'.<sup>166</sup> But the difficulty with a precision diagnosis is explained by

Shpayer-Makov, in relation to the Metropolitan Police:

The most prevalent cause of invaliding ... though it caused only a small number of deaths, was rheumatism and rheumatic fever (which the chief surgeon occasionally lumped together with rheumatic gout and sciatica) ... [and] sometimes rheumatic fever was incorporated into "other fevers".<sup>167</sup>

Rheumatism, in the sense of the arthritides, undoubtedly incapacitated many policemen and made their lives miserable, but it did not kill them. Respiratory infection, on the other hand, did. Pneumonia, both primary and secondary, was a serious and life-threatening condition and contributed significantly to death-rate statistics during the period under investigation. In the Metropolitan Police, for example, 'pneumonia and bronchitis accounted for almost half of all deaths in the force and about a fifth of all invaliding'.<sup>168</sup>

Nineteenth and early twentieth century police statistics, however, cannot be regarded as entirely unselected or totally accurate, for while much positive evidence is to be found, much is incomplete. Detailed information on morbidity and mortality in the force was not routinely collected and little is found in police registers. There is also no guarantee of diagnostic certainty with death certificates either, for though more definitive and descriptive diagnoses were recorded as medical expertise grew, as late as 1871 it was still understood that 'probability has to take the place of absolute knowledge'.<sup>169</sup> Also, as Ashley, Cole and Kilbane explain:

<sup>166</sup> P. Dieppe, 'Osteoarthritis and Related Disorders' in *Oxford Textbook of Medicine* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), p. 16.22.

<sup>167</sup> Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman*, p. 136.

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 136.

<sup>169</sup> *Lancet* (1871), 2. 135.

The validity of statistics from notification has periodically been questioned; it is acknowledged that reporting is frequently far from complete, especially for the more common conditions [but] ... although notification may not give precise estimates of the incidence of individual infectious diseases, they do provide crude indicators of change in prevalence in the community.<sup>170</sup>

In other words, even though there can be inaccuracy in the reporting and notification of morbidity and mortality in the community, trends and patterns in certain diseases/disease processes can still be gauged.

Over time, police selection processes and recruits changed too. Selection was influenced as much by socio-economic and demographic fluctuations as by the maturation of the force. Policemen, drawn from the working classes, changed in terms of age on admission, marital status, past work experience, physical fitness, mental outlook and length of service. There were other selective influences; entry was barred to men who had had previous convictions, or had been dismissed from other forces. And those with known physical infirmities such as epilepsy, deafness or impaired vision were also turned away. In 1890, the chief surgeon to the Metropolitan Police believed that the force's medical examination was 'far more rigorous than that conducted on army recruits'.<sup>171</sup> In the light of this argument, policemen entering the Monmouthshire or any other constabulary between 1857 and 1914 cannot fairly be regarded as representative of working class men in general. Thus, comparisons can only be made with other policemen. This is an important aspect of epidemiology, which is defined by Goldacre and Vessey as 'the study of disease and its distribution in defined populations'.

<sup>170</sup> J. S. A. Ashley, S. K. Cole, and M. P. J. Kilbane, 'Health information resources in the United Kingdom', in R. Detels, W. W. Holland, J. McEwen, and G. S. Omenn, *Oxford Textbook of Public Health* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.), Vol 1: *The Scope of Public Health* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 461.

<sup>171</sup> PP 1890 (c. 6075) LIX, *Metropolitan Police Superannuation*, qq. 1305, 1312-14, cited in Emsley, *The English Police*, p. 200.

Inevitably, absolute proof of cause and effect in this study will be impossible to attain, but 'the *most reasonable* interpretation of an association'<sup>172</sup> will be presented.

Between April 1857 and March 1914, 1390 men were recruited into the force. However, for the purpose of this inquiry, recruits who served for less than a year (unless they died in service) were discounted. 404 men came into this category. Eight men, who remained on the police register but died serving their country in France during WW1, were also discounted. The chapter therefore investigates the history of the remaining 978 men. These were then divided into nine groups, each group representing a specific length of service: 1-5 years, 6-10 years, 11-15 years, 16-20 years, 21-25 years, 26-30 years, 31-35 years, 36-40 years and 41+ years. This was the 'vertical', approach – an ascending length of service study. The number of deaths was measured in each group and the percentage of deaths from pulmonary disease calculated to estimate whether they were in fact the commonest. One advantage of this inquiry was that it was reasonably 'age-specific'. With few exceptions, men of similar ages were recruited into the force; a mean age of 25 was recorded for recruits in 1857 and 22 in 1914. Indeed, Goldacre and Vessey suggest that a comparison of 'mortality rates between populations of different age compositions which does not take account of age specific rates can be very misleading'.<sup>173</sup>

A 'horizontal' approach has also been undertaken. But, as the last serving policeman recruited during the period under investigation died in the 1940s, it was

<sup>172</sup> A. Bradford Hill, *Principles of Medical Statistics* (London: The Lancet Limited, 1966), [hereinafter, Bradford Hill], p. 48.

<sup>173</sup> M. J. Goldacre and M. P. Vessey, 'Health and Sickness in the Community', in D. J. Weatherall, J. G. Ledingham, and D. A. Warrell, *Oxford Textbook of Medicine* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), p. 2.6.



extended to run along the 1850 – 1940 timeline. Ten decades were examined to determine whether patterns of disease and death changed over time, and whether any specific environmental factors, which might have affected the men's health, could be identified.

### The vertical study

**Table 1:** Mortality rates between April 1857 and March 1914, encompassing nine periods of service.

No. of years served	No. of men	No. of deaths	Fatality rate per cent
1-5	96	9	9
6-10	100	8	8
11-15	46	6	13
16-20	31	7	23
21-25	44	8	18
26-30	166	10	6
31-35	53	2	4
36-40	31	3	10
40+	11	4	36

Source: GRO: Monmouthshire Constabulary Admission Registers, 1857-1914; D3297.1-3.

The results summarised in Table 1 show an interesting pattern, which does not wholly correspond with Steedman's assertion that policemen's 'life expectancy decreased as years of service were clocked up'.<sup>174</sup> In the case of the Monmouthshire men, this hypothesis appears true only up to twenty years' service; thereafter the figures decrease dramatically until post thirty-six years – though even here men in the 36-40 year category demonstrate a better life expectancy than those in the 11-15 year category.

<sup>174</sup> Steedman, *Policing the Victorian Community*, p. 121.

And figures for the final group have a considerable bias, because the risk of men in their sixties and seventies dying is necessarily higher anyway. The second Chief Constable, Victor Bosanquet, was still in active service at the age of seventy-three, though not in good health.<sup>175</sup> But while the average age of those who died in this group was sixty-seven, that of men who retired in apparently good health was higher. Superintendent William Kynch, for example, the longest serving man in the force, retired at the age of seventy-five, William Porter at seventy-one and Ernest Willmott at seventy.<sup>176</sup>

**Table 2:** Frequency of deaths from pulmonary infection in relation to other causes

Group	Deaths in service	Deaths from pulmonary infection	Deaths from other causes	Percentage of deaths from pulmonary infection
1-5 years	9	3	6	33
6-10 years	8	3	5	37
11-15 years	6	2	4	33
16-20 years	7	4	3	57
21-25 years	8	4	4	50
26-30 years	10	2	8	20
31-35 years	2	0	2	0
36-40 years	3	0	3	0
41+ years	4	1	3	25

Source: GRO: Monmouthshire Constabulary Admission Registers, 1857-1914: D3297.1-3: Policemen's death certificates.

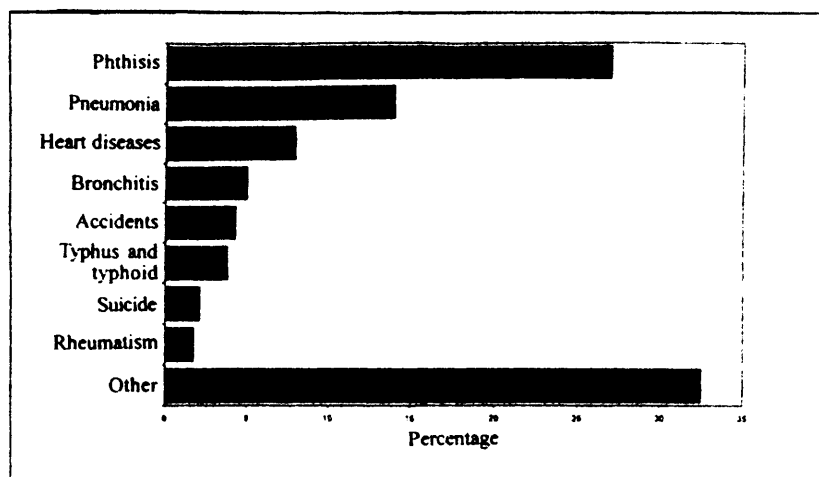
<sup>175</sup> It came to light at the time of his death in August 1936 that Bosanquet had been suffering from angina: See, for example, *South Wales Weekly Argus*, 5 September 1936.

<sup>176</sup> GRO: Monmouthshire Constabulary Recruitment Registers, 1857-1914: D 9732 . 1-3.

**Table 3: Causes of death in service of policemen recruited between 1857 and 1914**

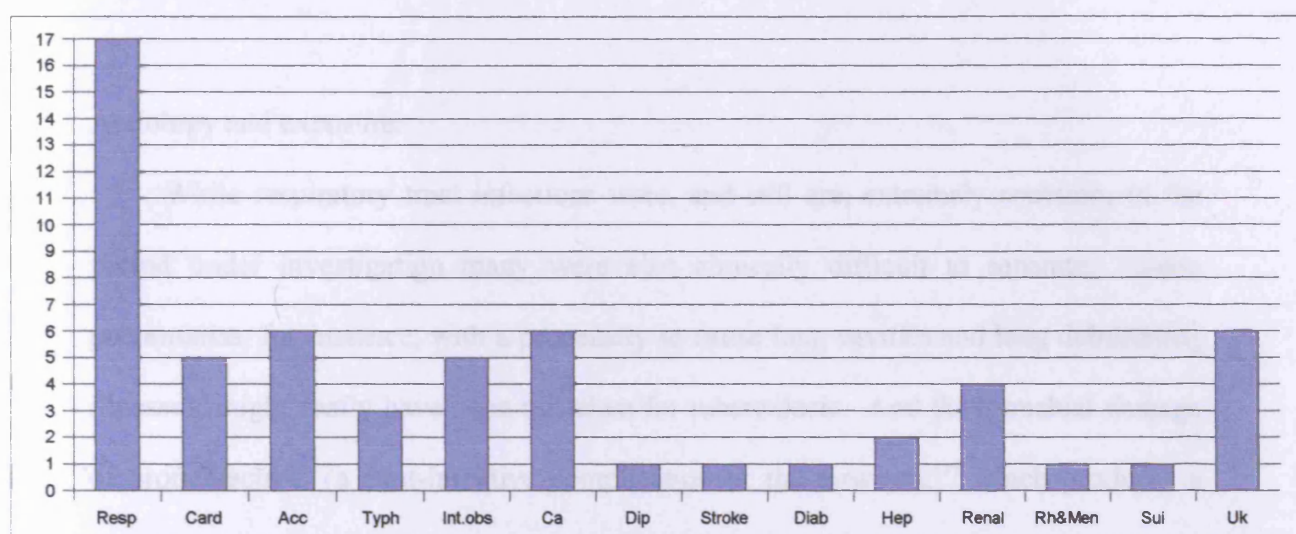
1. Tuberculosis/Pneumonia/Bronchitis/Influenza\*
2. Typhoid/Typhus
3. Liver Disease
4. Diphtheria
5. Acute Rheumatism & Meningitis
6. Renal Failure
7. Heart Disease
8. Intestinal Obstruction/Peritonitis (i.e. Strangulated hernias & possible cancers)
9. Known Cancers
10. Stroke
11. Diabetes
12. Suicide
13. Accidents
14. Unknown

Source: GRO: Monmouthshire Constabulary Admission Registers, 1857-1914; D3297.1-3; and Policemen's Death Certificates. \*Influenza with chest involvement.

**Graph 1: Distribution and causes of death in the Metropolitan Police, 1870-1903**

Source: Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman*, p. 135: With kind permission of the author.

**Graph2:** Distribution and causes of death in Monmouthshire policemen recruited between 1857 and 1914.



Source: GRO: Monmouthshire Constabulary Recruitment Registers, 1857-1914: D 3297 . 1-3: Policemen's Death Certificates.

**Key:**

Resp – Respiratory infection  
 Card – Heart disease  
 Acc – Accidents  
 Typh – Typhoid/Typhus  
 Int.Obs – Intestinal obstructions  
 Ca – Cancer  
 Dip – Diphtheria  
 Stroke – Stroke  
 Diab – Diabetes  
 Hep – Liver Disease  
 Renal – Kidney disease  
 Rh&Men – Acute Rheumatism & Meningitis  
 Sui - Suicide  
 Uk - Unknown

From Graph 2 it is clear that while respiratory infection was the single biggest killer of Monmouthshire policemen, it did not cause the majority of deaths; collectively more men died from other causes than from lung complaints. These figures correspond closely with those of the Metropolitan Police, as Graph 1 demonstrates. This raises

questions about the aetiology (cause or origin) of the above diseases and the likelihood of police exposure to them.

#### Aetiology and exposure:

While respiratory tract infections were, and still are, extremely common, in the period under investigation many were also clinically difficult to separate. Some pneumonias, for instance, with a propensity to cause lung cavities and long debilitating illnesses, might easily have been mistaken for tuberculosis. And the bronchial damage of bronchiectasis (a post-infective complication of the airways),<sup>177</sup> which produces a cough and sputum in varying degrees, could well have been confused with chronic bronchitis. Indeed, as Anne Hardy has warned, registration data should be treated with caution because of the 'problem of differential contemporary diagnosis between phthisis and bronchitis and other respiratory diseases'.<sup>178</sup> Therefore, because of the possibility of misdiagnosis in the absence of modern bacteriology and radiography and the lack of distinct boundaries between many respiratory conditions, pulmonary or respiratory infection has been used here as a collective term for tuberculosis, pneumonia, influenza and bronchitis – all of which appear on the death certificates of the Monmouthshire policemen. Influenza has been included because, although it is a systemic viral illness, from which a large percentage of people recover, it is frequently complicated by

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<sup>177</sup> Benson describes bronchiectasis as 'the end result of infection, with inflammation and permanent damage to the bronchial wall'. Its most common cause before the advent of antibiotics was 'pneumonia in childhood, especially when complicating measles or whooping cough', but there are other causes, such as scarring following pulmonary tuberculosis, the 'inhalation of toxic fumes or the aspiration into the lungs of gastric contents', M. K. Benson, 'Diseases of the Airways' in D. J. Weatherall, J. G. G. Ledingham, and D. A. Warrell (eds.), *Oxford Textbook of Medicine* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983) [hereinafter, *Oxford Textbook of Medicine* (1983)], pp. 15.60-70.

<sup>178</sup> A. Hardy, *The Epidemic Streets: Infectious Disease and the Rise of Preventive Medicine, 1856-1900* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993) [hereinafter, Hardy, *The Epidemic Streets*], p. 215.

pneumonia which, in the absence of suitable treatment, can prove fatal. Policemen with underlying chest disease would have been particularly susceptible.

Occasionally a death certificate has shown that a pre-existing lung disorder, like chronic bronchitis, was complicated by secondary pneumonia, as was epidemic influenza. But secondary pneumonia is also seen to have developed in association with other diseases unrelated to the chest. Where that has occurred, the initial disease has been taken as the primary cause of death. For example, Superintendent William McIntosh is listed in this study as having died from renal failure, though his disease was complicated at the end by broncho-pneumonia.<sup>179</sup> Of the deaths due to respiratory tract infection, pneumonia was by far the commonest. The infection can be due to a number of different pathogens (agents, generally micro-organisms, that cause disease), though the pneumococcus 'accounts for the majority of acute cases of pneumonia admitted to general hospitals' today.<sup>180</sup> Most pneumococcal cases occur during winter and early spring, and nine of the twelve registered deaths from pneumonia in the Monmouthshire policemen occurred during these two seasons. However, in the absence of detailed aetiological investigation, different types of pneumonia cannot be considered here.

Many pathogenic organisms are known to live in the upper respiratory tract of asymptomatic subjects; they become harmful invaders only when tissue damage occurs. Should a cold or an attack of tonsillitis, pharyngitis or influenza etc. damage a subject's respiratory defences, then a pathogen's relationship with its host will change, thus paving the way for pulmonary infection to arise. It is not difficult, therefore, to

<sup>179</sup> Death certificate of William McIntosh, who died at Pontypool on 10 November, 1880.

<sup>180</sup> J. E. Stark, 'Infection of the Respiratory Tract' in *Oxford Textbook of Medicine* (1983), pp. 15.73-15.74.

understand the obsession with preventive measures in pre-antibiotic days. As Hardy has shown:

All social classes were prejudiced against fresh air, and their prejudices were not without foundation ... on quasi-medical grounds that are still with us, there was the fear of draughts: the draughts which produce the great British chill.<sup>181</sup>

The 'great British chill' could, as has been said, lead to worse things. When in November 1858, Sergeant Basham of Monmouth Station, developed pneumonia after catching a cold, he was incapacitated for three months.<sup>182</sup> Basham was sent to bed 'very unwell with cold' on 10 November. Three days later he had developed a fever, and on 20 November he was reported to be 'very ill at Monmouth'; so ill that his wife was advised by the doctor not to share his bed. By the 4 December the sergeant was 'improving but still very weak'. It was another week before he was 'able to sit up a little' and when January 1859 arrived he was 'still unfit for duty'. His name did not appear on the duty lists until early February.<sup>183</sup> However, when Constable James Lethbridge, a twenty-six year-old consumptive, caught a chill in March 1861 he promptly died. In the winter of 1888, the death of Sergeant John McEvoy, already debilitated by heart disease, was undoubtedly hastened by a cold and bronchitis.<sup>184</sup> Consequently, the weather played an important part in policemen's lives and references to its dangers abound.

In novels, the weather was seldom forgotten. Mr Elton, in Jane Austen's *Emma*, is delighted to find that modern day contrivances have "rendered a gentleman's carriage perfectly complete. One is so fenced and guarded from the weather, that not a breath of

<sup>181</sup> Hardy, *The Epidemic Streets*, p. 236.

<sup>182</sup> GPA: *Diary of Superintendent Handyside*, August 1858-August 1859: entry of 10 November 1858.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid., November 1858 – February 1859.

<sup>184</sup> Details from the death certificates of James Lethbridge, who died on 14 March 1861, and John McEvoy, who died on 11 January 1888.

air can find its way unpermitted".<sup>185</sup> But it was precisely this lack of fresh air that lay at the heart of the spread of many respiratory infections. Tuberculosis, a disease described by Hardy as 'an insidious, chronic infection which left almost no one untouched'<sup>186</sup>, was clearly influenced by overcrowding and poor ventilation, though exactly how many policemen suffered from it cannot be gauged. The majority of sick men were quickly dismissed and did not have their conditions recorded. However, several have subsequently been identified as having had the disease. Twenty-eight-year-old Michael Sullivan, for example, who joined the force from the Army in September 1904, became incapacitated by ill-health within a month, and was forced to resign. He died of tuberculosis eighteen months later.<sup>187</sup> And thirty-seven-year-old Sergeant Thomas Phillips died of the disease just nine months after being forced to resign through ill-health in 1897.<sup>188</sup> Only four serving men recruited between 1857 and 1914 are registered as having died from tuberculosis; a fifth, thoroughly debilitated with typhoid fever to begin with, ultimately fell victim to the bacillus and died.

#### Illustration 1:

*Special's Wife.* "Contrary to regulations indeed! Fiddlesticks! I must ~~assist~~ Frederick, upon your taking this hot brandy-and-water. I shall be having you laid up next, and not fit for anything".

Source: *Punch or the London Charivari*, Vol. 14, 1848.



<sup>185</sup> J. Austen, *Emma* (London: Penguin Books, 1966), p.136.

<sup>186</sup> Hardy, *The Epidemic Streets*, p. 3.

<sup>187</sup> Details obtained from Michael Sullivan's death certificate.

<sup>188</sup> Details obtained from Thomas Phillips' death certificate.



*Mycobacterium tuberculosis* is the most common form of tuberculosis in man and can become 'established in the body without symptoms or detectable evidence of disease',<sup>189</sup> which is perhaps why policemen with tuberculosis were able to join the force in the first place. 'A particularly important feature [of the disease] is its ability to lie dormant for many years',<sup>190</sup> until certain host factors activate it: debilitating illness, poor nutrition, alcoholism and stress are among such factors. The stress suffered by Inspector Pennymore during the Punch House affair, discussed in Chapter Two, may have altered his immune status to a degree that allowed a fulminating and rapidly fatal form of the disease to overtake him (galloping consumption), though Hardy is cautious on this point. She suggests:

tuberculosis ... was unlikely to be immediately concluded by any short-term crisis of stress or deprivation; these in themselves could activate the disease, but would not determine its conclusion.<sup>191</sup>

Interestingly, Pennymore had been a tailor prior to becoming a policeman, and '[a]mong the needle trades, the vitiated atmosphere of the work-rooms ... wrought dreadful havoc ... phthisis was rife among tailors and milliners';<sup>192</sup> a knowledge that lends credence to the possibility of an existing infection having been activated in the inspector.

Badly constructed houses and places of work, as well as overcrowding, is always associated with a high prevalence of respiratory infection. In fact transmission of most infectious diseases depends on close personal contact. Damp cottages and badly constructed police stations feature frequently in the Chief Constable's reports to the justices in Quarter Sessions, and the topic was well aired in the police press too. 'There

<sup>189</sup> K. M. Citron and D. J. Girling, 'Tuberculosis', in *Oxford Textbook of Medicine* (1983), p. 5.241.

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.237.

<sup>191</sup> Hardy, *The Epidemic Streets*, p. 227.

<sup>192</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 246.

have been cases of serious illness of police officers clearly traceable to the unhealthy buildings in which they had to reside', ran an article in the *Police Chronicle* of 1894.<sup>193</sup> And there were other concerns – because of 'the extreme variability of our climate ... damp and cold are much more deadly foes to the policeman than the occasional broiling' summer uniforms for the police could not be entertained.<sup>194</sup> A sudden drop in temperature might cause a man in thin clothing to catch cold. Edmund Herbert bore this in mind when issuing new stock to his men in the summer of 1860, 'the great coats, hats and the old clothing are not to be cast aside as useless ... [but] worn at nights, in wet weather and in quarters'.<sup>195</sup>

A careful constable should, therefore, not have had to wear wet clothing to work, though Emsley describes how men did find themselves 'going on duty with clothes still wet from the previous day'.<sup>196</sup> However, damp and cold were but two of the 'deadly foes' with which policemen had to contend. There were many more. Policing the common lodging houses, for instance, which were known nidi of infection, or regulating the packed drinking houses, particularly those classed as 'low', undoubtedly posed a danger from intimacy of contact. But occupational exposure was only part of the threat. In spite of strict guidelines governing police drinking, officers and constables constantly broke the rules and thereby dined with disease both licitly and illicitly. In unwholesome and overcrowded establishments unseen danger might lurk in the air, for not only are the common respiratory viruses spread by droplet infection, so too are more serious

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<sup>193</sup> *Police Chronicle*, 28 April 1894.

<sup>194</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>195</sup> GPA: *Pontypool Division General Order Book*, 24 June 1858 – 3 April 1866; G.O. 2 January 1860.

<sup>196</sup> Emsley, *The English Police*, p. 230.

pathogens. The tuberculosis bacilli along with a range of other extrinsic organic agents can be inhaled as fine particulate matter or aerosols, which give rise to lung disease.

Farmers' lung results from exposure to mouldy hay, straw or grain; malt workers' lung, from mouldy barley; potato riddlers' lung, from straw dust; and woodmen's disease, from mouldy bark dust. Though only a small proportion of men exposed regularly to such harmful antigens would have developed these diseases, it is not unreasonable to assume that some police recruits, coming from the land or the wood trades, could have been affected. As the initial phase of the disease is often clinically subacute, and the chronic phase irreversible and progressive, policing would inevitably have been seen as the responsible agent. It is also usually assumed, as Parkes points out,

that the lungs of adults exposed to ... respiratory insults – environmental or occupational – have already reached optimal or full physiological development [however] ... a variety of adverse prenatal influences, including genetic and nutritional ... can prevent full structural and functional maturity of the airways being attained. They are thus susceptible to develop chronic airflow obstruction in later life.<sup>197</sup>

In the light of such evidence, it is difficult to say with any certainty that policing was the most powerful determinant of chest disease in policemen, particularly as many short-term men became incapacitated by chest complaints as well as other diseases. Taylor maintains:

[I]t was not only long-serving men who were broken by their job. PC Dennis was pensioned in 1871, having been declared “totally unfit for further police service” after little more than one year as a policeman.<sup>198</sup>

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<sup>197</sup> W. R. Parkes, *Occupational Lung Disorders* (Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann, 1994), p.223.

<sup>198</sup> Taylor, *Policing the Victorian Town*, p. 132.

Shpayer-Makov rightly notes that most of the diseases policemen suffered or died from, 'also predominated in the general population during the nineteenth century'.<sup>199</sup> Therefore, it would seem that by virtue of the offending conditions predominating in the general population and often occurring very soon after recruitment, both Taylor's and Shpayer-Makov's statements tend to negate rather than confirm the theory that police work was a major cause of illness in serving policemen.

Particulate dissemination can give rise to diseases other than those of the lungs. It is also a mechanism by which typhus is spread and, along with typhoid fever, typhus was one of 'the "filth diseases" which made the century notorious'.<sup>200</sup> However, until mid-century it was not apparent that typhoid and typhus fevers had separate identities; even after mid-century physicians did not always recognise the clinical differences. 'The use of the term "typhus" as a generic to cover all kinds of fever added further to the confusion',<sup>201</sup> hence the inclusion of the disease in this discussion.

Typhus is an infection which belongs to a group of clinical disorders known collectively as the rickettsial diseases. The causal agents are microscopic parasites (rickettsiae), which 'gain access to man via the skin, mucous membranes, and the respiratory tract',<sup>202</sup> from the faeces of ticks, lice, fleas or mites. In Victorian Britain it was only epidemic (louse-borne) and endemic or murine (flea-borne) typhus that flourished. The louse-borne, or epidemic typhus, 'when uncontrolled due to privation and poor health standards ... usually occurred in susceptible populations over a three-

<sup>199</sup> Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman*, p. 137.

<sup>200</sup> Hardy, *The Epidemic Streets*, p. 3.

<sup>201</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 152.

<sup>202</sup> *Oxford Textbook of Medicine* (1983), Vol. 1, p. 5.335.

year period'.<sup>203</sup> It was a pattern local medical officers of health knew well, though diagnostic difficulties are apparent in their correspondence. In May 1858 an Abergavenny surgeon described typhus as 'raging' in Blaenavon:

Not a row of cottages free from it (except one) ... in some instances nearly every house in a row is infected, in several instances two in a house, in one instance four; it is only beginning as I can too truly foretell from my long experience of these epidemics.<sup>204</sup>

In one house, the disease 'at the close put on a shape difficult to distinguish from Cholera collapse'.<sup>205</sup> The surgeon had no doubt that the main sources of infection were dung heaps and other accumulations of rubbish encroaching upon and, in places, half covering some Blaenavon roads 'to an extent which must be seen to be believed'.<sup>206</sup> The factors associated with an 1870 typhoid epidemic in Llanvrechva Upper were similar; 'the accumulation of decayed vegetable and animal matter ... deficient drainage ... and a few families of filthy habits interspersed amongst the population'.<sup>207</sup> However, not until the twentieth century, did advances in microbiology and parasitology allow 'precise characterisation of infectious diseases and mechanisms of transmission'.<sup>208</sup>

Unlike typhus, typhoid fever (*Salmonella typhi*) generally comes from a human source, and gains access to the body via food or water that has been contaminated by faecal material or, occasionally, other bodily secretions or fluids. In nineteenth century Britain, inadequate sanitation and polluted water supplies were generally responsible for its spread. And in the local doctor's opinion, conditions in Llanvrechva Upper were

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<sup>203</sup> *Oxford Textbook of Medicine* (1983), Vol. 1, p. 5.335.

<sup>204</sup> A. Williams, *Public Health in Mid-Victorian Wales* (Cardiff: University of Wales, Board of Celtic Studies, 1983): Letter from Dr. Steel to the the Secretary of the Board of Health, Whitehall, 28 May 1858.

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>206</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>207</sup> Williams, *Public Health in Mid-Victorian Wales*: Letter from Medical Officer of the Cwmbran Coal and Iron Works, to the Guardians of the Pontypool Union, 12 March 1870.

<sup>208</sup> A. S. Monto and C. F. Marrs, 'Infectious Agents', in *Oxford Textbook of Public Health*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, Vol. 1: *The Scope of Public Health* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 175.

wholly due to what we would attribute today as 'cowboy' builders, with their reckless and irresponsible greed.

Many individuals with little means and less brains [are] building workmen's cottages [where] the ordinary necessities of life are taken very little into consideration ... If building sites ... were surveyed by a competent person, with reference to drainage before houses were built, it would be a means in my opinion of obviating many of the existing evils.<sup>209</sup>

Many of the men who became policemen had lived and worked in these hazardous environments before joining the force, some had grown up in them and some, no doubt, had experienced privation and poor health standards all their lives. For others, the industrial environs were previously unknown. Such factors are likely to have had some bearing on the susceptibility of the men to disease – in susceptible individuals, or those harbouring pathogenic organisms, cold and damp could easily have been precipitants to disease.

'The interaction of behaviour and environment is an inescapable and pervasive determinant of health'.<sup>210</sup> Evidence from numerous experimental trials have shown health and lifestyle to be inextricably bound. However, as in most things, 'every behaviour related to morbidity and well-being also has a variety of influences'.<sup>211</sup> Therefore, the appearance of hepatitis on the death certificates of three Monmouthshire policemen, cannot automatically be assumed to have resulted from alcohol abuse, even though alcohol abuse was rife in the force. Hepatitis is difficult to comment on as the nomenclature possibly covered any jaundice of unknown aetiology. Infective hepatitis,

<sup>209</sup> Williams, *Public Health in Mid-Victorian Wales*: Letter from Dr. Steel to the Secretary of the Board of Health, Whitehall, 28 May 1858.

<sup>210</sup> L. W. Green, D. G. Simons-Morton, and L. Potvin, 'Education and life-style determinants of health and disease' in *Oxford Textbook of Public Health, 3rd edition, Vol. 1: The Scope of Public Health* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 125.

<sup>211</sup> *Ibid*, p. 129.

which is a sporadic or epidemic illness caused by the hepatitis A virus, and generally spread via faecal contamination, is only rarely rapidly fatal, though a fulminant form of the disease, with massive liver necrosis, can occur and may have been responsible for the death of Sergeant Morris Richards, who died after an illness of just six days.<sup>212</sup> In the majority of cases of viral hepatitis, however, jaundice usually occurs after an initial 'flu-like' illness and once this has occurred there is generally rapid improvement and complete recovery. A number of different viruses, drugs, chemicals and toxins are capable of producing acute liver damage, and if recovery from the condition is incomplete, the subject will then progress to one of several forms of chronic hepatitis. Continued exposure to hepatotoxins (liver poisons) can result in chronic and irreversible liver damage.

One of the commonest hepatotoxins is alcohol, but as 'there is no evidence that small amounts ... are damaging, a definition or a diagnosis of "alcohol-related disease" implies excessive intake'.<sup>213</sup> Yet, in spite of the Monmouthshire policemen's propensity for "excessive intake", liver disease appears to have affected only three of the long-term men. Perhaps a more trustworthy test of the effects of alcohol on members of the force would be to follow up those dismissed for habitual drunkenness: if their medical histories were readily available, a different picture might emerge. However, as liver disease is not universal among heavy drinkers, it is possible that 'alcoholic cirrhosis is multifactorial and that its development is associated with an independent factor, pre-

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<sup>212</sup> Details from the death certificate of Morris Richards, who died on 12 July 1885 at the Rhymney Police Station.

<sup>213</sup> *Oxford Textbook of Medicine* (1983), Vol. 1, p. 12.209.

existing or co-existing. This factor could be an environmental pollutant, food additive, virus, etc'.<sup>214</sup>

Poisonous as well as fraudulent adulteration of food and drugs was widespread in the nineteenth century prior to the Food Adulteration Acts, which eventually monitored and controlled it. The first of these Acts was passed in 1860, but a further twelve years were to elapse before provision was made for the appointment of public analysts, in the amended Act of 35 & 36 Vict. c. 74.<sup>215</sup> However, it was not until the passage of the 1899 Food Adulteration Act that real improvements began to be seen and the insidious tide of abuse started to recede. One substance identified as producing highly malignant and rapidly fatal liver cancers in laboratory rodents was 'butter yellow', a colouring agent added to margarine. And, as cheap butter substitutes such as 'butterine' comprised about 60 per cent of margarine and were roughly a third of the price of butter, they were the obvious choice for the lower paid. Brewers also found it profitable to add 'mixtures of bitter substances, some containing poisons like strychnine, to "improve" the taste of beer and save on the cost of hops'.<sup>216</sup> For the poorly paid and those addicted to drink, therefore, the risk to good health was considerable.

Until the late-nineteenth century, all manner of noxious substances were added to foodstuffs, yet initially legislation to curb the practice was not universally welcomed, mainly because it was believed parliamentary intervention would interfere with trade. However, a more enlightened approach to the subject was noted at the time of the second reading of the Adulteration of Food and Drugs Bill, 1872, when it was

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<sup>214</sup> *Oxford Textbook of Medicine*, (1983), Vol. 1, p. 12.211.

<sup>215</sup> *Hansard*, 3, 1875, 595.

<sup>216</sup> N. Coley, 'The Fight Against Food Adulteration', *Education in Chemistry*, (2005), 42 (2), 46-49.



recognised that the Act merely intended 'to put a stop to the adulteration of food by the mixture of articles poisonous or injurious to health'. Consequently:

If anyone chose to mix beans with coffee, or water with milk, no one under this Act could say anything; but if any baker adulterated his bread with brick-dust, poison of any sort, or with plaster of Paris, the clauses of this Bill would render him liable to severe punishment.<sup>217</sup>

But while many adulterants were used by bakers to increase the weight of loaves, other more toxic additives were used in the bread whitening process; for example, 'bakers sometimes added alum ( $K_2SO_4 \cdot Al_2(SO_4)_3 \cdot 24H_2O$ ) and chalk to the flour'.<sup>218</sup> Brewers likewise used of a formidable range of substances to improve the taste of their products – amongst them were *cocculus indicus*, which contained a poison related to curare and which was also used to stun fish; *nux vomica*, an important source of strychnine; vitriol (sulphuric acid); opium; and quassia, a mixture of alkaloids, which was also used as a pesticide.

Until an end was put to the practice of adulteration, drinkers unwittingly consumed drugs, some no doubt to a degree that constituted abuse. And at a lecture given to the Young Men's Institution in Leicester in 1857, it was suggested that apparent drunkenness in the streets had more to do with the drug rather than the alcohol content of beer.<sup>219</sup> The theory was also endorsed by others, including the then Chief Constable of Leicester. It might also explain why so many policemen were found in a state of near paralysis – completely unable to act or function, and perhaps why so many became addicted to 'drink'. But beer and bread were only part of the story, a vast array of foods were adulterated. Brightly coloured lead, copper and mercury compounds

<sup>217</sup> *Hansard*, 3, 1872, 1507.

<sup>218</sup> N. Coley, 'The Fight Against Food Adulteration', *Education in Chemistry* (2005), 42, 2, 46–49.

<sup>219</sup> J. Burnett, *Plenty and Want: A social history of diet in England from 1815 to the present day* (London: Nelson, 1989), p.221.

were added to items such as custard powder, red cheese, vinegar, pickles, beverages, and, worse still, jellies and confectionary, which were eaten mainly by children.<sup>220</sup> In all, the effects of this catalogue of abuse were not only potentially lethal, but heavily biased towards the poorer classes from which policemen were recruited.

Alcohol and a host of other dietary factors are said to be related to the development of major diseases and health problems. Strong evidence of causality exists between dietary habits and cancer, for example.

If we define diet to include all materials that occur in natural foods, are produced during the normal processes of storage, cooking, and digestion, or are added as preservatives or to give food colour, flavour, and consistency, the ways in which diet could influence the development of cancer are legion.<sup>221</sup>

Six men are recorded as having died from cancers at specific sites; upper maxilla, lung, stomach, colon, pelvis, and bladder. In Britain cancers of the mouth are commonly related to smoking and the consumption of alcohol. Smoking and alcohol act synergistically and cancers of the mouth are therefore less common in non-smokers who do not drink alcohol. But it is not known whether PC Kennedy, who died of cancer of the upper maxilla, drank or smoked. PC Baker, on the other hand, who died from lung cancer, was a very different man. Not averse to 'disgraceful' language, 'unbecoming' conduct, and brawling in the street, alcohol and public houses figured prominently in his life.<sup>222</sup> He had enlisted in the army at eighteen, and had been a soldier for eight years prior to joining the force. He died of lung cancer at the age of fifty-six, and it is not unreasonable to suppose that he smoked.<sup>223</sup>

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<sup>220</sup> N. Coley, 'The Fight Against Food Adulteration', *Education in Chemistry* (2005), 42, 2, 46-49.

<sup>221</sup> *Oxford Textbook of Medicine* (1983), p. 4.73.

<sup>222</sup> GPA: *Defaulters' Book*, pp. 400 & 407.

<sup>223</sup> Death certificate of Henry Baker, who died at Risca on 13 January 1939.

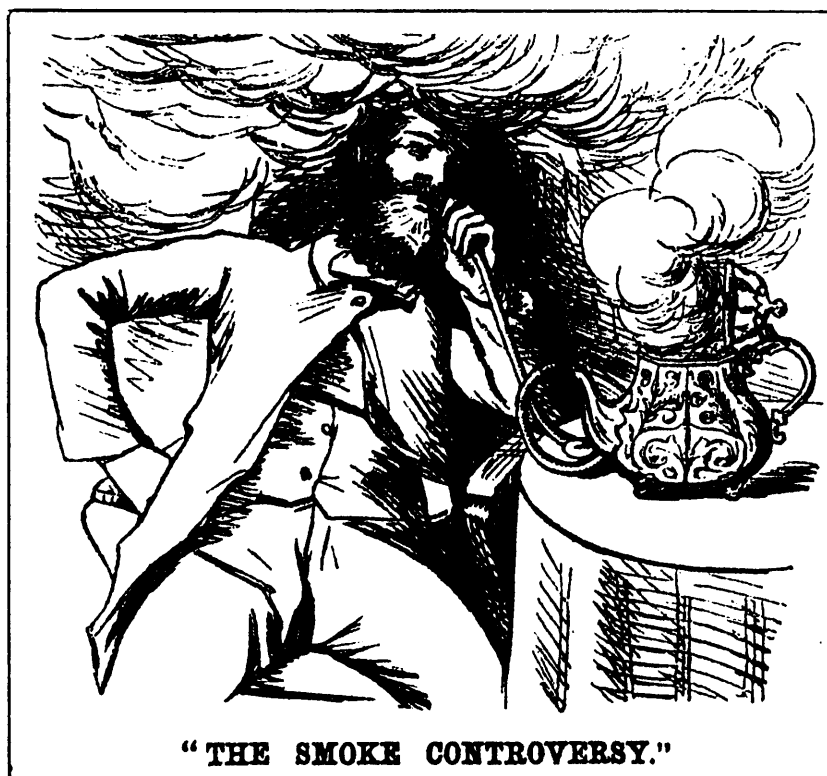
The date of his death also has some significance, for until the 1920s lung cancer was rare. The increase in its incidence over the next two decades was initially thought to be a diagnostic artefact, but it became obvious that this was not entirely true. By the late 1940s it had become apparent that the developed world had begun to see 'an epidemic of lung cancer that was comparable in severity to, though with a longer time-scale than, the epidemics of infectious diseases in the past'.<sup>224</sup> However, while a lack of diagnostic acumen was partly responsible for the apparent rarity of the disease during the nineteenth century, a shorter life expectancy with a consequential reduction in exposure to carcinogens must also have had a bearing on statistics. Nineteenth century physicians, nonetheless, recognised the deleterious effects of tobacco upon the nation's health and by mid-century it had become a public debating point. 'Abundant evidence has been adduced ... of the gigantic evils which attend the use of tobacco', ran an article in the *Lancet*. 'There is a long catalogue of frightful penalties attached to its abuse'.<sup>225</sup>

#### Illustration 2:

"Fixing a flexible tube to, and Smoking Cavendish out of your Mother's best Silver Tea-Pot is excess".

Vide "*Lancet*", April, 1857.

Source: *Punch or the London Charivari*, 2 May 1857.



<sup>224</sup> *Oxford Textbook of Medicine* (1983), Vol. 1, p. 4.60.

<sup>225</sup> *Lancet*, April 1857.

Monmouthshire policemen were frequently censured for smoking. In 1862 PC Charles Davies was fined a day's pay 'for sitting down in a Watch House and smoking when on duty'. Constable Samuel Taylor was caught smoking 'when in uniform at the Entrance Door of the Assize Court at Gloucester', and George Watkins 'in the Entrance Porch of Usk Court House when attending Sessions as a witness'. Constable William Dowden showed even greater effrontery by stretching out on the grass with a cigarette when he was supposed to be policing an event in Tredegar Park'.<sup>226</sup> Two of these men died from respiratory infection whilst serving in the force.

**Illustration 3:**



*Youthful Swell.* 'HAW! LOOK HERE! IS THAT CHEST OF CIGARS YOU IMPORTED FOR ME RIPE YET?'

*Cigar Dealer.* 'WELL, SIR - I FEAR NOT - THAT IS, NOT RIPE FOR YOUR TASTE, SIR, FOR AT LEAST THREE WEEKS; BUT WE CAN SPARE YOU A COUPLE OF THOUSAND OF THESE GIANT REGALIAS TO GO ON WITH, TILL THE WEATHER IS Milder, WHEN YOUR CIGARS WILL MELLOW RAPIDLY!' [*Youth accepts the generous offer, and lounges out with a Giant Regalia as big as his leg in his mouth*].

Source: *Punch, or the London Charivari*, 28 March 1857.

<sup>226</sup> GPA: *Defaulters' Book*, pp. 2, 272, & 526.

As so little was known about cancers during the period of this study, the course and prognosis of malignant disease was poor. In many cases when surgery did become available, it was rarely possible or justifiable. Superintendent Eugene Davies died from cancer of the colon in 1944. He had served in the Monmouthshire Constabulary for thirty-six years and was fifty-five years old at the time of his death, which is within the limits of the usual age at presentation. Davies underwent surgery at the Royal Gwent Hospital in Newport, but his 'massive' tumour was untreatable and he died from post-operative shock, together with the effects of the disease. Forty-eight year-old Superintendent Robert Thomas died in 1915 of chronic sarcoma of the pelvis, and the young constable, Thomas Painting died of bladder cancer, a disease known to be produced, amongst other things, by cigarette smoking.<sup>227</sup>

Other men, whose deaths, likewise, cannot be contributed to police work, died from strangulated hernias, gallstones, diabetes, diphtheria, and the end results of streptococcal or other infections. With gallstones, surgery is mandatory in cases of obstruction or perforation, but in 1876 this was not an option for Giles Vaun, whose passing gallstone became impacted. Pneumonia complicated a very critical condition and he succumbed after four days illness. George Williams, on the other hand, died in 1907 of 'volvulus of hernia' (strangulated hernia or twisted bowel). Although surgical intervention was possible, it was not attempted in Williams's case and he died within two days of diagnosis.<sup>228</sup>

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<sup>227</sup> Details obtained from the death certificates of fifty-five-year-old Superintendent Eugene Davies, who died after surgery on 19 February 1944, at the Royal Gwent Hospital, Newport; forty-eight-year-old Superintendent Robert Thomas, who died in Abergavenny on 21 November 1915; and thirty-two-year-old Constable Thomas Painting, who died in the Royal Gwent Hospital, Newport, on 1 February 1918.

<sup>228</sup> Details obtained from the death certificates of Constable Giles Vaun, who died at the age of thirty-eight in Cwmbran, on 3 June 1876; and forty-nine-year-old Constable George Williams, who died in Monmouth on 10 August 1907.

Until the discovery of insulin, diabetes mellitus always resulted in death. 'In the classical young-onset form of the disorder, there is near total insulin deficiency, with inevitable widespread metabolic changes',<sup>229</sup> which is what killed thirty-year-old Constable John Palmer. By the time of his death, diabetes was managed with a diet low in carbohydrate and sugar and high in protein and fat, which could prolong life but did not prevent sufferers from eventually succumbing to complications of the disease. Insulin had been isolated and extracted from beef cattle in 1921, but it does not appear to have been commercially available soon enough to have saved Palmer. He lapsed into a coma and died on 28 April 1923.<sup>230</sup>

During the second half of the nineteenth century a medical approach to the prevention of disease began to be introduced, which at times met considerable resistance. But, following the Sanitary Act of 1866, 'public health legislation acquired an even greater vocabulary of systematic enforcement'.<sup>231</sup>

The ideological justification for compulsory prevention was articulated by mid-century advocates of state medicine such as Rumsey and Simon. They suggested that the sovereign right of the individual to contract, die of, and spread infectious disease should be suspended for the benefit of the health of the community as a whole.<sup>232</sup>

This philosophy was behind the introduction of compulsory vaccination against smallpox in the second half of the nineteenth century, though the measure did not win the battle against the disease for many decades. Not only was there resistance to compulsory vaccination from some quarters, but some vaccines were of a poor quality

<sup>229</sup> *Oxford Textbook of Medicine* (1983), Vol. 1, p.9.5.

<sup>230</sup> Details obtained from the death certificate of thirty-year-old Constable John Palmer, who died at Monmouth Police Station on 28 April 1923.

<sup>231</sup> D. Porter, 'Public health and centralisation: the Victorian British state', in R. Detels, W. W. Holland, J. McEwen, and G. S. Omenn (eds.), *Oxford Textbook of Public Health, 3rd. edition, Vol. 1: The Scope of Public Health* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p.26.

<sup>232</sup> *Ibid.*

and some vaccinators lacked the proper training and skills for their task. Constables were, nevertheless, compelled to be inoculated against smallpox, a disease that periodically manifested itself in many parts of the county, and no deaths from the disease occurred amongst them.

At the present time Smallpox is very prevalent in many parts of the County. Already at one Station a Constable is on the sick list from this Disease. The Duties of the Constables bring them into contact with all classes – Vaccination in infancy is not a sufficient protection. For these reasons all Members of the Force who have not been again vaccinated since childhood will be so without delay.<sup>233</sup>

Certificates of proof of vaccination were then sent to the Chief Constable. However, vaccines for other potentially fatal bacterial infections were not discovered until the twentieth century. The vaccine for the bacterial infection *Corynebacterium diphtheriae*, which produces diphtheria, for example, was not discovered until 1921, which was too late for the constable in this study, who died from the disease in 1894.<sup>234</sup>

It has been argued that education, socio-economic status, and lifestyle all have a significant bearing on morbidity and mortality. In fact, the poor and the poorly educated are less likely to engage in patterns of behaviour that are conducive to health, than their better off, better educated counterparts.<sup>235</sup> The intertwining of physical, social and cultural environments, are all relevant to health and disease.<sup>236</sup> In this respect, and in relation to the Metropolitan Police, Shpayer-Makov argues that 'the ecology of police work was responsible for the physical deterioration of a large proportion of police

<sup>233</sup> GPA: *Abergavenny Division General Order Book*, 1 November 1868–27 August 1877: G.O. 215, 6 January 1872.

<sup>234</sup> GPA: Quarterly Reports of the Chief Constable, December 1883–July 1901.

<sup>235</sup> L. W. Green, D. G. Simons-Morton, and L. Potvin, 'Education and life-style determinants of health and disease', in R. Detels, W. W. Holland, J. McEwen, and G. S. Omenn (eds.), *Oxford Textbook of Public Health*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, Vol. 1: *The scope of public Health* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), pp.125–136.

<sup>236</sup> See, for example, W. F. Bynum, *Science and the Practice of Medicine in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), Chapter 3.

employees'.<sup>237</sup> The physical environment of the Metropolitan Police, she suggests, led to what we term “burnout” syndrome today, and which could have exacerbated disease and increased accidents in the force.<sup>238</sup> She also believes that the London weather played a major part, there being 'enough evidence in current medical opinion to support the view'.<sup>239</sup> In Monmouthshire, the weather is harsher in the upland areas than in the low-lying plains and, during the nineteenth century, pollution affected the industrial towns to a greater extent than the rural ones. Yet Monmouthshire and Metropolitan policemen died of the same diseases in the same proportion, and Monmouthshire figures show little variation between rural and industrial policemen's causes of death.<sup>240</sup>

It can also be argued that within police forces there were counter-balances to certain of the socio-economic and cultural factors associated with disease. Compulsory vaccination was one, but other behaviours that correlate with and precede good health were actively encouraged. It can be argued that police work had a positive effect upon men's health, from the point of view of the ban on smoking and drinking whilst on duty, and the constant emphasis placed upon personal cleanliness. 'Members of the force wishing to grow Beards & Mustachios will be allowed to do so provided they wear them short & keep them clean & neatly trimmed'.<sup>241</sup> Three years later, Herbert reiterated the point, having become aware of the 'slovenly manner in which many Constables keep their Hair, Beards and Clothes'.<sup>242</sup> He was also aware that the weather could have a detrimental effect upon his constables' wellbeing. 'During the very hot weather as much

<sup>237</sup> Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman*, p. 134.

<sup>238</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 145-6.

<sup>239</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 138.

<sup>240</sup> This is evident from the death certificates.

<sup>241</sup> GPA: *Abergavenny Division General Order Book*, 1 October 1868–27 August 1877: Memo of 30 October 1871.

<sup>242</sup> *Ibid.*, G. O. of 4 July 1874.



patrol duty as possible to be performed in the very early mornings and evenings'.<sup>243</sup> And roads leading to conference points that 'are in winter time almost impassable by night, will be altered'.<sup>244</sup> In 1879 he instructed his senior command to curtail constables' night beats in 'the present severe cold weather .. the Constable remaining in office on reserve', and where there was deep snow 'distant Conferences' could be dispensed with.<sup>245</sup> These points should not be lost sight of. They are necessary to counter some of the overtly subjective and highly theatrical accounts of police experiences which were used in contemporary journals to highlight the hardships of the job:

The east wind will sometimes stab him to the heart, and he will be found frozen to death at his post; or, where the fierce blast is not immediately fatal, it will seize upon his vitals, and entailing consumption as a consequence, consign him to a lingering death.<sup>246</sup>

That the relationship between policing and poor health is multifactorial cannot be more apparent than in cases of heart disease. Here various studies have provided clear evidence of a relationship between socio-economic status and mortality, in fact it can be said that the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were factors in themselves. One of the major causes of death during the period of this work was rheumatic heart disease as a consequence of infection. After the acute phase of the illness, which in 90 per cent of cases first occurred between the ages of five and fifteen, the action of the heart was often impeded and heart failure, commonly associated with mitral and/or aortic valve involvement, eventually led to death. Rheumatic fever generally develops after a latent period in people who have had a group A haemolytic streptococcal infection. These organisms are readily communicable and can be spread by the respiratory route (droplet

<sup>243</sup> GPA: *Abergavenny Division General Order Book*, 1 October 1868–27 August 1877: Memo of 27 June 1876.

<sup>244</sup> GPA: *Memos to Superintendents*, 6 May 1859–October 1879: Memo of 4 November 1867.

<sup>245</sup> *Ibid.*, Memo of 21 January 1879.

<sup>246</sup> 'The Sketcher in London. Policeman AE', *Leisure Hour* (7 January 1858), p. 14, cited in Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman*, p. 138.

infection); through skin wounds infected by handkerchiefs, hands or dressings etc., containing dried particles of nasal secretions; and via food. In the latter instance the vehicle of spread during the nineteenth century was frequently milk. The disease affects the fibrous tissues of the body – joints, muscles, tendons, heart valves, subcutaneous tissues and blood vessels – and fever and joint pain are its principal manifestations. The heart is commonly affected and, during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, rheumatic fever was the most common cause of heart disease in people under the age of fifty. In the case of Edward Jones, a thirty-year-old police constable who died in October 1876, there was only a four day history of ‘acute rheumatism’, but twenty-four hours before his death, Jones developed meningitis, which suggests that multiplying pathogens had spread to his blood stream (septicaemia) and overwhelmed his general defence mechanisms.<sup>247</sup>

On 3 November 1858 PC Samuel Benfields was ‘very ill with rheumatic fever’, but he was back at work on 24 November,<sup>248</sup> and served for a further twenty years. Superintendent Handyside, who supervised both PC Benfields and Sergeant Basham (who developed pneumonia after catching a cold, p. 169 above), suffered a cold himself around the same time as his two officers. Handyside, however, recovered after taking medicine and spending most of one day in ‘quarters’.<sup>249</sup> The vagaries of human make-up and susceptibility to disease are thus demonstrated by these examples, and have to be taken into account when apportioning blame for failing health in policemen.

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<sup>247</sup> Details obtained from the death certificate of Constable Edward Jones, who died at Usk on 10 October 1876.

<sup>248</sup> GPA: Entries from the Diary of Superintendent William Handyside, 1 Aug. 1858–6 Aug. 1858.

<sup>249</sup> Ibid: Entry of 17 October 1858.

It is likely that many of the men who either died in the force from heart complaints, or who became severely debilitated and were dismissed on ill-health grounds for the same reason, were first and foremost victims of haemolytic streptococcal infections. Nowadays, with longer life expectancy and the conquest of infection, cardiovascular disorders are more commonly due to hypertension (high blood-pressure), arteriosclerosis (furring of the arteries) and blood vessel disorders. However, these conditions did exist and did kill during the period under investigation, as is evident from the characteristic description of angina, and possibly of myocardial infarction, contained in the brief medical history of Victor Bosanquet who, at the time of his death, had a four year history of 'attacks of pain in the chest and of extreme shortness of breath'.<sup>250</sup>

Increasing age increases the risk of ischaemic heart disease (deprivation of blood to the heart), but stress, diet, smoking, hypertension and other aspects of life-style are associated with its onset too; alcoholics and heavy drinkers, for instance, are known to be at risk. As has already been shown, Bosanquet was no stranger to controversy. Even in the absence of direct evidence, he is likely to have experienced considerable levels of stress. Additionally, coronary-prone behaviour patterns (psychosocial factors), which are well documented today, were recognised and described by great physicians centuries ago. William Harvey, for example, 'ascribed a patient's disease to the fact that he "was overcome with anger and indignation which he yet communicated to no one"'. John Hunter described his own angina pectoris as brought on by "agitation of the mind ...

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<sup>250</sup> *South Wales Weekly Argus*, 5 September, 1936.

principally anxiety or anger” [And] Osler described the typical angina patient as the man “the indicator of whose engine is at full steam ahead”.<sup>251</sup>

As heart disease has a multifactorial aetiology and risk factors tend to be cumulative, policing, like any other stressful occupation, would undoubtedly have contributed to the pathogenesis (origin and development) of the disease in some men. Though, paradoxically, policemen were also shielded from many stresses, particularly those associated with downturns in the economy, such as pay-cuts, short-time working or unemployment. On the other hand, police wages were poor and living conditions were sometimes overcrowded, damp and unhealthy. On balance, it is difficult to decide whether risk factors associated with the job would have outweighed beneficial ones.

Henry Burrows was a thirty-four year old policeman when he joined the Monmouthshire force in 1860. No stranger to controversy, he was repeatedly in trouble. On six occasions he was accused of making 'wrong' or 'contrary' statements in court, and was at variance at different times with magistrates, a solicitor and the Chief Constable. On one occasion he was the subject of a press report for perjury in a public house case. Non-attendance at a night conference point brought further investigation, as did a report that he had needed 'looking after' one night because he was drunk on duty. It is infinitely possible that the stresses and strains of these events had an adverse effect upon Burrows' health and precipitated a myocardial infarction. At the age of fifty he

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<sup>251</sup> *Oxford Textbook of Medicine* (1983), p. 13.156. William Harvey, 1578-1657, made ground-breaking discoveries in cardiac and circulatory functions; John Hunter, 1728-1793, is considered to be one of the greatest anatomists of all time and the founder of experimental pathology; and the Canadian physician William Osler, 1849-1919, was an expert in the diagnosis of heart, lung, and blood diseases. He became Regius Professor of Medicine at Oxford in 1905.

suffered an acute cardiac episode, to which he succumbed, seven hours after the onset of symptoms.<sup>252</sup>

Another group of men who died whilst serving in the force and whose illnesses frequently rendered them incapable of work, were those in renal failure. It would be easy to attribute their weeks off duty to the effects of police work, but careful analysis of their histories reveals a different picture. Nephritis (or glomerulonephritis), the slowly progressive renal disease suffered by several of the men in this study, was, like rheumatic fever, a *post*-infective condition most likely associated with a streptococcal sore throat. The disease is less common in Britain today due to early treatment with antibiotics, but during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the clinical course of post-streptococcal nephritis was an all too familiar one, which depended entirely on a balance between the subject's defence mechanisms and the ability of the invading pathogen to overcome those defences.

The disease corresponds clinically to that described by the British physician, Richard Bright, in 1827, where blood and protein in the urine were accompanied by oedema (swelling, due to fluid in the tissues), oliguria (reduced urinary output), and hypertension (high blood-pressure).<sup>253</sup> However, while the majority of sufferers recovered, following diuresis (urination) and a return of the blood-pressure to normal, the disease could progress and become chronic, which appears to have been the case with five Monmouthshire policemen. In most cases of chronic nephritis the disease

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<sup>252</sup> Details from the death certificate of Constable Henry Burrows, who died at the age of fifty, on 16 September 1874.

<sup>253</sup> A. D. Thompson and R. E. Cotton, *Lecture Notes on Pathology* (Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications, 1963), p. 466.

enters a latent phase of between five and thirty years before it becomes clinically evident again. Death from renal failure and/or hypertension is then inevitable. The work patterns of two policemen who suffered from chronic nephritis both show a history of acute illness followed by a latent period and then renal failure – though the latent period in Superintendent William McIntosh's case was a short one (*progressive acute nephritis*).

McIntosh first became ill on 4 May 1879. He returned to work a day later but was too weak to return the following day. His illness kept him from duty until 23 June. He attempted a second come-back in early June, but was unwell again after five days; in total his illness spanned seven weeks. After his apparent recovery he was able to work for three months without interruption, but during the late autumn and winter of 1879 – 80, he was sick intermittently for twenty-six days. For the rest of the year he appears to have worked almost without a break until 24 October, when he became acutely ill again. He died eighteen days later of uraemia and broncho-pneumonia.<sup>254</sup> William Edghill's illness differed only in length. For five years prior to his death in 1881, Sergeant Edghill was known to have had proteinuria (the abnormal presence of protein in the urine), and an acute illness of ten weeks duration can be traced back to the summer of 1876. There then followed almost three years of apparent clinical recovery, although his urinary abnormality persisted (this was noted on his death certificate). However, on 19 November 1879 the chronic disease became clinically evident again and he was

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<sup>254</sup> Details from the death certificate of Superintendent William McIntosh, who died on 10 November 1880 at the age of fifty-three; and *Constabulary Daily States*, 1879-80, GRO: CDS.

unable to work. Unlike William McIntosh, Edghill did not die quickly but lingered on in progressive renal failure for eighteen months.<sup>255</sup>

Other conditions which killed policemen have been subjected to analytical rigour here because they were not necessarily synonymous with police work. Sergeant James Milkins, for example, died of a stroke in 1893, at the age of sixty-two. He was in his thirty-seventh year as a Monmouthshire policeman.<sup>256</sup> Strokes, which *can* occur at all ages, are principally a disorder of the elderly. Various risk factors have been identified, though probably the most important are hypertension and arterial disease (atheroma), and the most likely results are permanent brain damage or death. The pathogenesis of the disease is much the same as in coronary thrombosis, for atheroma principally affects the aorta and other large arteries, as well as the medium-sized coronary and cerebral arteries. Heart disease of any kind is a risk factor for cerebral infarction, as is peripheral vascular disease, diabetes, cigarette smoking and obesity.

A number of men in the force also suffered from psychiatric disorders, and those whose behaviour became sufficiently erratic to bring them to the notice of the Chief Constable, were either dismissed or transferred to the asylum for treatment. Some presented as severe psychiatric emergencies, such as Rees Harris, who joined the force in 1912 and who became 'dangerously insane' in 1933. Other men, classed as being 'not in [their] right mind' or 'mentally deficient', posed less of a problem, but whether their conditions were endogenous or reactive they had, of necessity, to be removed from the force once it became clear they were suffering some form of mental impairment. Of

<sup>255</sup> Details from the death certificate of Sergeant William Edghill, who died at the age of fifty-five, on 30 July 1881; and the *Constabulary Daily States*, 1876-81, GRO: CDS.

<sup>256</sup> Details from the death certificate of Sergeant James Milkins.

seven men who are recorded as having become insane and transferred to the asylum, two are known to have died from neuro-syphilis. However, some vulnerable men in serious crisis were not recognised as being at risk at all; PC Albert Warburton, who reacted with despair to retirement, killed himself five months after leaving the force, and Henry Fearis, a serving constable, shot himself in the mouth in a state of agitated depression.<sup>257</sup>

The Machen constable, Henry Fearis, had chosen not to retire at the appointed time but to work for a further five years. He was two years into this extended period of service when he sat down at home on a January afternoon in 1928 and, while his wife and daughter were employed in the kitchen, put a gun to his mouth and shot himself. It later transpired that Fearis had heard from a fellow constable that he was under suspicion of having burgled the railway station at Machen. Gossip concerning this event had spread through the town and distressed him greatly. At the inquest the other constable denied having started the rumour but, whatever the truth, the event undoubtedly precipitated morbid anxiety and depression in Fearis, which led him to take his own life.

Accidents in the force were frequent, but most were attended by relatively minor injuries and a complete recovery. While some resulted from overt carelessness, or reckless behaviour (often drink related), others were due to unforeseen incidences that commonly occur in everyday life. In 1876, Charles Waters slipped as he tried to control his bolting horse, with the result that the attached weights and measures cart ran over

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<sup>257</sup> Constable Albert Warburton's death was recorded in the Constabulary Admission Register, GRO: D 3297.3, and an account of Constable Fearis's death can be found in the *Merthyr Express*, 28 January 1928.



him and caused catastrophic internal haemorrhage. Forty-five years later it was a motor car that killed William Shapland in much the same manner.<sup>258</sup> For William Powles, an impromptu splash-about in the Usk with fellow recruits ended in his drowning; a tragedy that highlighted the inability of so many of his companions to swim, for while two attempted a rescue, the others could only watch from the bank in helpless awe.<sup>259</sup> But, as Shpayer-Makov points out, 'illness rather than injury was the major cause of incapacitation' in policemen.<sup>260</sup> However, there were numerous injuries in both the Metropolitan Police and in the Monmouthshire force – occupational and accidental. Occupational injuries in both forces involved horses and vehicles, dogs, and physical assaults.<sup>261</sup> Accidents were generally brought about by the same causes, but due, as mentioned, to an unexpected mishap, or often stupidity or misdeed on the part of the constable. In 1913, for example, PC Charles Dries required stitches to a three-inch gash on his forehead, which he had sustained during a quarrel with his wife: Dries had pushed his spouse and she had retaliated by throwing a table knife at him.<sup>262</sup> When PC James Grubb's blood-stained helmet was found lying in the road at 5.30 on a July morning in 1910, the inebriated Grubb was found to have fallen from his bicycle, after being on duty at a wedding.<sup>263</sup> PC Joseph Morgan, on the other hand, broke a rib 'pitching hay whilst on duty'<sup>264</sup>

Morbidity is the state of being diseased or incapacitated by illness. Its study, however (even more so than that of mortality), can be no more than a hypothesis-

<sup>258</sup> An account of PC Waters' accident is given in the *Pontypool Free Press*, 11 November 1876, and William Shapland's in the same paper in 1921.

<sup>259</sup> *Usk Observer*, 15 June 1858.

<sup>260</sup> Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman*, p. 135.

<sup>261</sup> *Ibid.*, Chapter Four.

<sup>262</sup> GPA: *Defaulters' Book*, p. 603.

<sup>263</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 600.

<sup>264</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 426.

generating exercise, for statistical evidence is patchy. All too often the reason for a resignation or dismissal on ill-health grounds is either described in police documents as 'bodily infirmity', or it is not recorded at all. However, while the commonest causes of morbidity were probably also the commonest causes of mortality, there is also some evidence that men were either removed from the force or incapacitated for a variety of other reasons too – deafness, defective eyesight, epilepsy, erysipelas, gonorrhoea, piles, rheumatism, scabies, syphilis, weak legs, weak constitutions and, in one case, paralysis from the waist down just four months after recruitment.

While it is clearly the case that men came into the force with a range of diseases and disabilities, others probably acquired them during service; more perhaps from dubious habits and hygiene than beat work. In 1887, Thomas Foxall was accused in Pontypool Court of 'consorting with a prostitute'.<sup>265</sup> He was also reported for entering, uninvited, the bedroom of another policeman's wife. Twelve years later he died at the local asylum, from heart and brain disease, possibly syphilitic. His fate mirrored that of Constable Joshua Evans, and perhaps others.<sup>266</sup> Gonorrhoea (a venereal disease) and erysipelas (a streptococcal skin infection) caused William Manning's downfall, along with the disclosure that he had infected the wife of the man he lodged with. PC David Morgan was dismissed the force in 1890 with venereal disease, PC William Fisher came down from the Metropolitan Police with it, and the unfortunately named PC Clapp was sufficiently debilitated by venereal disease to be unable to carry out his duties.<sup>267</sup>

<sup>265</sup> GPA: *Defaulters' Book*, p. 427.

<sup>266</sup> GRO: Monmouthshire Constabulary Admission Register, 1857-1898: D 3297.2. Details also obtained from the death certificates of thirty-year-old Joshua Evans, who died at the Abergavenny Asylum, on 16 January 1888, and Thomas Foxall, who died at the same place on 27 October 1899. Foxall was thirty-four years old

<sup>267</sup> GRO: Monmouthshire Constabulary Admission Registers, 1857-1914: D 3297 . 1-3; and GPA: *Defaulters' Book*.

Undated photograph of Thomas Foxall, No. 132.



Foxall, a former collier, joined the Monmouthshire Constabulary on 9 November 1885, and served at Pontypool, Blackwood, Newport and Shirenewton. He was admitted to the Abergavenny asylum in June 1899, following a rapid deterioration in his mental condition. He died at the asylum on 27 November 1899, at the age of thirty-four.

Source: GPA: Print reproduced, with kind permission of the Gwent Police, from a scrapbook of assorted photographs (compiler unknown),

Albert Lawrence, who had previously worked as an asylum attendant, had scabies,<sup>268</sup> which is a highly contagious skin infestation. The living conditions in institutions such as prisons and asylums lent themselves to infestations. Some conditions could undoubtedly be hidden for a time – a sexually transmitted disease is not necessarily obvious and neither is epilepsy until a seizure is witnessed – but it would have taken a Job or a Keller to disguise the manifestations of scabies, partial vision or profound deafness. So how were physically and mentally impaired men (several proved to be 'mentally deficient') admitted into the force? Steedman is categorical. 'Policemen were, after all, chosen for those qualities of health and strength that made them such good risks in their first years of service'.<sup>269</sup>

Contemporaries were actually puzzled by the fact that policemen, who had "good food, sleep, and exercise" and had been in excellent health upon recruitment, found themselves on the sick list in great numbers.<sup>270</sup>

Was the medical examination as rigorous as it was claimed to be? Few references to the medical selection of candidates for the county constabulary have been traced. However, some small evidence does lie in the recruitment registers and the reports of the Chief Constables. In July 1899, Bosanquet, complained to the Standing Joint Committee that a 'candidate for the Force recently passed as medically fit, was subsequently found to be short-sighted', yet the police surgeon had been relied upon to examine eyesight at a cost of 2/6d per man. The surgeon, however, insisted that: 'It has never been our custom to make any *special* examination of a Police Candidate's vision' (my italics). It also became apparent that there were three categories of eye test, at 2/6d,

<sup>268</sup> GRO: Monmouthshire Constabulary Admission Registers, 1857-1914: D 3297.1-3.

<sup>269</sup> Steedman, *Policing the Victorian Community*, p. 121.

<sup>270</sup> Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman*, p. 134.

3/6d and 5/-, and policemen were getting the cheapest.<sup>271</sup> Bosanquet's proposal that this be changed to the 5/- test was adopted at the next committee meeting.<sup>272</sup>

It may also have been the case that the general medical examination was economically determined too, and therefore cursory. A police recruit's distinguishing marks were among the many statistics recorded in the admission registers. Yet, for most of the period of this study, only marks on the face and hands were recorded, with the occasional mark on the leg being noted. Towards the end of the century and beyond, however, every blemish on every part of the body was revealed in great detail; a pigeon-chest, a birth-mark in an unusual place.<sup>273</sup> This in itself is insufficient proof that Monmouthshire policemen were not fully undressed for their medical examination initially, but it does convey the idea that they were not. In the Metropolitan force the medical examination was said to be 'stringent' and only the most robustly healthy recruits were accepted,<sup>274</sup> yet they appear to have fared no better than the provincial men. Perhaps a lack of scientific medical knowledge rendered the stringent and the cursory examinations much the same for a large part of the nineteenth century.

The stethoscope was certainly in use by the 1850s, but it was not commonly employed for a further two or three decades. There is some evidence that auscultation (listening to body sounds through a stethoscope) *was* used to determine chest disease in sick Monmouthshire policemen by the 1870s, but it is no known whether it was used in the medical examinations on entry.

<sup>271</sup> GPA: Quarterly Reports of the Chief Constable, December 1883-July 1901: Report of 10 July 1899.

<sup>272</sup> GPA: Standing Joint Committee Minutes of Business, 1891-1899: Report of 12 July 1899.

<sup>273</sup> GRO: Monmouthshire Constabulary Recruitment Registers, 1857-1914: D 3297. 1-3.

<sup>274</sup> Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman*, pp. 36-9.

This is to certify that I have carefully examined Sergeant James and find him very much reduced in flesh, Chest delicate, very liable to congestion of the left Lung, unable to do Police duty, and never will be able. He has not been well since the assault on him at Ynysddu in August 1872 – that and exposure to wet and cold is the cause of his failing health.<sup>275</sup>

Reports like this undoubtedly encouraged a belief that policing was the principal determinant of morbidity and mortality in nineteenth and early twentieth century policemen, and without the epidemiological advances of later decades it must have seemed the obvious cause.

As the last recruit of the period 1857-1914 died in service in February 1944, a horizontal study has been conducted to determine variations and trends in the causes of death in the force. It runs along an 1850–1940 timeline. Analysis of the death certificates in this lineal arrangement has revealed some variation in mortality rates; most notably a marked decline in some diseases and a small rise in others. The statistical data and an assessment of the possible determinants of change, such as the introduction of public health measures, legislation to prevent the adulteration of food and the advance in the prevention and treatment of disease, provide the debate in this section.

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<sup>275</sup> GRO: *Medical Certificate of Sergeant James*, from J. D. Davies, Surgeon, Blackwood, 18 March 1875: QSP & R 0084 15.

## The horizontal study

**Table 4:** Causes of death in the force over ten decades – 1850-1940

Decade	Known causes of death (no. of deaths)
1850	Accident (1) *
1860	Tuberculosis (2); Typhoid (1); Uk (1)
1870	Tuberculosis (1); Typhoid (1); Pneumonia(2); Heart Disease (1); Intestinal Obstruction (1); Accident (1)
1880	Tuberculosis (1); Typhoid (1); Pneumonia (4); Heart Disease (2); Renal Failure (3); Hepatitis (1); Cancer (2)
1890	Pneumonia (3); Heart Disease (1); Diphtheria (1); Stroke (1)
1900	Pneumonia (2); Intestinal Obstruction (1);
1910	Pneumonia (3); Heart Disease (1); Intestinal Obstruction (1); Renal Failure (1); Cancer (2); Accident (1)
1920	Pneumonia (1); Intestinal Obstruction (1); Ca Liver/Hepatitis (2); Diabetes (1); Accident (1); Suicide (1)
1930	Renal failure (1); Cancer (2); Accident (1)
1940	Renal Failure (1); Cancer (1) *
	[Uk = Unknown]

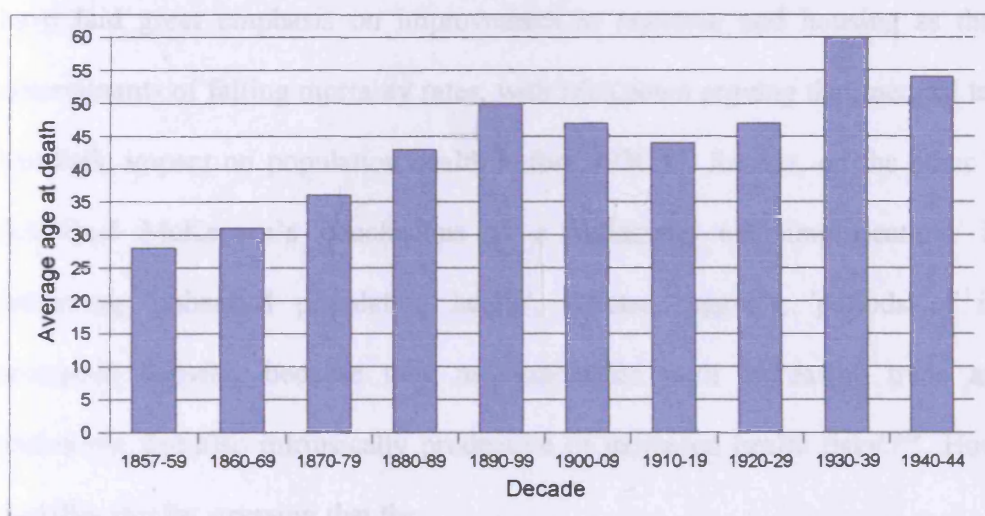
Source: Death certificates of policemen and Chief Constables' Quarterly Reports.

\* Data for the 1850s and 1940s represents only 3 and 4 years of the decades respectively and cannot therefore be fully compared.

Analysis of mortality by cause indicates a downward trend in deaths from infectious diseases such as tuberculosis and typhoid, and a fall in deaths from heart disease, a trend that was closely linked to the control of infections. In the case of heart disease, improved mortality rates are also likely to have been influenced by improvements in diagnosis and perhaps the improved medical examination of recruits. Death from renal failure continued intermittently and cases of known cancers increased; there were two cases of known cancer in the forty years prior to 1900, and five cases in

the forty years post 1900. Along with the fall in deaths from infectious diseases, there was also a marked rise in the age that death occurred. Excluding the 1850s and 1940s, for reasons mentioned above (\* note to Table 4), the average age at death rose sharply between the 1860s and 1890s, then fell during the first two decades of the twentieth century, only to rise again during the 1930s (Graph 3). There is an obvious relationship between the decline of infectious diseases and the rise in age at death, not least because tuberculosis 'in its dominant respiratory form ... primarily affects those in the prime of life'.<sup>276</sup>

**Graph 3: The changing age of mortality 1857-1944**



Source: Policemen's death certificates and Quarterly Reports of the Chief Constables.

<sup>276</sup> Hardy, *The Epidemic Streets*, p. 211.



## Determinants of change

The downward trend in deaths from infectious diseases has for decades past been a matter of keen speculation and interpretation. Past historiography has, in general, associated declining mortality rates with rising national wealth. But, as Szreter has noted:

[while] important counter-examples have been uncovered ... [and] there has been significant dissent, a glib World War II consensus has remained largely unperturbed; that economic growth causes mortality decline, principally through an epidemiological transition – a decline of infectious and communicable diseases.<sup>277</sup>

Some scholars, most notably Thomas McKeown, and John and Sonya McKinlay, have laid great emphasis on improvement in nutrition and housing as the primary determinants of falling mortality rates; with McKeown arguing that medical technology had little impact on population health before 1930.<sup>278</sup> Szreter, on the other hand, has described McKeown's conclusions as a 'fallacious oversimplification'. Far from delivering 'enhanced population health', Szreter suggests, 'periods of increasing economic activity, because they are associated with increasing trade and urban settlement, are also intrinsically productive of increased health risks'.<sup>279</sup> However, he qualifies this by stressing that the

period during which the health of the population was compromised by industrialization was ultimately resolved, so that continuing economic growth came eventually to be accompanied by general rising health.<sup>280</sup>

<sup>277</sup> S. Szreter, 'Economic Growth, Disruption, Deprivation, Disease and Death: on the Importance of the Politics of Public Health for Development', *Population and Development Reviews*, 23, 1997.

<sup>278</sup> J. McKinlay and S. M. McKinlay, 'The Questionable Effect of Medical Measures on the Decline in Mortality in the United States in the Twentieth Century', *Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly*, 55, 3, 1997; Thomas McKeown, *The Modern Rise of Population* (London: Edward Arnold, 1976)

<sup>279</sup> S. Szreter, 'Industrialization and Health' in *British Medical Bulletin*, 69: 75-86 (2004).

<sup>280</sup> Ibid.

For Szeleter, social intervention was not only crucial to this general rise in population health it was also the critical determinant in Britain's mortality decline. But, whether the critical determinant was better nutrition as a result of economic growth, or social intervention (and the arguments appear fairly evenly weighted), what does seem absolutely certain is that there was no singular process involved. 'Infectious disease was viewed as a local problem, to be dealt with by local authorities'.<sup>281</sup> Under the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834, the old Parish system of relief had been abolished and the Union, with its workhouse and elected Board of Guardians, had become the new administrative unit. However, always anxious to keep costs down the Boards of Guardians, wholly representative of propertied interests until the 1880s, were slow to initiate change.<sup>282</sup>

Quarter Sessions records afford abundant evidence to support this view. For example, an efficient young county constable, appointed by the Abergavenny Board of Guardians as Inspector of Nuisances for Blaenavon, was dismissed from the post in 1858 for attempting to police men of a higher social standing than himself. His request that dung heaps and other accumulations of filth be removed from the properties of several of the most active members of the Board of Roads, was regarded as a sad want of discretion. He was removed and the filth remained; that is, until a particularly virulent typhus epidemic caused the district medical officer to complain to the Secretary of the Board of Health in Whitehall.<sup>283</sup>

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<sup>281</sup> Hardy, *The Epidemic Streets*, p. 4.

<sup>282</sup> T. Thomas, *Poor Relief in Merthyr Tydfil Union in Victorian Times* (Glamorgan: Glamorgan Archive Service Publication, 1992)

<sup>283</sup> Williams, *Public Health in Mid-Victorian Wales*: Letter to the Secretary of the Board of Health, Whitehall, 28 May 1858; Letter 24/1.

The General Board of Health was created by the Public Health Act of 1848, which 'was the culmination of several years of national and local pressure to improve the condition of the urban environment and the health of the population'.<sup>284</sup> A condition of the Act had been to allow for the establishment of local boards of health, and these, formed if the death-rate in any district (parish, borough, town, city etc.) exceeded twenty-three in a thousand, or if a tenth of the area's rate-paying public successfully petitioned for one, were responsible for general sanitary conditions: the regulation of sewage, water supplies, street cleaning, burial grounds and slaughterhouses, for example, were arranged under their auspices. In 1853, ninety-three rate-paying signatories (the legally required tenth) from Christchurch, in Newport, were among the first group to take advantage of the Act in Monmouthshire, after their parish had been extensively built upon 'without having any general system of Drainage in consequence of which the sewage now lies stagnant in open Ditches'.<sup>285</sup> And while petitions from other parts of the county differed very little in detail, ten years were to pass before any conspicuous zeal for local sanitary reform became apparent.

The General Board of Health, however, lasted only ten years. In 1858, the Medical Department of the Privy Council replaced it. At this time manifold changes were taking place in the scale and pace of urban spread and from the 1860s a flurry of petitions drew attention to the brutal and degraded conditions of life which followed in their wake. But, as is indicated by the attitude of members of the Board of Roads to the Inspector of Nuisances for Blaenavon, the prevalence of disease was not just about

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<sup>284</sup> *On the State of the Public Health 1997*: The Annual Report of the Chief Medical Officer, Dept. of Health, 1998.

<sup>285</sup> Williams, *Public Health in Mid-Victorian Wales*: Letter 51/2.

environmental conditions. As Hardy notes:

history of health ... variously casts light on the evolution of a country's government and institutions, on its population history, on its intellectual development, and on its social attitudes and popular beliefs.<sup>286</sup>

Something of the character of local politics and society are revealed in the reports of the local health officers and of government health inspectors. An 1850 report on the sanitary conditions of the borough of Newport serves as a useful starting point for the study of developments in local public health. The borough was never policed by the county constabulary, though assistance was at times afforded. Several county constables were previously borough officers, others were born and raised in the district, and early conditions in Newport were also fairly representative of the rapidly expanding industrial towns of the western valleys. The report throws light on a catalogue of filth and degradation: groups of houses, sometimes as many as fifteen, forced to share just one 'privy'; waste deposited in ash heaps in the streets; wagon-loads of filth accumulating in slaughterhouse yards; privies heaped up; drains emptying into the canal or the river; piggeries and stables in back yards and streets; and over-full burial grounds seeping 'exudation from the graves' into water supplies and houses. In fact the stench from St. Woollos churchyard at certain times of the year was said to be unbearable. A waterworks had been established in Newport in 1848, but few houses benefited from a supply as landlords refused to meet the expense.<sup>287</sup>

Fourteen years later, conditions at Tredegar were much the same. Built on land held under lease from the Tredegar Iron Company, the town in 1864 contained rows of

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<sup>286</sup> Hardy, *The Epidemic Streets*, p. 3.

<sup>287</sup> Newport Library: G. Clark, *Report to the General Board of Health: on a preliminary inquiry into the sewerage, drainage, and supply of water and the sanitary conditions of the inhabitants of the Borough of Newport* (London: 1850).

workmen's cottages, some of which ranked amongst the most deplorable ever seen. With filthy, shared 'privies', pigs and donkeys living on (and sometimes in) premises, and a heavy burden of death and disease on the populace, the Iron Company resisted any plans to supply the inhabitants with clean water, or to sweep and remove ashes from beyond the principal streets.<sup>288</sup> Here, amongst the workers, policemen and their families rented poorly constructed cottages, with addresses like Fifth Row (south side) and Forge Row, next to Bedwellty Pits, purchased local supplies, and mixed extensively with the labouring classes of these districts in pursuit of their work.

The Local Board District of Tredegar was eventually constituted in 1874, and the parish of Dukestown added to it in 1878, yet the evolution of public health measures in the town proved painstakingly slow. A report by Dr. J. Spencer Low, on sanitary conditions there in 1909 paints a picture of moribund local councillors, more concerned with balance sheets than the conditions of life of the poor. Housing in several areas of the town was now managed by 'slum landlords' (some being members of the district council), whose properties were often 'totally unfit for human habitation'. Overcrowding was still rife, and though a water supply had been laid on, the inhabitants of some districts were still required to carry their own. Sewage now drained directly into the Sirhowy river, which during summer months often shrank to little more than a stream and became 'an almost stagnant cesspool'. Water-closets, where they existed, were often choked with excrement, because of the precarious nature of hand-flushing, and in Sirhowy, where WCs were in very short supply, galvanised pails were employed in lieu of them. The pails, to which ashes were seldom added, were emptied twice

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<sup>288</sup> Williams, *Public Health in mid-Victorian Wales*: Letter from C. B. Crisp to the Secretary of the Board of Health, Whitehall, 18 October 1864: Letter 217/2.

weekly by the council's scavengers – and their contents, along with general household waste, created a mass of filthy tips that encircled the town.

The provision of a destructor had been considered by the council in 1901, but its cost was deemed prohibitive. Byelaws passed in 1899, governing the management of dairies, cowsheds and milk shops, had also been largely ignored and many premises remained in a filthy state. The sanitary condition of the elementary schools was also open to question; privy 'pits' at Trefil school, for instance, which had been constructed against one of the school walls, had not been emptied for five years and, at the time of the report, a broken 'slop' drain had for a year been discharging its contents over the Troedrhiwgwair school playground.

Everything about the town's sanitary arrangements in 1909 threatened the health of the inhabitants, yet procedures for dealing with outbreaks of infectious disease were still totally inadequate. There was no steam disinfecting apparatus available, though this had been requested as early as 1890; bacteriological examinations were not carried out on doubtful cases of infection; and isolation was non-existent – primarily because no houses were untenanted and the only isolation hospital, Ashvale House, had neither trained staff nor proper accommodation and was generally deemed too damp for use. Consequently, when epidemics struck, whole families were attacked as well as neighbouring households. Reports of the Board's medical inspectors for Blaina, Abertillery and Ebbw Vale, for the same period, present a similar picture.<sup>289</sup>

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<sup>289</sup> GRO: Dr. J. Spencer Low's *Report to the Local Government Board on the Sanitary Circumstances and Administration of the Tredegar Urban District* (London: 1909): C/Misc. R 0011.

Blaenavon came under scrutiny again in 1913, when an official inquiry was launched to investigate the county council's claim that the town council had failed to exercise its powers under Part III of the Housing of the Working Classes Act 1890, in regard to the provision of houses. As a result working-class accommodation was in crisis. The principal grounds for the county council's complaint were gross overcrowding, insanitary and indecent living conditions, and a high incidence of tuberculosis owing to the dearth of habitable houses. Yet, it transpired, there was 'an ample margin of borrowing power' to enable the town council to carry out the necessary building work and the rates were not considered to be 'exorbitant'. The barrier to progress seems to have been incompetence and parsimony on the part of local councillors, who abandoned their defence on the second day of the Inquiry and pledged to provide fifty new houses to start with.<sup>290</sup>

While epidemiological measures were painfully slow, progress, nevertheless, was made. The formation of the Western Valleys Sewerage Board under the Western Valleys (Mon.) Sewerage Board Acts of 1903, 1906, and 1907, led to the commencement of work on trunk sewers, to run down the valleys and discharge their contents into the sea near Newport. And in 1909 there were plans afoot for subsidiary sewers to connect with these – it was the likely cost of this proposed scheme that had led to the plans for a rubbish destructor being shelved in Tredegar. However, the development of the system was not universally supported.

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<sup>290</sup> GRO: Blaenavon Housing Inquiry, 13 – 14 November, 1913: *Monmouthshire County Council: Powers and Duties of the County Council in Public Health* (Newport: 1938): C/Misc. R 0073.

In 1903, a large petition against plans to construct sewers had come from eight powerful, local industrialists; 'owners of collieries and blast furnaces iron and steel and tin plate and other large manufacturing premises in the Ebbw Valleys'.<sup>291</sup> These men believed the sewerage improvement plan was 'unreasonable', 'incapable of justification' and 'ill-considered', and would prevent the more 'effectual utilization of the lands in the valleys, for the extension of manufacturing works and the sinking of new pits'.<sup>292</sup> Worse still:

the effect upon the blast furnaces iron steel and tinplate works in the valleys [would] be so serious as to cripple the industries and render necessary a considerable reduction in the number of persons employed if not the removal of the works altogether.<sup>293</sup>

This was blackmail in its ugliest form; its sponsors, the biggest ratepayers in the districts referred to in the plans – 'an oligarchy of the worst sort, attentive only to their class interests and scornful of the common good'.<sup>294</sup> However, as Hardy has remarked:

Opposition of vested interests to sanitary reform, which has been demonstrated by several historians, was successful in temporarily delaying local measures of improvement but did not significantly compromise the overall impact of preventive medicine.<sup>295</sup>

The most pressing environmental problems were gradually brought under control, and headway was made. The compulsory appointment of Medical Officers of Health in every sanitary district of England and Wales; a move that was brought about by the Public Health Act of 1875, was a major step in the right direction. Improvements also occurred in medical treatment, and resources for the care of the sick. The establishment of cottage hospitals in the county played a significant part in this: Monmouth Hospital

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<sup>291</sup> GRO: Western Valleys (Monmouthshire) Sewerage Board; Petition Against, on Merits, Praying to be heard by Counsel etc. House of Commons Session, 1903: D 695 611.

<sup>292</sup> Ibid.

<sup>293</sup> Ibid.

<sup>294</sup> H. Ausubel, *John Bright, Victorian Reformer* (London: Wiley, 1966), p. 8.

<sup>295</sup> Hardy, *The Epidemic Streets*, p. 292.



opened in 1868 and Abergavenny Hospital in 1890, though better facilities were established in both towns during the early years of the twentieth century. The old Blaenavon Works Hospital was established in 1884, and replaced in 1927; and a ten-bedded hospital was opened in Ebbw Vale in 1900. Tredegar Park hospital, supported by funds from the Tredegar Iron and Coal Company, was established in 1904; Blaina hospital in 1911 and, after a number of difficulties, Abertillery and District Hospital finally opened at Aberbeeg in 1922.<sup>296</sup>

The cottage hospitals were generally supported by voluntary contributions, but hospital funding came to require more than just charity, and by the 1880s money from patients 'had become an acceptable means of raising income'.<sup>297</sup> At Abergavenny's Victoria Hospital in 1902, a 'contribution of Sixpence a day at the least (3/6 a week, 2/- for children) [was] laid down, or a larger sum according to the circumstances of the Patient'.<sup>298</sup> 'Charity', explains Waddington, 'was highly fashionable in Victorian society and for some it became an emblem of social prestige'.<sup>299</sup> Early twentieth century records of the Monmouth General Hospital show many eminent men and women among its benefactors: Lord Llangattock and the Hon. J. M. Rolls of the Hendre were notable patrons, and in 1903 a special fund, which had been set up by the late John E. W. Rolls, provided for an additional bed called the 'Hendre Bed'. In 1908 a generous benefactor presented the hospital with X-Ray equipment, and in 1910 sufficient funds were raised

<sup>296</sup> G. Jones, *The Aneurin Bevan Inheritance: The Story of the Nevill Hall and District NHS Trust* (Gwent: 1998).

<sup>297</sup> K. Waddington, "'Grasping Gratitude: charity and hospital finance in late-Victorian London', in M. Daunt (ed.), *Charity, self-interest and welfare in the English past* (London: 1996), p. 189.

<sup>298</sup> GRO: The Victoria Cottage Hospital and Dispensary, Abergavenny; Annual Reports 1902-1931; 1902 Report, pp. 9-10: D.2191.

<sup>299</sup> K. Waddington, "'Grasping Gratitude": charity and hospital finance in late-Victorian London', in M. Daunt (ed.), *Charity, self-interest and welfare in the English past* (London: 1996), pp. 181-202.

for the matron to purchase an electric vacuum cleaner.<sup>300</sup> Abergavenny's Victoria Hospital had to wait until 1930 for X-Ray apparatus and central heating.

It is not known how many Monmouthshire policemen received hospital care; only two died in hospital during the nineteenth century: Charles Waters died at Newport Infirmary in 1876, after being run over by a cart, and Henry Hasted was operated upon in the same institution in 1888, but died at home, and two constables died at the Abergavenny asylum. Only four of the twenty-two policemen who died in service between 1900 and 1944 received hospital care, which is difficult to understand as a police sickness fund existed by that time, though the date it came into being has not been established.

In 1918 twenty-six year old Constable Bryant, sick for a year with abdominal pain, remained at home until he died from a ruptured appendix and multiple abscesses.<sup>301</sup> Bryant had been stationed at Ebbw Vale, where the cottage hospital was by then well established, and by 1918 appendectomies were not uncommon. Monmouth Hospital Reports of 1903-19, show patients undergoing this type of surgery as early as 1908, though the duration of their hospital stay was often lengthy and mortality rates were exceptionally high. In 1909 a twenty-year-old patient with acute appendicitis required two operations, and occupied a bed for 210 days, but survived. By 1918 the period of recovery had lessened to between twenty and thirty days and mortality rates

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<sup>300</sup> GRO: Monmouth Hospital Reports; Treasurer's Account for the year ending 31 December, 1908: D.912.13.

<sup>301</sup> Details obtained from the death certificate of Constable William Bryant, who died on 17 December 1918.

were decreasing; six out of nine Monmouth Hospital cases survived appendectomy that year.<sup>302</sup>

As Hardy has noted, 'a wide range of medical conditions, easily alleviated today, were a continuing part of daily life in the days before antibiotics, minor surgery and scientific medical practice'<sup>303</sup> but, as is also apparent, when certain surgical procedures did become available they were not immediately universal. Treatments of increasing complexity were used for palliation and cure which were seen as the cutting edge of pioneer research at the time. In 1887 the *Lancet* printed a report by a Dr Owen Pritchard on his use of the 'Burgeon Treatment of Consumption':

I enclose notes of two cases of phthisis treated in private practice by gaseous injections into the rectum, after the plan advocated by Dr Burgeon ... For the production of the sulphuretted hydrogen a solution of sodium sulphide and caustic soda was used ... and the sulphuretted hydrogen liberated by throwing in a small quantity of tartaric acid.<sup>304</sup>

While the measure was not thought to cure the disease completely, Dr Pritchard found that it did have an admirable effect upon the cough, which was said to be considerably retarded by the gaseous injections. However, as the doctor's guinea-pigs were ladies with a degree of social standing, to continue coughing would have required immense courage on their part.

Various dilutions and mixtures were used in a number of treatments, the suitability of which seem dubious and often potentially dangerous. The internal administration of 'antiseptics', both orally and rectally, for example, was thought to be of use in the treatment of typhoid, though the antiseptics themselves were far from safe.

<sup>302</sup> GRO: Monmouth Hospital Reports, 1909-19: Report of 1918: D.912.13.

<sup>303</sup> Hardy, *The Epidemic Streets*, p. 270.

<sup>304</sup> *Lancet*: 1887; 2, pp. 605-6.

The subchloride of mercury and iodine are both powerful antiseptics ... Other antiseptics, such as the sulphate of quinine, dilute sulphuric acid, the chloride of aluminium etc., find a suitable employment in typhoid fever, as they combine antiseptic and tonic properties.<sup>305</sup>

Yet far-sightedness did not always prove the safest course for a doctor either. In 1893, for example, the published letters of Dr Thomas Allinson, were sufficiently controversial for the General Medical Council to strike him off their register a year later.

He advocated three hours a day of walking or other exercise, told people not to work too hard, to cut down on salt, eat more fruit and vegetables, avoid tea and coffee before bed and to be teetotal ... his advice to give up smoking appalled society as doctors regularly recommended a cigar as a way to clear the lungs. He was against many medical drugs of the day which included poisons such as arsenic, mercury and opiates.<sup>306</sup>

Allinson was obviously aware that certain medical treatments and popular beliefs, born from a lack of scientific knowledge, aggravated many of the diseases prevalent in his time, and increased the risk of morbidity and mortality. While this does not invalidate claims that beatwork was largely responsible for sickness and death in policemen, or that the London weather played its part in destroying the health of those in the metropolis, it does weaken it by suggesting that the cause and effect equation is far more 'complex and ambiguous'.

## Conclusion

An analysis of morbidity and mortality in Monmouthshire policemen, suggests that policing was not the most significant factor associated with death, and neither did respiratory infection, on average, cause the highest mortality rate. It does seem likely, however, that there was some risk to the men's health from exposure to disease during

<sup>305</sup> *Lancet*: 1875, 1, pp. 190-1.

<sup>306</sup> *Daily Telegraph*, 3 January 2008.

routine beatwork, though we do not, and cannot, know whether those who died or became incapacitated were typical of the body of men in general, in respect of factors which precipitated their illnesses. The vagaries of human make-up and susceptibility can influence patterns of disease, as can past illness, experience and behaviour. But while no clear-cut associations can be made, it nevertheless seems reasonable to suggest that there was a causal relationship between lifestyle and the prevalence of certain diseases: the use and abuse of alcohol and tobacco, for instance, in respiratory and liver disease, and promiscuity in sexually transmitted infections. However, the nature of beatwork, particularly night shifts, afforded ample opportunity for irregular practices.

Age also has a well-known influence on susceptibility to disease. The only subject to suffer a stroke in this study was sixty-two year old Sergeant Milkins, and seventy-three year old Chief Constable Bosanquet was the only *known* person to have suffered from severe angina whilst still working. However, only one of seven men who died between 36 and 41+ years' service succumbed to respiratory infection, while many more long-serving men appear to have remained hale and hearty up to and beyond retirement. Here we see the vagaries of human make-up coming into play – a sifting of the strongest, perhaps, by the Darwinian process of natural selection. Contemporary conceptions of disease and death also appear to have had a bearing on health. There was a general disregard

for all but the most serious and incapacitating degrees of illness itself; an attitude inevitable, perhaps, in a society accustomed to varying degrees of ill health. Minor and chronic illnesses were widespread in the population, and helped to mask the early stages of more infectious disease.<sup>307</sup>

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<sup>307</sup> Hardy, *The Epidemic Streets*, p. 269.

It is not difficult to believe, therefore, that medical officers shared this 'indifference' to commonplace conditions and concentrated their efforts on treating and controlling infectious diseases. This may partly explain why men who were functioning somewhere below full physical fitness, but who were not *palpably* infirm, managed to enter the force. It would, however, be anachronistic to imagine that even the best of the fit, young men from the working class sought by head and chief constables during the nineteenth century, could in any degree equal men of the same description today.

In the horizontal study the steady rise in age at death appears to mirror national mortality trends, though the rise is not a linear continuum. However, peaks and troughs need further analysis – death rates were certainly highest during years of depression; nine per cent of the force died during the 1880s, for instance. In this study, as in Shpayer-Makov's work on the Metropolitan Police, it cannot be 'stated unequivocally' that morbidity and mortality were caused directly by policing. Policemen died of a variety of diseases.

These diseases also predominated in the general population during the nineteenth century. Pulmonary infections were the chief cause of death in the country at large and in London in particular.<sup>308</sup>

From evidence uncovered to date, policemen's health and well-being appear to have rested on an infinite variety of factors of significant epidemiological importance; beat work was just one of the correlates.

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<sup>308</sup> Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman*, p. 137.

## Chapter Five

### Discipline and Default

There is no form of social activity which can do without the appropriate moral discipline. It is this discipline that curbs [the individual], that marks the boundaries, that tells him what his relations with his associates should be, where illicit encroachment begins, and what he must pay in current dues towards the maintenance of the community ... if the rules do not prescribe what he should do to make his actions conform to collective aims, it is inevitable that these aims will become anti-social.<sup>1</sup>

There was no shortage of rules prescribing police behaviour or defining the boundaries of a policeman's job: the rule book of the Monmouthshire force presented a relentless and stringent array of orders and regulations, which had evolved from those laid down for the Metropolitan police in 1829. Every man admitted into the force was issued with a copy, and the rules were 'read over and explained ... in order that no future complaints may be made upon their being enforced'.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, as Steedman points out:

The nineteenth-century policeman's handbook told him what he ought to be: neutral, passive, a mere symbol for the citizen's own self-discipline. Constitutional textbooks of the late nineteenth century said, as does most police history written by policemen, that this is what he was.<sup>3</sup>

However, few modern police historians, Steedman amongst them, would subscribe to such a view. Taylor, for example, has noted that in the early years of the Middlesbrough force some policemen were virtually indistinguishable from the people they policed: amongst them 'there was a willingness to drink and fight that exacerbated the troubles of the town on a Saturday night'.<sup>4</sup> In the early twentieth-century, too,

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<sup>1</sup> E. Durkheim, *Professional Ethics and Civic Morals* (Trans. Cornelia Brookfield), (London: Routledge & Keegan Paul, 1954), p. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Herbert, *Orders and Regulations*, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Steedman, *Policing the Victorian Community*, p. 5.

<sup>4</sup> Taylor, *Policing the Victorian Town*, p. 97.

accounts show that 'drink and rowdy behaviour were ... vital ingredients of ... police culture' in South Wales.<sup>5</sup>

As rule-breaking was endemic in the Monmouthshire Constabulary, the aim of Chapter Five is to explore its causes, and the ways in which it was managed in order to achieve stability and development. The labour-management dynamic was far from straightforward, however, and it will be argued that the 'carrot and stick' method of control which had been employed in the Metropolitan force from its outset, and which was used in most provincial forces, did not prove an incentive to good behaviour in Monmouthshire. Default amongst the county constables was as much a response to the way management reacted to it as it was to the demands of the job. Fully quantifying it would also be impossible, for in any work of history, as Summers rightly points out, both the 'potential and limitations of sources need to be taken into account'.<sup>6</sup>

This becomes clear when examining the constabulary's admission registers and discipline book – the main sources for this study. In every volume there are small notes pencilled against names that point to evidence beyond what is officially recorded. A separate file that has not survived was kept on Superintendent David Llewellyn, for example, and a charge against Inspector David Edwards in 1861 was 'not gone into as he was leaving'. Furthermore, Constable Kelly, who was dismissed in 1913 for rifling a fruit store on his beat, had apparently stolen from the shop in the past, but had escaped detection.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Jones, *Crime and Policing in the Twentieth century*, p. 225.

<sup>6</sup> V. Summers, 'Criminals or Scapegoats? The Irish and Crime in Mid-Nineteenth Century Cardiff', *Llafur*, 8, 2, 2001, pp. 63-73.

<sup>7</sup> GPA: *Defaulters' Book*, pp. 150, 200 & 553.



Nevertheless, the force discipline book, the *Defaulters' Book* (1857-1929), does contain a comprehensive list of the men who were officially reported, the offences they were accused of, and the punishments that were meted out to them. Its contents and scope are therefore of great significance in assessing the dynamics of labour-management and change within the force. In addition to this book and the admission registers, a rich diversity of other sources has been drawn upon: reports of the two chief constables, the HMICs, and the Standing Joint Committee; station diaries; police journals; individual force histories; and the local and national press. A further aim of the chapter is to challenge again the 'Whig' interpretation of history as a continuous advance. The Monmouthshire Constabulary had a convoluted evolution and *Discipline and Default* engages with this fact to a greater degree perhaps than the previous chapters. Comparisons with the Metropolitan force continue to question the belief that '[t]he Metropolitan situation and the Metropolitan policeman were, for the main part, quite irrelevant to the policing of provincial forces'.<sup>8</sup> There is also a corrective intent to the chapter, as an historiographical lacuna exists in detailed analyses of default amongst serving policemen during this period.<sup>9</sup>

Becoming a policeman required a massive change in lifestyle, for the structure of police life was entirely different from the life most recruits had previously inhabited. From the commencement of the force, recruits were expected to devote their whole time to its service – serving and residing wherever ordered and appearing at all times in complete uniform. When not on duty a policeman was expected to remain in his quarters or, if duty called, leave a written note stating the time he left, the probable time

<sup>8</sup> Steedman, *Policing the Victorian Community*, p. 9,

<sup>9</sup> Shpayer-Makov's *The Making of a Policeman*; Taylor's *Policing the Victorian Town*; and Emsley's *English Police*, all address the theme, but there are few other works that provide detailed information on the subject.

of his return, and the cause of his absence. He could neither marry without the Chief Constable's permission nor enter a public house, except in the immediate execution of his duty. Attendance at fairs, clubs and public meetings was proscribed without the approval of a magistrate or the divisional superintendent, as were games and any other form of public entertainment. A policeman could not receive any form of gratuity or remuneration or contract debts. When practicable, he was also expected to attend 'divine service' as well as devote a portion of his time to 'the improvement of his handwriting, reading, and [his] mind generally' – the latter being seen as an essential requisite to promotion. Neglect of duty could subject a man to a penalty of ten pounds or a month's hard labour, and any other misconduct or disobedience of orders, to immediate dismissal, reduction in rank, or stoppage of pay.<sup>10</sup>

Not only did the rule book define police conduct and practice, it also established how these should be observed and maintained through a hierarchy of command, and a strict hierarchical system of control was put into place at the outset. After a short period of induction at police headquarters, a constable's further training and job development was generally the responsibility of the officer above him. Inspector and sergeant alike were instructed thus:

He will himself adhere strictly to orders. By doing so he will place himself above the fear of accusation, or recrimination, in the event of his being obliged to report any of the men under him.<sup>11</sup>

Shpayer-Makov has also noted of the Metropolitan force that, 'subordination was considered legitimate, with material provision and protection the pay-off for loss of

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<sup>10</sup> Herbert, *Orders and Regulations*, pp. 5–25,

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 19 – 21.

independence'.<sup>12</sup> The police, like the Post Office, were pioneers of the 'bureaucratic system of labour organisation', which Daunton describes thus:

In internal labour markets, personal relationships with opportunities for favouritism or capricious discipline were replaced by formal rules and regulations, and such organisations offered 'jobs with relatively high wages, good working conditions, chances of advancement, equity and due process in the administration of work rules, and above all employment stability'.<sup>13</sup>

Daunton does concede, however, that 'its acceptance was a slow process with many conflicts and ambiguities'.<sup>14</sup> 'Conflicts and ambiguities' abounded in the Monmouthshire force where, as in the Metropolitan Police, hierarchy and obedience could not always be accepted because men in supervisory positions often abused their powers.<sup>15</sup> In Monmouthshire some superior officers not only failed in their duties, but actively encouraged constables beneath them to engage in unacceptable practices. Inspector Sydney Short, for example, frequently involved his station constable in his wrongdoings (demonstrated on p. 89 above). Constable Thomas Lewis, who apprehended a woman without a warrant, escaped punishment because he had been directed by his sergeant, and constables Richard Richards and William Phillips, who were caught drinking and playing cards in a public house, were also 'leniently dealt with' because their sergeant was one of the party.<sup>16</sup>

As will be demonstrated, more of these cases occurred during the earlier period of this history, though Bosanquet (Chief Constable, 1894-1936) still had occasion to discipline senior officers in the closing years of the nineteenth century and beyond. A

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<sup>12</sup> Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman*, pp. 112 & 154.

<sup>13</sup> M. J. Daunton, *Royal Mail: The Post Office since 1840* (London: The Athlone Press, 1985), pp. 237-8.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 238.

<sup>15</sup> With regard to various benefits, Shpayer-Makov found that senior Metropolitan officers often discriminated between men they favoured and those they did not. See *The Making of a Policeman*, p. 163.

<sup>16</sup> GPA: *Defaulters' Book*, pp. 53, 111 & 112.

close reading of the *Defaulters' Book* also reveals that punishments during Herbert's chief constableness were not only excessively harsh at times, but were also selective, with leniency more readily, though not exclusively, shown to men above the rank of constable. It thus appears that one of Herbert's strategies for moving his force forward was to 'adjust' the disciplinary process whenever he deemed it necessary.

Constable Thomas Muggleworth, for instance, who in November 1858 was accused of 'allowing the Moulders Arms to remain open after hours and receiving 1/- [one shilling] for the same', was dismissed from the force, convicted, and fined '£2 [with] 19/6d costs'.<sup>17</sup> However, the theft of peas and beans from a private garden by Sergeant Beswick in August 1859 was, after investigation, found to be no more than a 'mistake', for which the sergeant was ordered to apologise and pay ten shillings compensation to the complainant.<sup>18</sup> Constable Thomas Evans, on the other hand, was instantly dismissed for stealing firewood in June 1866.<sup>19</sup> In October 1861, Sergeant Basham managed to escape punishment altogether, after 'endeavouring thro' threats to obtain evidence in a poaching case'. An interview with Basham appears to have convinced the Chief Constable that 'the threat was not direct and might easily have been made thro' ignorance'.<sup>20</sup> Likewise, it was said to be ignorance or 'inattention to orders' that allowed Sergeant Richards to escape punishment for 'receiving and distributing 30/- without permission'. The sergeant's statement apparently satisfied the Chief Constable that there had been no 'concealment or improper motive'.<sup>21</sup> Likewise, when Sergeant Pugsley was reported for beating his wife in 1874, it was

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<sup>17</sup> GPA: *Defaulters' Book*, p. 56.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 75.

<sup>19</sup> GPA: *Defaulters Book*, p.38.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 89.

<sup>21</sup> GPA: *Defaulters' Book*, p. 113.

decided that the 'woman [was] deserving of blame thro' gossip and extravagance'. Unchecked, the beatings continued. Pugsley also embarked upon an affair with a married woman and, for a short time, co-habited with her. Finally, in 1878, he was asked to behave towards his wife or resign. He chose to resign, and later became an inspector in the Metropolitan Police.<sup>22</sup>

Where leniency *was* shown to constables, it was generally because they were considered 'useful' men, or mitigating circumstances (often in conjunction with usefulness) were present. Constable George Dare, for example, was reported but not punished for accepting a present of six pigeons without the Chief Constable's permission. Though no reason was given for the chief's tolerance, Dare appears to have been a sober and hard working constable who struggled to support a wife and ten children. He was several times reported for debt, which was a dismissible offence yet, by order of the Chief Constable, arrangements were made for his creditors to receive payment by instalment.<sup>23</sup> Constable Joseph Cook, however, who had a propensity to drink and whose level of commitment appears not to have been high, was simply ordered to resign when he contracted debts for the second time in 1866.<sup>24</sup>

The examples above and particularly the case of Sergeant Pugsley (which can be compared to that of Inspector Edwards, p. 88 above), indicate that in practice there was a flexible policy towards discipline which ran counter to the rules – ideology and practice were antithetical poles. The disciplinary process was, in reality, both negotiable and selective. Many constables were punished for minor deviations while sergeants and

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<sup>22</sup> GPA: *Defaulters' Book*, p. 368.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 218 & 279.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 178

inspectors often escaped serious infringement without penalty. Some constables, on the other hand, were treated sparingly, either because they were regarded as useful or because there were mitigating circumstances, such as a supervising officer being party to their crimes. In a newly established force anxious to gain administrative and organisational efficiency, this was probably necessary. Initially, men employed as sergeants and inspectors had police or military backgrounds, and were therefore considered to be the well-trained and effective personnel needed to guide the recruits. They were not as easily replaced as constables, and so discretionary enforcement of the rules was perhaps the only option available to Herbert. Whether this proved to be divisive and led to default in the early years is not easy to assess, but dismissals and voluntary departures were certainly excessive. This mirrored the situation in the Metropolitan Police, where Shpayer-Makov found that the 'paternalistic social organisation' was often 'both discretionary and highly selective' and thus 'more rhetorical than real'.<sup>25</sup>

As the force matured and sergeants, inspectors and eventually superintendents were drawn from the constable class, limited promotional opportunities and selective discipline, would not have equated with the concept of justice. Frustration and resentment arising from such overt inequality is likely to have fuelled discontent and provided a motive for crime. The American sociologist Robert Merton attaches great importance to the theory that inequality leads to crime. He argues that in a society where there is a value consensus, all members of that society should have an equal opportunity to realise their goals. However, if the structure of that society comprises different social strata and unequal opportunities for people 'variously located in that

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<sup>25</sup> Shpayer Makov, *The Making of a Policeman*, pp. 161-4.

structure', pressure for socially deviant behaviour is generated.<sup>26</sup> The *Defaulters' Book* appears, in part, to confirm that the situation in the Monmouthshire Constabulary accords with Merton's interpretations.

There are 983 names recorded in the *Defaulters Book*, and 2,860 offences – 874 and 2,667 respectively lying within the period of this investigation. For the purpose of this study, the offences (hereinafter called crimes) have been categorized into five broad groups: insubordination, drinking, thuggery, sex and theft. Though many could be classed as insubordination, inasmuch as they constitute a violation of police rules, insubordination is here presented as disobedience of orders and defiance of authority with no apparent involvement in drinking, thuggery, sex or theft. Therefore, PC Ellis Jones, who was fined a day's pay in 1861 for being insolent to his sergeant when reprimanded, and PC George Lloyd, who received the same punishment in 1863 for overstaying his leave by 15 hours, are categorised as insubordinate. Whereas Constable Burley, who came off-duty '2 ¼ hours late', under the influence of drink, on Boxing Day 1871, has been placed in the drinking category.<sup>27</sup>

Lawrence Sherman opens his work on police corruption thus:

Every historical document that deals with policing suggests that there has always been some corruption in every law enforcement agency. In some societies and at some points in history there has been a great deal of [it] ... and at others very little, but it seems that no police force has ever been corruption free.<sup>28</sup>

Indeed, in Sherman's opinion police corruption has a very long history. He cites the Roman satirist Juvenal, who, in the famous phrase – *quis custodiet ipsos custodies*

<sup>26</sup> R. K. Merton, *Social Theory and Social Structure* (New York: 1968).

<sup>27</sup> GPA: *Defaulters' Book*, pp. 153, 154 & 303.

<sup>28</sup> L. W. Sherman, *Police Corruption: A Sociological Perspective* (New York: Anchor Press, 1974), p.40.

(who shall guard the guards?) – questioned the calibre of men chosen as city guards in Rome. And the Chinese government official who, some ten centuries later, posited that it was just as much 'bad laws' as 'bad men' that led to corruption amongst public officials.<sup>29</sup> However, it has never been satisfactorily proved that either 'bad laws' or 'bad men' lie at the root of criminal motivation, and at the dawn of the twenty-first century the topic still remains central to much theoretical and empirical investigation. In defining the term 'police corruption' Sherman adopts McMullan's definition, which labels a public official corrupt if he accepts money or money's worth for doing something that he is under a duty either to do, or not to do, anyway, or if he exercises legitimate discretion for improper purposes.<sup>30</sup>

However, that definition does not sit easily with the multitude of seemingly trivial offences for which policemen were punished. Mars suggests that this is because of the different words we use to describe crime. For instance, 'fiddling is still considered a trivial activity without serious implications,' because fiddle is a 'light' word, whereas theft is "“heavy” because it is precise".<sup>31</sup> According to James Anderton, a former Chief Constable of Manchester, there should be no ambiguity. Anderton believed that 'fiddling at work is crime of the same order as robbing a bank is crime'.<sup>32</sup> Gottfredson and Hirschi also see no difference in etiology between trivial and serious crimes. They suggest that 'it is at least arguable that persons who park illegally in front of fire hydrants may share characteristics with people who rob banks, such as a lack of concern for the interest of others and a disregard for the consequences of one's act'.<sup>33</sup> There was

<sup>29</sup> L. W. Sherman, *Police Corruption: A Sociological Perspective* (New York: Anchor Press, 1974), p. 1.

<sup>30</sup> M. McMullan, 'A Theory of Corruption', *Sociological Review*, Vol. 9, No. 2, June 1961.

<sup>31</sup> G. Mars, *Cheats at Work: An Anthropology of Workplace Crime* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1982) [hereinafter cited Mars, *Cheats at Work*], p. 164-5.

<sup>32</sup> Mars, *Cheats at Work*, p. 19.

<sup>33</sup> M.R. Gottfredson & T. Hirschi, *A General Theory of Crime* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), p. 43.



no qualitative difference as far as Herbert was concerned either. A man of the same cast as James Anderton, he made it explicitly clear that the constabulary rule book was to be interpreted literally; any distortion or violation of its contents constituted a crime and would therefore result in punishment. In cases of doubt, however, suspected miscreants were always interviewed and assessed.

**Table 1:** The number and type of crimes committed by men of the Monmouthshire Constabulary, 1857 – 1914.

Crime	1857-59	1860s	1870s	1880s	1890s	1900-09	1910-14	Total no. of crimes 1857 – 1914
Sex	4	22	9	24	6	14	5	84
Insubordination	107	340	323	200	124	120	74	1288
Drinking	88	236	231	188	110	97	52	1002
Thuggery	21	58	43	45	20	24	20	231
Theft	13	13	18	5	5	2	6	62
<b>Total</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>669</b>	<b>624</b>	<b>462</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>2667</b>
<b>% of total no. of crimes 1857 – 1914</b>	<b>(9)</b>	<b>(25)</b>	<b>(23)</b>	<b>(17)</b>	<b>(10)</b>	<b>(10)</b>	<b>(6)</b>	

Source: GPA: Monmouthshire Constabulary *Defaulters' Book*, 1857-1929

- Red columns represent incomplete decades

Changes in manpower, i.e. rapid turnover rates, particularly during the early years, coupled with the force's steady growth, do not allow statistically accurate conclusions to be drawn from the figures above. For example, the force comprised an average of 71 men between 1857 and 1859, and yet 108 men were responsible for the period's 233 recorded crimes. Likewise, 229 men committed 669 crimes during the 1860s, while the force's average strength was only 98 men. Therefore, in the absence of a constant, trends alone have been interpreted.

**Table 2: Average crime rate during each period**

	1857-59	1860s	1870s	1880s	1890s	1900-09	1910-19	1920-29
No. of defaulters	108	229	197	167	134	154	150	112
No. of crimes	233	669	624	462	265	257	197	157
Average crime rate	2.1	2.9	3.1	2.8	1.9	1.6	1.3	1.4

Source: GPA: Monmouthshire Constabulary's *Defaulters' Book*, 1857-1929

- The red column represents an incomplete decade

In the above table the average crime rate is seen to peak in the 1860s and 1870s. It then declines. There is a sudden drop between the 1880s and 1890s and a more gradual downward trend thereafter. The 1910-1919 decade is not wholly representative, as the Great War caused considerable disruption to the force. There were only 36 defaulters and 40 recorded crimes (average crime rate of 1.1) between 1915 and 1919. However, as Table 1 indicates, of the total number of crimes committed during the fifty-seven year period of this investigation, a quarter were perpetrated during the 1860s (669 crimes). That number had dropped to a tenth by the 1890s (265 crimes). In numerical terms, only ten more crimes were recorded in the twenty-four year period 1890 to 1914, than in the decade of the 1860s. The trend, therefore, was unequivocally one of improvement, and this continued: there were 197 crimes recorded between 1910 and 1919, and 157 between 1920 and 1929.

In his anthropology of crime in the workplace, Mars has linked *types* of crime to *types* of occupation and divided all jobs into four categories – hawks, donkeys, wolves and vultures. In each of these categories jobs are found 'to possess structural characteristics in common and to exhibit broadly similar arrangements to rob, cheat,

short-change, pilfer and fiddle customers, employers, subordinates and the state'.<sup>34</sup> Likewise, workers in the various categories are said to exhibit many of the characteristics of their animal counterparts. In hawk jobs, for example, independence is valued, whereas donkey jobs lack autonomy and frequently isolate workers. Group work, on the other hand, is integral to wolves, while vultures, though requiring some group support, are highly competitive and generally act in isolation. Mars has also identified a link 'between the social environment of jobs and ... their cosmology ... that is, the ideas, values, attitudes and beliefs that are appropriate to them'.<sup>35</sup> A lack of fit between work and a worker's cosmology, he suggests, will result in tension or 'alienation', which in turn may lead to crime. As this was frequently seen in donkey jobs, and the structure of nineteenth and early twentieth century police work, with its rigid controls, places it (with some variation) in this category, it seems inevitable therefore that crime in police forces should thrive.

However, unlike some categories, where tax evasion, double-dealing or 'riding' the system is possible, in donkey jobs such things are rare. Donkeys, according to Mars, commonly 'fiddle' time, like policemen on beat duty slipping into private houses, pubs, shops, workmen's huts etc. to rest and take refreshment (generally liquid), or loitering and gossiping and taking short cuts, then falsifying reports. This, suggests Mars, is 'a pleasurable departure from routine and an implicit challenge to authority'.<sup>36</sup> Fighting might also be categorised in this way.

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<sup>34</sup>Mars, *Cheats at Work*, p. 2.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 34.

<sup>36</sup>Mars, *Cheats at Work*, p. 35, and S. Henry, *The Hidden Economy: The Context and Control of Borderline Crime* (London: Robertson, 1978), Chapter 6.

'Donkey fiddles thrive in jobs where a person is both insulated from co-workers and constrained by rules'.<sup>37</sup> Single policemen in charge of out-stations, policemen alone on their beats, or those working at night, had every opportunity to break the rules, and in these situations the Monmouthshire men broke them spectacularly. Sergeant Thomas Povall, for example, took full advantage of being in a backwater at Caerleon. Charges against him include attempted robbery, buying and selling ricks of hay, dealing in horses and cattle, doing his duty on horseback, and acting as a money-lender.<sup>38</sup> James Burns 'appropriated the contents of a purse found by him', and Thomas Bennell took advantage of a gentleman's house being temporarily unoccupied to sleep there for two nights.<sup>39</sup>

The night itself brought myriad opportunities for every type of offence. Constable John Garraway, having failed to report for morning parade, was later discovered in an alcoholic stupor in the cells. A late November dawn of 1897, also failed to wake the Tredegar constable William Durham, who was prostrate, in alcoholic repose, on the pavement outside his station.<sup>40</sup> Cover of darkness and solitary beat work provided opportunities for constables Hirons and Harvey to indulge, or attempt to indulge, in theft. An unlocked shop prompted Hirons to call the owner and have the place secured. However, the following morning it was discovered that a rabbit, left hanging on the premises, had gone missing. On enquiry Hirons and a fellow constable were found to have had rabbit for dinner that day. Harvey's night-time escapades were completely foiled when the skeleton key he was known to possess got jammed in the lock of a

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<sup>37</sup> Mars, *Cheats at Work*, p. 69.

<sup>38</sup> GPA: *Defaulters' Book*, pp. 120, 172, 190, 309, 338 & 342.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 361 & 407.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 104 & 468.

music shop at Usk.<sup>41</sup> Needless to say, the Chief Constable had an easier task than the locksmith, for both constables were swiftly removed.

'Immoral and improper conduct when on country patrol on the night of the 2<sup>nd</sup> June [1864]', resulted in the dismissal of Constable James Jones, while Edmund Pennymore chose to resign when it came to light that he had left his night beat to sleep with the landlady of *The Griffin* public house, in September 1863.<sup>42</sup> But coarser pleasures, it seems, were pursued irrespective of the hour. Constable William Copley was caught in a stable behind the Ebbw Vale police station, committing bestiality with a mare. And nine months after the comatosed constable, William Durham, was removed from the pavement outside Tredegar station, he was seen by civilians taking a 'loose' woman into a shed for immoral purposes. Jeremiah Wear had sex in a barn, Theophilus Morgans, on the river bank at Pontymoile, Osmond Medlicott, in a public lavatory, and Edward Powel, on the Merthyr Road in Abergavenny.<sup>43</sup> Opportunities in each of these cases undoubtedly arose from a mixture of solitary beat work, the availability of willing participants (apart from the mare), and a lack of restraint on the part of the men. However, the bold and illicit use of public space, often in daylight hours, also suggests that the added risks heightened the excitement. Constable Arthur Reed, for example, spent two months entertaining local women with acts of 'self-abuse' in his bedroom window, before a complaint was lodged. He, like the other constables, appears to have indulged in 'a game of chance played against the risk of detection'.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> GPA: *Defaulters' Book*, pp. 550 & 556.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., pp. 183 & 44.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., pp. 485, 468, 584, 634 & 467.

<sup>44</sup> Mars, *Cheats at Work*, p. 35.

Throughout the period under investigation, the cells provided ample opportunity for crime. Examples from each end of the period under investigation highlight this. In 1865, Constable Thomas James was dismissed for 'taking indecent liberties with "Mary Phillips" a prisoner in the Cells at the Police Station, at Blaenavon', while in February 1907, 'Mary Jones complained to the Sergeant that a Constable, at about 2 or 3am., who visited her cell, wanted to have connection with her'.<sup>45</sup> PC John Farr also abused his position of trust. Farr was ordered to resign in May 1878, for '[i]mmoral conduct with Marian McDonald, 16 yrs old and half-witted'.<sup>46</sup> Others practised what Mars calls 'false collusion'. The essence of this is 'the suggestion that a favour is being done ... that the person working the fiddle is putting himself out in some way by giving an extra service'.<sup>47</sup> When, for example, Constable Hill offered to help search a couple's home for a missing ring, the search apparently proved unsuccessful. The constable's deviousness might also have lain undiscovered, had the ring not quickly come to light on Mrs Hill's finger.<sup>48</sup>

Policemen's position and function brought myriad opportunities for crime: a single-handed outstation, a lonely country beat, a night shift, insider information, a position of trust, lax or corrupt supervision. However, opportunities only existed where the weak or corruptible allowed themselves to be influenced, or were bad from the start. It should be remembered also that approximately 40 per cent of recruits did not default. Many defaulters were simply examples of the wrong men in uniform. Certainly, in Monmouthshire, failure of recruitment policies in the early years allowed a number of

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<sup>45</sup> GPA: *Defaulters' Book*, p. 194 & 544. A Home Office directive was issued in July 1908, which stated that matrons and not policemen were to attend female prisoners in the cells.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., p. 362.

<sup>47</sup> Mars, *Cheats at Work*, p. 84.

<sup>48</sup> GPA: *Defaulters' Book*, p. 18.

undesirables to slip through the net. Many dismissed men were later accused of serious criminal acts. Newspaper reports and notes in the recruitment registers illustrate this point. A sample are as follows: Superintendent George Gordon, who was dismissed in May 1858 for 'misappropriating public money', was later jailed for embezzlement.<sup>49</sup> Constable Benjamin George, who had six reports against his name before being dismissed in 1869, was later jailed for the abduction and rape of a little girl under the age of ten years.<sup>50</sup> Constable John Sheppard, who served for just five months between 1857 and 1858, went on to murder a girl who spurned his advances. He then killed himself.<sup>51</sup> And Constable William Evans, who joined the Glamorgan force after resigning from the Monmouthshire Constabulary, was later jailed for knocking out the eye of his sergeant.<sup>52</sup>

Improvements did occur, and these are reflected in the tables. In Tables 1 and 2 above, it can be seen that the biggest single drop in crime among Monmouthshire policemen occurred between the 1880s and 1890s. Shpayer-Makov has also noted that following the Police Act of 1890, in which the system of police pensions was reformed, there was 'a sudden drop in voluntary resignations' in the Metropolitan force. 'Undoubtedly, the accelerated accommodation of the workforce to police work was spurred by the promise of genuine security offered by the act'.<sup>53</sup> In Monmouthshire, both dismissal and resignation rates improved considerably during the late 1880s. In 1867 there were twelve dismissals and fourteen resignations, in 1877, seven dismissals

<sup>49</sup> GRO: Monmouthshire Constabulary Recruitment Register, 1857-65: D 3297 .1, & *The Times*, 3 May 1865.

<sup>50</sup> GRO: Monmouthshire Constabulary Recruitment Register, 1857-97: D 3297 .2.

<sup>51</sup> GRO: Monmouthshire Constabulary Recruitment Register, 1857-65: D 3297 .1.

<sup>52</sup> GRO: Monmouthshire Constabulary Recruitment Register, 1857-97: D 3297 .2.

<sup>53</sup> Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman*, pp. 174-5.

and eleven resignations; and in 1886 (1887 figures are not available), there were no dismissals and just six resignations.<sup>54</sup>

It must be asked why? Two developments, in particular, stand out. The first was a complete volte-face by Herbert on the subject of gratuities. The second was Herbert's retirement and the appointment of Superintendent Victor Bosanquet as Chief Constable. In the first instance, the defining moment of Herbert's about face can be found in his General Order of January 1886. Here, a sergeant and three constables were granted permission to retain the various sums of money offered to them for detecting crimes; two men received ten shillings, another, five shillings, and the last man, two shillings and sixpence.<sup>55</sup> Thereafter, recipients no doubt chased potentially lucrative sources or petitioned likely donors, for General Orders were soon awash with details of rewards.

One example, that of 31 January 1889, shows the Chief Constable to have allowed 38 gratuities to be retained. Sergeant Guinea was lucky enough to receive three, the sum of which amounted to 29 shillings – just a few shillings short of his weekly wage.<sup>56</sup> In fact there is no evidence to show that men were denied their rewards during this period, though some constables did pass on sums of money to the Chief Constable for the superannuation fund. For example, in September 1889, PCs Bevan and Farmer were awarded 2/6d each for 'Assistance at Tea Party & 5/- to be paid to CC for Superannuation Fund'.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> GRO: Constabulary Daily States; Q/CDS 0010, 0020 & 0030.

<sup>55</sup> GPA: *Caerleon Station General Order Book*, 13 January 1882–3 December 1889: G.O. 28 January 1886.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid: G.O. 31 January 1889.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid: G.O. 1 September 1889.



**Illustration 1:** Some of the gratuities received by men of the Monmouthshire Constabulary in August 1889.

PS Price 41	"	
PC J Reed 25	1/8	
" B Turner 87	each	Assistance at a Sunday
" E Matfield 136	"	school sports
" J Jones 128	"	" " "
" E Poole 97	"	" " "
PC W Davies 34-	5/-	Recovery of lost dog
" " do "	2/-	Protecting flower gardens
" J Evans 127-	2/6	Recovery of a lost Litt. Cape
" W Humphris 126-	2/6	Recovery of stolen blanket
" W do 126	4/-	Prize at Elbow Vale flower show
" E Gray 113	5/-	do " do "
" W <sup>Broderick</sup> <del>Turner</del> 32	2/-	Recovery of 10 lost ducks
" S Ferris 88	1/6	Detecting of flower stealing
" J Williams 67	"	
" W Sheddick 36	1/8	Protection of houses during
" W Bullock 5	each	absence of servants
PS, Puck 63	8/-	
PC J Morgan 103	4/-	Assistance at a fire
" J Fisher 59	each	
" J Phillips 133	"	

**Illustration 2:** Some of the gratuities received by men of the Monmouthshire Constabulary in July 1889.

Pt	Biston	95	2/-	6/-	
"	Morgan	69			Each
"	Evans	127			
"	Humphreys	126	10/-		Apprehension
"	Lewis	73			Each of 2 weeks
"	Wicot	147	2/-		protecting water over sea
Supt	Lewis	62	10/-		assistance collecting tools
Pt	Thiddach	36	2/-		assistance in assault case
Supt	Caper	72	2/-		protecting house
"	Mr. Gialh	76			Each during absence of time
"	Davis	116			
Pt	Crawley	74	11-4		Each do
"	Barry	12			
"	Evans	104			
Pt	Lewis	117	2/-		for assistance County Prison
Pt	Porter	53	10/-		making inquiry broken window
Supt	Lewis	117			assistance in a church
Pt	Milron	119			procession —
Supt	Lewis	117	3/-		assistance in
Pt	Lynch	22			Each taking Lunatic
"	Milron	119	6/-		Paid to C & for Superannuation Fund

The sanctioning of gratuities was in outright opposition to one of the main policies laid down for the management of the new police – that no paid police officer should ask for or receive gratuities or rewards for his services (see also p. 149 above). Indeed, it flew in the face of one of the fundamental principles dating back to the reign of Edward 1:

that no sheriff nor other the king's officer take any rewards to do his office, but shall be paid of that which they take of the king; and he that so offendeth shall yield twice as much, and be punished at the king's pleasure.<sup>58</sup>

Many of the tasks for which policemen were being rewarded were general police duties. In July 1889, PCs Humphries and Lewis were paid 10/- each for the apprehension of a prisoner, and Sergeant Porter received the same amount for making enquiries about some broken windows. Other rewards, such as PC Wilcox's 2/- for protecting water cress beds, and the 2/- apiece to PCs Capper and McGrath for protecting a house during the tenant's absence, were not.<sup>59</sup> Had it been proven that Inspector Sidney Short had taken money to look after a gentleman's woods some thirty-years earlier (see page 89 above), Short would have been punished. Yet in June 1888 PC Williams received 2/- for 'Protecting damage to Trees', and PC Davies received 10/- for 'Protection to Larch Trees'.<sup>60</sup>

It is difficult to account for Herbert's change of heart over gratuities. Partiality was bound to occur. It certainly seems from the repeated appearance of the same names amongst beneficiaries, and the fact that only the well-off had woods and property worth protecting and significant sums of money to give away, that some men at least were

<sup>58</sup> *Reports from the Select Committees appointed by the House of Commons to enquire into the State of the Police of the Metropolis*, 1828.

<sup>59</sup> GPA: *Carleon Station General Order Book*, 13 January 1882 – 22 November 1889: GO of 31 July 1889.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid: GO of 26 June 1888.

toadying to the rich. Constable George Evans, a Radnorshire farm labourer, who joined the force in June 1885, appears in the lists about twice a month. The sums he received were not large, but they could bring his weekly wage to the same level as a constable in the class above him.<sup>61</sup> As policemen were poorly provided for in terms of remuneration, this would have given him good reason to chase opportunities. Shpayer-Makov notes, in relation to the Metropolitan force, that there is 'ample evidence' to show 'that policemen succumbed to temptations put in their way'.<sup>62</sup>

The relaxing of the rules concerning gratuities does seem to indicate a correlation between material benefits and criminal motivation. But other influences were also at work. When Victor Bosanquet took office as Chief Constable on 1 January 1894, gratuities were immediately channelled into the pension fund rather than men's pockets, yet the level of default in the force continued to fall. Bosanquet was young (thirty at the time of his appointment), and had a good working knowledge of the force, Herbert was now seventy. The officers and constables possibly appreciated the more energetic and positive leadership of their second chief, for there is some evidence (other than the gratuities issue) that Herbert's judgment had begun to lose its edge. A considerable stir was created in 1891 when the following General Order found its way into the Press:

Officers and Constables who never report any irregularity in a public house, in districts where drunkenness is considerable will be considered to have been wanting in vigilance and to have neglected an important duty. They must not, therefore, be surprised if they do not receive the increment of pay authorised to be granted to efficient constables.<sup>63</sup>

It was not known how the Order was leaked, but it led to a question in the House of Commons, and lengthy correspondence between Herbert and the Home Office. The

<sup>61</sup> GPA: *Caerleon Station General Order Book*, 13 January 1882–3 December 1889: PC Evans' name appears regularly throughout 1888 and 1889.

<sup>62</sup> Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman*, p. 150.

<sup>63</sup> *Monmouthshire Beacon*, 22 August 1891.

fear was that 'ill-founded and vexatious prosecutions would result from the order rather than a prudent administration of the law',<sup>64</sup> and so the Home Secretary wished to see the wording changed. But Herbert, with the backing of the Standing Joint Committee, stood firm and the Order remained. It could be argued that he was right to do so, for on the question of the police, a Select Committee Report of 1828 had recommended:

The officers might ... be rendered responsible for any increase of crime within their districts not followed by a corresponding increase of detection; and, moreover, the desired interest in the prevention of crimes might be created by apportioning their remuneration to their services [and] ... their promotion ... by the amount and value of service.<sup>65</sup>

It could also be argued that some of Herbert's powerful friends had exerted an influence. One, Sir Henry Mather-Jackson, was the chairman of the Standing Joint Committee. He had 'approved of the order, and was sure that [the] excellent chief constable would not sanction anything but what was fair and honest'.<sup>66</sup> He was equally certain in his belief that there was not 'a single man in the force who would commit perjury'.<sup>67</sup> However, when disciplinary action could take the form of a 40 shilling fine and a reduction in rank for insubordination, or dismissal from the force with forfeiture of all arrears of pay plus five days' imprisonment, for 'neglect of duty',<sup>68</sup> an aggrieved policeman was surely capable of anything.

From the start, control of the constable was based on a system of punishment and reward. However, in Monmouthshire, particularly during Herbert's chief constablenesship,

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<sup>64</sup> *Monmouthshire Beacon*, 22 August 1891.

<sup>65</sup> *Reports of the Select Committee appointed by the House of Commons to enquire into the State of the Police of the Metropolis*, 1828, pp. 288-9.

<sup>66</sup> *Monmouthshire Beacon*, 5 September 1891.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>68</sup> *Tredegar Station General Order Book*, October 1866–November 1875: GOs of 17 May 1858 & 3 Sept 1860. The constable fined 40 shillings in 1858 had taken a drink and been insolent to his superior officer at the Abergavenny Fair, and the constable imprisoned in 1860 had failed to report himself off night duty and was subsequently found drunk in a public house.

punishment often outweighed reward and partiality of judgment meant that fair-play was seldom fair. In an attempt to improve morale some material rewards had been resorted to as early as the 1860s. Good conduct pay of one, two or three pence a day was granted for the appropriate length of service and a clean discipline sheet. In 1870 a Merit Class was added to the top constable class, with a concomitant pay rise, but this was dropped five years later in favour of additional constable classes. These policies buffeted against a tide of default with little outward signs of success until the last quarter of the century. It seems reasonable to suppose, therefore, that for many recruits the realisation that some of the declared values of police life were illusory, came to be expressed in default. Punishment was always pecuniary: fines, demotions, suspensions, and removals to other stations at the offender's own expense, all affected a policeman's pocket. And the same situation existed in other forces. In the Metropolitan Police, for example,

the penal techniques used by the authorities – such as dismissals, reduction in rank, and fines – and the conduct of superior officers often seemed to the rank and file to surpass acceptable limits.<sup>69</sup>

Sometimes further sanctions were added in Monmouthshire. In October 1859, for example, a second-class constable was fined two days pay and ordered to undertake 'an extra week's night duty, for sleeping on his beat'.<sup>70</sup> But while most historians agree that, 'the dismissal rate declined ... as discipline became less harsh',<sup>71</sup> it appears that 'the extent of supervision [which] was at the root of many complaints about the disciplinary control of the men',<sup>72</sup> continued to cause disaffection among the rank and file throughout the period under investigation.

<sup>69</sup> Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman*, p. 112.

<sup>70</sup> GPA: *Tredegar Station General Order Book*, 20 July 1857 – 4 February 1864: G. O. 19 Oct. 1859.

<sup>71</sup> Steedman, *Policing the Victorian Community*, p. 92.

<sup>72</sup> Shpayer-Makov, *The making of a Policeman*, p. 112.

Disaffection and jealousies can perhaps be judged by the amount of in-fighting that occurred. In the early years of the Monmouthshire force, 'impertinent language' was occasionally directed at sergeants but, by the 1860s, inspectors and superintendents, as well as sergeants became targets for 'gross insolence' and 'abusive' and 'threatening' language from the constables beneath them. Numerous reports of insubordination in the *Defaulters' Book* hint at tension. Verbal abuse was the most common form of attack by the rank and file on senior officers, but for those (and there were many) unable to verbalize their feelings, physical violence was the customary response. Sergeants were occasionally threatened with a beating or challenged to a fight, while fellow constables regularly exchanged blows – in police stations, on the streets, at conference points, and sometimes at the scene of an incident. In 1911, for example, PC Henry Baker arrived at the scene of a fire carrying a flagon of cider. He then stripped off his uniform and began sparring with another constable.<sup>73</sup>

There were twenty-three verbal assaults on senior officers in the 1860s and three police station brawls. The 1870s saw six verbal assaults on senior officers and seven fights between constables. The 1880s saw a return of the behaviour of the 1860s, with twenty verbal assaults on senior officers, mostly with menaces, and three station-house brawls. The 1890s were relatively trouble free – five cases of insolence and one of smashing up the furniture in the police station. However, between 1900 and 1914, there were ten reports of 'gross' insubordination to officers and eighteen cases of 'riotous and disorderly' behaviour amongst constables in their various stations, including assaults, threats and brawls.<sup>74</sup> Some constables misbehaved away from home too: constables Haydon and Rumsey, for example, were reported in February 1911 for 'creating a

<sup>73</sup> GPA: *Defaulters' Book*, p. 400.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, examples from throughout the book.

disturbance ... at their lodgings, the New Inn Hotel, Clydach Vale, when on strike duty in Glamorganshire.<sup>75</sup> Many others became riotous without the help of fellow officers. Constable George Williams, for example, whilst on duty at a farm sale in February 1894, became so drunk and riotous that he had to be 'carried to Caldicott Police Station by civilians and locked up by them in a cell'.<sup>76</sup>

The root cause of this aggression and violence is seldom recorded in the *Defaulters' Book*. However, it has been suggested by Gurr that:

Destructive behaviour may be explained by reference to [a] fundamental property of the human organism: if men are exposed to noxious stimuli that they cannot avoid or overcome, they have an innate disposition to strike out at their sources. Striking out may or may not reduce the frustration, but it seems to be an inherently satisfying response to the tension built up through frustration.<sup>77</sup>

Indeed, in various force histories it has been suggested that, initially, for the constable, there was very little satisfaction to be derived from the job. All too often, as Shpayer-Makov notes, it was the use of arbitrary powers by senior officers 'against which constables had little redress, that caused disaffection'.<sup>78</sup> Scollan records the machinations of an Essex superintendent in the 1880s, whose actions undoubtedly caused resentment:

Enforcing the Contagious Diseases of Animals Act ... could be lucrative for the constable concerned. Whoever laid the information before the local magistrates received a portion of the penalty finally imposed on the offender. In one division the chief constable found it was always the superintendent who laid the information – whether or not he had discovered the case – and presumably claimed the penalty.<sup>79</sup>

However, once the deception was identified, the chief was quick to install a system whereby constables discovering cases received the money rightly due to them. Shpayer-

<sup>75</sup> GPA: *Defaulters' Book*, pp. 385 & 596.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 942.

<sup>77</sup> T. R. Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (London: Collier Macmillan, 1980), pp. 22-3.

<sup>78</sup> Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman*, p. 185.

<sup>79</sup> Scollan, *Sworn to Serve*, p. 43.



Makov also discovered that hostility towards the higher ranks of the Metropolitan police 'intensified in an atmosphere of growing allegations of corruption in these ranks in the period prior to the First World War'.<sup>80</sup> Grievances were aired in the police press, and in 1907 a royal commission was 'appointed to inquire into the conduct of the Metropolitan Police', which ultimately denounced 'the supervisory ranks for tyrannising the rank and file'.<sup>81</sup>

But it was not always the rank and file who were aggrieved, as the case of the Monmouthshire inspector, George Groves, highlights. In 1907 Groves was 'called on to resign' by the Chief Constable, for 'Charges of Card Playing in Public Houses etc., Receiving 1d postage for Licence to remove Pigs etc., [and a ] Batch of Reports'.<sup>82</sup> The Groves case was taken up by John Kempster in the *Police Review*, where it was alleged that the request of 1d postage from a gentleman had kindled the wrath of the Chief Constable. There was also a public meeting in Abercarn. The Abercarn Chamber of Trade, reluctant to lose 'an efficient, courteous and capable Officer', requested an investigation into the circumstances of the case, which the inhabitants of Abercarn endorsed. However, following an enquiry by the Standing Joint Committee, from which the press were barred, it was 'unanimously resolved' that the actions of the Chief Constable had been correct.<sup>83</sup>

Yet, inconsistencies are to be found in the Groves case. All the above allegations against him in the *Defaulters' Book* were written in the same ink, by the same hand, and are not dated. This suggests they were a single entry, possibly added at a later date as

<sup>80</sup> Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman*, p. 185.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> GPA: *Defaulters' Book*, p. 388.

<sup>83</sup> GPA: Minutes of the Monmouthshire County Council's Standing Joint Committee, 10 June 1907.

evidence of what was supposed to have happened. It would seem, therefore, as Morgan remarks, that even by the first decade of the twentieth century, 'despite all the *Review's* efforts ... county police [still] had no right of appeal against autocratic chief constables in whose hands alone the discipline of the force lay'.<sup>84</sup>

Both Herbert and Bosanquet had a vision of life that was deeply rooted in the traditions of their class. But, Herbert possessed a charm, or tolerance, that was absent in Bosanquet, which is perhaps why Bosanquet managed to generate so much hostility amongst sections of the population and the Standing Joint Committee. In 1926, for example, it was suggested that Monmouthshire 'had been the victim of a man of immense and overpowering ego ... [and] the prevalence of "this dictator" was a danger to the County'.<sup>85</sup> A brief step outside the period of this study will allow a clearer picture of why those remarks were made. The year 1926 provides some excellent examples.

When, in that year, exhaustive attempts by the force had failed to solve a case and outside aid was called for, Bosanquet refused to listen. All the evidence pointed to the fact that a foul murder had been committed. The coroner's jury agreed that under the circumstances the likelihood of accident or suicide seemed 'hardly credible'. But the chief 'stubbornly and preposterously' refused to accept both the verdict or any help from London. Almost 4000 Labour Women of Monmouthshire demanded a re-opening of the case, as they considered that justice had not been done (the victim was a woman). And the Standing Joint Committee also resolved that the Chief Constable should seek

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<sup>84</sup> J. Morgan, *Conflict and Order: The Police and Labour Disputes in England and Wales, 1900-1939* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), pp. 66-67. See also, Emsley, *The English Police*, pp. 101-2.

<sup>85</sup> *Police Review and Parade Gossip*, 23 July 1926.

the help of Scotland Yard. However, the motion was not carried (votes were 6 for, 6 against, and 3 neutral), so help was not requested.<sup>86</sup>

'The position of the Chief is that he is the only person competent to decide whether outside aid should be sought, and it is nobody else's business',<sup>87</sup> declared the *Police Review*. And the Bosanquet example was used as a warning:

From the point of view of Police administration it ought to satisfy the most conservative stickler for the maintenance of the powers of Chief Constables that such autocratic authority as is now vested in the office of County Chiefs is not only an anachronism, but is positively a stumbling-block in the way of that rigorous and exhaustive pursuit of suspected crime which it is the duty of the Police to undertake by every means within their power ... This is not the age for autocrats.<sup>88</sup>

Yet hardly had the print dried on that article, than Bosanquet's autocracy made headline news again. For the second time in his career his resignation was demanded "'inasmuch as his actions in the present emergency are calculated to disturb the peace of the county.'" <sup>89</sup> On this occasion he had stopped an apparently peaceful procession of miners, and prosecuted its leaders. He, of course, refused to resign and defended himself by claiming that his actions had been solely in the interests of law and order. The Home Office sided with the chief, but there was a great deal of ugly wrangling before the case was eventually settled: a case said to be 'unique in the history of the Police Force'.<sup>90</sup>

Bosanquet's chief constableness had begun at a time of increasing labour disputes; he took office just months after two men had been killed by troops in a mining dispute at Featherstone in Yorkshire. Reminiscent of the Chartist rising in Newport, this had

<sup>86</sup> GRO: Minutes of the Monmouthshire County Council's Standing Joint Committee, 17 March 1926.

<sup>87</sup> *Police Review*, 1 April 1926.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 2 July 1926.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 17 December 1926.

opened old wounds, and there was widespread disapproval of police and military tactics. A further period of major industrial unrest and serious rioting occurred in the period 1910-12 when, once again, police tactics came under scrutiny. However, in every complaint, police action was supported by the Home Office. The Home Office also put pressure on the police 'for a more aggressive action towards picketing';<sup>91</sup> effectively giving them '*carte blanche*' to be belligerent. For the rest of Bosanquet's time in office his force was increasingly involved with industrial disorder. Post-war unrest appeared to presage a 'crisis of a magnitude hitherto unknown in British labour history'.<sup>92</sup> Thus tight discipline and control within the force itself was essential. Only a highly disciplined force could be relied upon in intensive police action. Bosanquet was a good leader of men and the stability of the force continued to improve under his command.

His appointment to the chief constableness in 1894 brought a return to stricter measures of control; dismissals were resorted to more frequently than in Herbert's latter years. Towards the end of his career, Herbert had preferred to remove good conduct badges and pay, or defer promotion, for default – good behaviour guaranteeing their return. He also employed a new form of punishment, which targeted men's pensions, and was irreversible:

3<sup>rd</sup> Class Constable Edward Jones, No. 151, was suspended from the 6<sup>th</sup> to the 22<sup>nd</sup> Aug, and forfeited 17 days pay during which time he was incapacitated for duty through illness brought on by his own indiscretion. In accordance with the Regulations of the Standing Joint Committee he loses 119 days "approved service" being 7 days for each day suspended ... [and] 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Constable John Hughes, No. 138, was suspended from 24<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> October and forfeited 4 days' pay, and reduced to 3<sup>rd</sup> Class, for receiving drink from Publicans – In accordance with the Regulations he loses 28 days "approved Service".<sup>93</sup>

<sup>91</sup> Morgan, *Conflict and Order*, p. 177.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid., p. 188.

<sup>93</sup> GPA: *Newport Station General Order Book*, 31 Jan 1893 – 1 Mar 1901: G.O. 2 Nov 1893.

Bosanquet's first disciplinary action was more straightforward. In 1894, '3<sup>rd</sup> Class Constable H. Gear, No. 150, was suspended on the 6<sup>th</sup> and dismissed the force on 10<sup>th</sup> January, for being under the influence of drink when on night duty'.<sup>94</sup> Other constables, like naughty boys, were confined to quarters for misbehaviour. In 1897, for instance, PC Henry Waters was fined a day's pay and confined to the police station for seven days, during his off-duty hours, for 'disobedience of orders in being absent from his Station for 3 hours and 45 minutes without permission on the night of 2<sup>nd</sup> June'.<sup>95</sup> Yet it appears Bosanquet's strictness was generally tempered by a sense of fair play. When, in 1896, PC Watkins stopped a pair of runaway horses attached to an omnibus in Abergavenny, and Sergeant Barry plucked a child from the path of a speeding horse and cart, both men were allowed to accept the rewards that were offered to them;<sup>96</sup> rewards that would otherwise have been paid into the superannuation fund.

Under Bosanquet's command officers as well as constables quickly realised they needed to do better. His sense of fair play meant that sergeants and inspectors lost their relative immunity to severe punishment. In February 1894, for example, Sergeant James was removed from the rural setting of Raglan to industrial Tredegar, 'for neglect of duty in having his journal in arrears for several days'.<sup>97</sup> In February the following year Sergeant Powell was suspended for two days and reduced to 'First Class Constable', for 'being under the influence of drink when attending an inquest'.<sup>98</sup> Reinstatement, subsequent to good behaviour, generally took a year. In October 1905, Sergeant Sidney Banks was dismissed for 'persistent lying',<sup>99</sup> and in May 1907 Inspector

<sup>94</sup> GPA: *Newport Station general Order Book*, 31 Jan 1893 – 1 Mar 1901: G.O. 3 Feb 1894.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., G.O. 1 July 1897.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., G.O. 3 Nov 1896.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., G.O. 16 Feb 1894.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., G.O. 5 Mar 1895.

<sup>99</sup> GPA: *Tredegar Station General Order Book*, 13 Sept 1900 – 2 Aug 1918: G.O. 6 Nov 1905.

George Groves was removed from the force (discussed on p 242-3 above). Banks had served for eleven years, and the only report against him was the one for which he was dismissed in 1905. Groves had twelve years service behind him, nine of which were completely unblemished.

Bosanquet's crack-down on officers might suggest he had a notion of certain of their failings, and had waited to catch them. 'Veteran constables and superior officers', notes Shpayer-Makov, 'played an important role in translating both the formal and informal police norms to their subordinates'.<sup>100</sup> And in an article entitled *What Makes a Policeman Go Wrong?* a former Denver police officer stressed the centrality to the workings of a force, of the senior men's influence on probationers. Mort Stern argued that probationers, eager to become fully-fledged policemen, feel a pressure to be accepted and will generally back up their older partners in any way they can:

One thing leads to another for the rookies. After six months they have become conditioned to accept free meals, a few packets of cigarettes, turkeys at Thanksgiving and liquor at Christmas ... The rule book forbids all this. But it isn't enforced. It's winked at at all levels.<sup>101</sup>

Bosanquet had never accepted gratuities as a superintendent and he had no compunction about stopping them. His firm leadership seems to have strengthened loyalties, for the 1890s witnessed the biggest drop in the average crime rate amongst serving members of the constabulary, and there was a steady decline thereafter. This can be determined by looking at the length of service of recruits in various years.

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<sup>100</sup> Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman*, p.245.

<sup>101</sup> M. Stern, 'What Makes a Policeman Go Wrong?' *The Journal of Criminal Law, Criminology and Police Science*, Vol. 53, No. 1, March 1962.

**Table 3:** Length of service of men who joined the Monmouthshire Constabulary between April 1867 and March 1868.

- 1 yr	1 - 5 yrs	6 - 10 yrs	11 - 19 yrs	20 + yrs	30 + yrs	Total
13	14	2	0	3	0	32

Source: GRO: Monmouthshire Constabulary Recruitment Register; D3297.1.

**Table 4:** Length of service of men who joined the Monmouthshire Constabulary between April 1887 and March 1888.

- 1 yr	1 - 5 yrs	6 - 10 yrs	11 - 19 yrs	20 - 30 yrs	30 + yrs	Total
0	3	0	1	1	5	10

Source: GRO: Monmouthshire Constabulary Recruitment Register; D3297.2.

Though six men from the 1887/8 intake qualified for a pension, only four chose to retire; two continued to work and subsequently died in service. Only one of the ten men was dismissed for bad behaviour. Table 5 below sets out the career history of the 1887/8 intake. The resignation and dismissal in this group took place before Bosanquet's chief constablenesship, which commenced on 1 January 1894. The surviving men supported their chief to the end of their careers.

**Table 5:** Career history of the 1887/8 intake.

Name	Initial Position	Years served	Final position	Reason for leaving
Victor Bosanquet	Supt.	49	Chief Constable	Died in the force
Tom Jones	4CC	39	Superintendent & Deputy Chief Cons.	Retired on pension
David Ellis	4CC	1 ½	Third-Class Constable	Died in the force
William Bullock	4CC	43	Superintendent & Deputy Chief Cons.	Died in the force
Benjamin Turner	4CC	35	Inspector	Retired on pension
Thomas Fisher	4CC	2 ¾	Second-Class Constable	Dismissed
William Edwards	4CC	26	Sergeant	Retired on pension
John Barry	4CC	35	Superintendent	Retired on pension
George Cook	4CC	19 ½	First-Class Constable	Died in the force
Francis James	4CC	2	Second-Class Constable	Resigned

\* 4CC = fourth-class constable

Source: GRO: Monmouthshire Constabulary Recruitment Register; D3297.2.

To determine whether the longevity of the 1887/8 intake was representative of that decade and beyond, three other years were examined – 1886/7, 1888/9, and 1893/4.

**Table 6:** Length of service of men recruited during three selected years.

Date	- 1 yr.	1-5 yrs.	6-10 yrs.	11-19 yrs.	20-30 yrs.	30 + yrs.	Total no. of men.
1886/7	0	4	2	1	3	0	10
1888/9	3	4	0	1	3	4	15
1893/4	1	8	1	2	8	1	21

Source: GRO: Monmouthshire Constabulary Recruitment Register; D 3297.2.



While none of the groups in Table 6 matched that of 1887/8 (with sixty per cent of its members serving for more than twenty-five years), the trend nevertheless was one of improvement. Thirty per cent of the 1886/7 intake endured until pension time, forty-seven per cent of the 1888/9 intake, and forty-three per cent of the 1893/4 group. The 1857/8 and 1867/8 figures were seven and nine per cent respectively. The influence of the change in leadership is reflected in the 1893/4 group, where 43% fell by the wayside in the first five years – perhaps weeded out by the new chief. But what other influences were at work?

Late-Victorian and Edwardian England was a policed society in a way that set it apart from Regency and early-Victorian England ... This did not mean that the police were universally liked ... but the very fact of a policed society was evidence of the ability of the police to win support and defuse or disperse opposition to such an extent that much of their work was unquestioned and many of their men went about their work unchallenged.<sup>102</sup>

Taylor attributes this trend in Middlesbrough to the town and the police acquiring a 'greater stability and maturity', though he warns against overstatement.<sup>103</sup> The same appears true of industrial Monmouthshire, though throughout the shire people had grown accustomed to the police. Acceptance had grown because, to quote Eliot again, people are not 'deeply moved by what is not unusual',<sup>104</sup> Acceptance can be gauged to some extent by requests to the Chief Constables for extra police in a number of towns. In 1887, for example, the ratepayers of Rhynmey, Blaenavon and Rogerstone applied for extra constables, as industrialisation had increased their various populations. The HMIC subsequently endorsed their claims.<sup>105</sup>

<sup>102</sup> Taylor, *Policing the Victorian Town*, p. 171.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> G. Eliot, *Middlemarch* (London: Oxford University Press, 1947), p. 207.

<sup>105</sup> Report of the HMIC, 1887.

Stability within the force undoubtedly encouraged public acceptance. In 1875, a better rate of pay was put forward by the HMIC for increasing a policeman's desire 'to make a trial of the service'. The Inspector also added that 'if a satisfactory measure of superannuation is granted, the attachment to the service will be improved and strengthened'.<sup>106</sup> The Police Act of 1890 made police pensions mandatory and gave equal rights to policemen nationwide. The system subsequent to it was discretionary. In theory, a man who had served for over fifteen years could retire on a pension of half-pay, or two-thirds pay for service of twenty-five years and over. In each case the claimant had to be either sixty years of age, or certified unfit and incapable of further duty. A man who had paid into the pension scheme throughout his career could lose his claim if he defaulted and was dismissed.

Shpayer-Makov suggests that 'the introduction of mandatory pensions increased the attractiveness of the Metropolitan Police as a place of employment and ... motivated employees to stay on for at least 25 years'.<sup>107</sup> Taylor also agrees that the pension 'added to the relative financial attractiveness of policing', but argues that it 'cannot be seen as a contributory factor in the stabilisation of the Middlesbrough force' for that had taken place a decade earlier.<sup>108</sup> But stability was undoubtedly multifactorial and motivation to stay on must have increased it. The pursuit of something as concrete as a mandatory pension would no doubt have led a sensible man in the right direction, particularly as state pensions were not introduced until 1908. But however desirable the pension, the fact remains that other conditions of service in the Monmouthshire force remained poor. Promotion through the ranks was an arduously long journey. The careers of the three

<sup>106</sup> Report of the HMIC, 1875.

<sup>107</sup> Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman*, p. 175.

<sup>108</sup> Taylor, *Policing the Victorian Town*, p. 131.

superintendents in Table 5 illustrate the point. PC Tom Jones's promotion from fourth-class constable to superintendent took twenty-nine years. He reached sergeant status after eight years, but the inspector's post took a further twenty-one years to obtain. Thereafter, only nine months passed before the rank of superintendent was conferred on him. William Bullock took twenty-four years to make the same journey, and John Barry twenty-five.<sup>109</sup>

Past police experience no longer made a difference to the speed of promotion; John Barry had served with the Royal Irish Constabulary for almost six years prior to joining the force, while William Bullock had been a farm labourer. Bullock became superintendent in 1911, Barry in 1913 and Jones in 1916. Bullock was granted the deputy chief constablenesship in 1927; thirty-nine years after joining the force and four years before his death. However, success did not come with a built-in guarantee; despite an exemplary discipline record, William Edwards was still a sergeant at the end of his twenty-six year career, and many other long serving men remained in the top constable class until their retirement.<sup>110</sup> Lack of places determined whether a man could or could not be promoted. Lack of education too often limited a constable's chances of success, and Monmouthshire records show that when examinations became a requisite to promotion men frequently failed them.

As Steedman points out, it was likely that 'only a minimal literacy was demanded of many recruits' and many men who presented themselves as candidates 'were turned down for being functionally illiterate'.<sup>111</sup> Emsley also suggests that it was not until the

<sup>109</sup> GRO: Monmouthshire Constabulary Recruitment Register, 1857–1898: D 3297. 2.

<sup>110</sup> GRO: Monmouthshire Constabulary Recruitment Registers, 1857–1914: D 3297. 1-3.

<sup>111</sup> Steedman, *Policing the Victorian Community*, p. 103.

third decade of the twentieth century that 'the number of recruits with secondary school qualifications' increased.<sup>112</sup> Indeed, in 1885 Edmund Herbert was still able to note that 'the deficiency in education is at present such that few eligible men can be selected suitable to perform even the duty of Sergeant'.<sup>113</sup> Superintendent Handyside's *Diary* allows a glimpse at the way constables were helped with their writing: 'examined the weekly states of men – found them better made out than last week, except Nos 23 and 13, which I have returned to be corrected'.<sup>114</sup> On 9 November, 'reports of men [are] better made out',<sup>115</sup> and on 18 November 'Nos 12 and 13' are again 'better made out; both men [seeming] to improve'. As well as the need for educational improvement, Miller suggests that only the most obedient men could aspire to promotion, for only those 'who had been accustomed to submit to discipline [would] be considered best qualified to command'.<sup>116</sup> General Order books back this up:

I.C.C. Wm. James No.45, having passed a most creditable examination in Knowledge of Police Duties, and being well qualified by education, efficiency and good conduct during the last 4 ½ years, is promoted to Acting Sergeant.<sup>117</sup>

Paradoxically, length of service was both a highway to promotional success and a hindrance to it, for senior officers who chose not to retire after twenty-five years' service necessarily clogged up the system. In 1894 the Swansea Watch Committee attempted to overcome this problem by asking its superintendent and four senior inspectors to resign. The *Police Guardian* acknowledged the advantage of this for younger force members, but it also warned:

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<sup>112</sup> Emsley, *The English Police*, p. 205.

<sup>113</sup> GPA: *Caerleon Station General Order Book*, January 1882 – December 1889; G.O. 24 October 1885.

<sup>114</sup> GPA: *Diary of Superintendent Handyside*, 1 August 1858–6 August 1869: entry of 26 October 1858.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, entry of 9 November 1858.

<sup>116</sup> W. Miller, *Cops and Bobbies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977), p. 40.

<sup>117</sup> GPA: *Abergavenny Division General Order Book*, October 1868 – August 1877; G.O. 13 March 1877.

anything approaching a systematic attempt to enforce retirement on the completion of the twenty-five years' approved service will create dissatisfaction on the part of the old officers and opposition by the ratepayers. The voluntary system works very satisfactorily.<sup>118</sup>

It was far from satisfactory, but the promotional ladder, described by Steedman as 'the most abstract and theoretical of structures for the majority of men',<sup>119</sup> was not the Tower of Babel. Many men clung to it tenaciously and found there *were* material rewards. For example, financial compensation was provided in an effort to motivate officers-in-waiting, as much as newly recruited constables. Merit badges and pay were introduced for good conduct, zeal and courage, and by the mid-1870s, superintendents, inspectors and sergeants alike were divided into classes, in the way that constables had always been. This idea of using finance as a means of persuasion and thus controlling discipline, had been chosen by the pioneers of the Metropolitan Police. They had envisaged the policeman as a man 'driven by the desire for material gain. He was therefore offered no mental satisfaction, as would become common in the twentieth century, but only economic incentives'.<sup>120</sup>

However, economic incentives had to be paid for, and Shpayer-Makov makes the point that as far as the Metropolitan Police were concerned, 'funding was not forthcoming from the governmental coffers'.<sup>121</sup> As it was not forthcoming from the Monmouthshire coffers either, the Chief Constable had to devise strategies to overcome this, and one way was to adjust the hierarchical structure, as has already been demonstrated. The general effect of this reorganisation was, perhaps, a perceived capacity for faster upward mobility, which may have motivated some men, by

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<sup>118</sup> *Police Guardian*, 5 May 1894.

<sup>119</sup> Steedman, *Policing the Victorian Community*, p. 115.

<sup>120</sup> Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman*, p. 154.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 157.

lessening their frustration. For the first-class constable, unable to pass his sergeant's examination, or debarred by the lack of a vacancy, there was also some financial compensation. A constable at the top of the first class had a marginally larger weekly salary than a sergeant at the bottom of his class. In addition, merit pay, a guaranteed pension, and the removal of officers' preferential disciplinary treatment, collectively, helped to ameliorate underlying grievances and the sense of social cleavage caused by the promotion by merit system. As Herberle notes: 'The sense of community is the foundation of any social order' and social cleavage can lead to conflict.<sup>122</sup>

The social cleavage experienced by police recruits lessened over time, as their leaders learned to mediate and introduce policies to overcome it. Autocratic as they were, neither Herbert nor Bosanquet were entirely resistant to change; both recognised that some ideological realignment was essential to the development of the force as the years progressed. Fulfilled workers generally produce better work, and policies were designed with this in mind. A major priority was to lessen default and the large-scale exodus of men. But, as Shpayer-Makov also points out:

The turning point in police policies must be viewed within the context of the broader social and economic environment in which management operated. The heads of the police were part of the elite of the country who, in the second half of the century, developed more tolerant attitudes towards the working classes.<sup>123</sup>

Even though this was the case, Monmouthshire policemen were generally excluded from any participation in policy-making decisions, but their collective behaviour did ultimately shape those decisions. Occasionally there was overt participation by policemen. An example is their petitioning for a wage increase in 1872, which led to a

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<sup>122</sup> R. Herberle, *Social Movements: An Introduction to Political Sociology* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1951), pp. 454-5, cited in T. R. Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (London: Collier Macmillan, 1970), p. 136.

<sup>123</sup> Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman*, p. 172.

new pay scale.<sup>124</sup> This had been a nationwide campaign. Policemen as Emsley points out, 'while recognising that they belonged to different forces and often evincing pride in their separate force identities, were also developing a corporate identity'.<sup>125</sup> And, as war approached, the period

witnessed the crystallisation of an *esprit de corps* and a sense of common feeling of professional identity that largely replaced class sentiment and provided a sense of continuity and stability.<sup>126</sup>

As highlighted in Chapter Three, published reports of the HMICs, the press and the police journals appear to have exercised a considerable influence on this new culture. Taylor believes that 'the emergence of in-house journals ... added to a sense of identity as aspirations as well as grievances were shared'.<sup>127</sup> The journals had emerged in the latter half of the nineteenth century; the *Police Service Advertiser* in 1866 (it became the *Police Guardian* in 1872), and the *Police Review and Parade Gossip* in 1893. Both afforded excellent platforms for debate. Steedman suggests that the *Advertiser* 'provided the first means for many local policemen to gain a national perspective on their work'.<sup>128</sup> The *Review's* editor, John Kempster, lobbied tirelessly for policemen's rights. Every problem was grappled with in the pages of his journal, which undoubtedly had a strong and shaping influence on its readers' solidarity.

Police solidarity was also strengthened by mutual aid agreements – the lending and borrowing of men – which became more common as industrial confrontations increased. In April 1895, Monmouthshire entered mutual aid agreements with the

<sup>124</sup> *Merthyr Telegraph*, 12 April 1872, and GRO: Letter informing the Monmouthshire magistrates of the Home Secretary's approval of pay increases for the county police, 4 November 1872: Q S P & R 00072.

<sup>125</sup> Emsley, *The English Police*, p. 95.

<sup>126</sup> Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman*, p. 266.

<sup>127</sup> Taylor, *Policing the Victorian Town*, p. 133.

<sup>128</sup> Steedman, *Policing the Victorian Community*, pp. 125-6.

counties of 'Chester, Derby, Gloucester, Glamorgan, Nottingham, Somerset, Warwick and Wiltshire, and the county Boroughs of Newport and Cardiff'.<sup>129</sup> In the face of hostile criticism, of which there was plenty under Bosanquet's command, the closing of ranks seems inevitable and part of the process of solidarity. An 'us and them' attitude evolved between the police and the policed.

Clark believes that generally 'the police in all communities must function in a sphere of their own, isolated within the community'.<sup>130</sup> The requirements of law enforcement deem it necessary. This 'socialisation' within the police 'creates an occupational structure with its own standards of behaviour and a body of specialised knowledge ... [which] may be thought of as a profession'.<sup>131</sup> Certainly, within the Monmouthshire Constabulary improvements in police conduct and bureaucratic organisation helped foster the idea of the police as a profession. But it is doubtful that members of the Monmouthshire force could be regarded as trained specialists by the end of this period of study. Nevertheless, a growing body of long-term experienced men were moving them in the right direction.

## Conclusion

With the establishment of the Metropolitan Police in 1829 an idea of what the police should be was constructed; an idea that was to play a large part in the creation of the provincial forces. As a corollary to this the bureaucratic employment system adopted by the Metropolitan Police was copied in provincial forces nationwide. While the Metropolitan and other newly established forces appeared to offer recruits the

<sup>129</sup> GRO: Minutes of the Monmouthshire County Council's Standing Joint Committee, 9 April 1895.

<sup>130</sup> J. P. Clark, 'Isolation of the Police: A Comparison of the British and American Situations' *Journal of Criminal Law, Criminology and Police Science*, 56, (September 1965), 307-319.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.



existence of a better type of life – most had come from backgrounds of extreme financial insecurity – the majority of men did not prove mentally receptive to their new role. Their level of education, generally befitting their status as labourers, was not unduly important initially, but their cultural norms were contradictory in every way to the rules laid out in police manuals. The whole structure of police life proved incompatible with the ways of many of these men who, despite supposedly stringent recruitment policies, often proved largely indistinguishable from some of the worst people they policed.

There was very little job satisfaction in the new constabularies and the workforces were poorly provided for in terms of remuneration. It was clearly as much a problem for the Metropolitan force, where 'onerous conditions caused widespread discontent',<sup>132</sup> as it was for the Monmouthshire and other provincial units. For this reason, in most forces, labour-management strategies underwent constant evolution in order to cope with the high turnover of recruits and the level of default in the early years. As Eckstein found, 'conditions such as inequalities, unsatisfied demands, discrimination and societal cleavages are related consistently to degrees of conflict'.<sup>133</sup> All these were factors in the nascent Monmouthshire force, as indeed they were in the Metropolitan Police. Conditions of service and disciplinary control did not deter default, but instead appear often to have had the reverse effect. Stability thus evaded the Monmouthshire constabulary for many years.

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<sup>132</sup> Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman*, p. 153.

<sup>133</sup> H. Eckstein, 'Theoretical Approaches to explaining Collective Political Violence', in T. R. Gurr, *Handbook of Political Conflict: Theory and Research* (London: Macmillan Publishers, 1980), p. 161.

In London, as in Monmouthshire, the 'paternalistic system managed neither to instill discipline nor to create stability'.<sup>134</sup> In both cases it became necessary to find solutions that would satisfy the needs of both management and workforce. Efforts to control the workforce thus grew from the 'behavioural side-effects' of an excessively harsh system of rules that had been designed to mould the policeman into an ideological form. But only slowly did police chiefs come to realise that this was not possible and that coercion alone would not diminish disaffection and default. Change was like shifting-sands, as various policies were tried out. Initially, instability necessitated arbitrary judgment in favour of officers, because officers were more difficult to replace than constables. But, arbitrary judgment in turn created frustration and hostility, which led to crime. The nature and extent of this was considerable and did not engender an atmosphere of cooperation. Discretionary and selective disciplinary processes were equally apparent in the Metropolitan Police, where they also failed to promote expected forms of behaviour. Thus, unwittingly or otherwise, the workforce by undermining the efforts of those in charge, generated change. Change, however, was slow to arrive, and this is surprising given the fact that the Metropolitan Police had been grappling with the problem for almost three decades before many of the provincial forces were formed, but the domineering paternalism that had shaped labour relations in the Metropolitan Police from its inception in 1829 still shaped labour relations in the provincial forces at mid-century and beyond.

The improvement in discipline and control in the latter part of the nineteenth century was due in large part to the changing times. Expansion of democracy, changing class values and labour/management relationships were all part of the changing

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<sup>134</sup> Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman*, p. 166.

environment which placed new demands upon the police. As society underwent change, a realignment of practices was essential to the development of a strong body of police. The constant outflow of men had a profound effect on efficiency. In an attempt to improve morale material rewards were resorted to first. Good conduct pay was introduced. One, two or three pence a day was granted for the appropriate length of service and a clean discipline sheet. A Merit Class was added with a concomitant increase of pay, and over the next few years there was a shifting of the number and level of classes. The larger incremental pay scale was calculated to motivate men and encourage good behaviour. Another strategy was to allow gratuities. But while gratuities appear to have been greedily sought after, and default figures did improve, this was not conducive to good practice.

Police behaviour was also bound up with 'in-house' journals. Through the sharing of opinions and experiences it became apparent that what was happening in one force was happening in another, and that the experiences of Metropolitan policemen often corresponded with those of men in the provinces. Provincial policemen could now see themselves in company with those who were hailed as the best in the world. Moreover, men writing under pseudonyms were able to vent their frustrations in a way that did not pose a challenge to them. Mutual aid agreements also strengthened this 'collective identity' for, by virtue of physical contact, policemen were made kin.

Bosanquet's dominating leadership brought further stability to the force. His strong individuality appears to have had a powerful influence on the men under his command. His removal of unreliable officers removed a bad 'learning environment' as well as a source of conflict, as superior officers now had to earn the right to direct the

activities of the rank and file. His appointment also coincided with an upsurge in trade union activity in the county. Legendary confrontations occurred between the chief and the Labour members of the Standing Joint Committee – 'my little lot of Communists', as he would later term them.<sup>135</sup> And though most of these occurred beyond the period covered by this work, it was obvious even in the 1890s that the sheer weight of Bosanquet's personality would have an effect upon the force. It was not a foregone conclusion that this would be positive, but following his death in 1936, the eulogistic outpourings on behalf of the men suggest that it was.<sup>136</sup>

Under his command, some newspapers and factions were quick to decry the force's handling of certain events, but these were generally favourably countered. Numerous petitions for extra constables to police certain areas of the county bear testimony to the fact that the police had become both widely accepted and seen to be needed. Though many of the positive developments within the force had been instigated by the policemen themselves (often unwittingly), it was reciprocity between the men and their Chief Constables, aided by the interaction of men and ideas from other police institutions, that ultimately moved the force forward. The experiences of the Metropolitan Police, though not entirely pivotal to those of the Monmouthshire Constabulary, were not so far removed either. There were processes common to both, and indeed to many other forces nationwide, the interaction of these ensured that the Metropolitan situation must always have been relevant to the policing of provincial forces.

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<sup>135</sup> Morgan, *Conflict and Order*, p. 134

<sup>136</sup> See, for example, *South Wales Weekly Argus*, 5 September 1936.

## Conclusion

The function of this thesis has been to trace the emergence and development of the Monmouthshire Constabulary from 1857 to 1914, with particular emphasis on the policeman's 'lot'. By exploring the force's workings and the fate of the recruits who signed up to become policemen, it was found that the experiences of this local model were far more complex than traditional accounts of police reform imply. The thesis therefore seeks to contribute to the growing historiography of police reform that challenges Whig interpretations of the process of change. It has been argued that in relation to policing in Monmouthshire, changes that took place after the 1856 Act could not be described as 'radical'. The trajectory of change in the shire progressed in fits and starts, with as many dalliances as a nineteenth century constable might have engaged in on his beat. This emerged throughout the thesis, but was clearly so in the final chapter, which detailed the different strategies employed to exact discipline. Also, in exploring the connection between policing and the health of the workforce, conclusions reached were far from straightforward, as poor health and death in the force generally rested on an infinite variety of factors of significant epidemiological importance, and beatwork was just one of the correlates.

The thesis also reflected on the relevance of the Metropolitan situation to provincial forces, as general as well as local studies have tended to emphasise the divergent management and organisational structures between them. Wall raises the question of differences in his study of Chief Constables in England and Wales,<sup>1</sup> and in a local study of the Denbighshire Constabulary, Fewtrell Clements also proposes that the Metropolitan Police differed appreciably and operated under regulations that did not

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<sup>1</sup> Wall, *Chief Constables*, Chapter 2.

apply to provincial forces'.<sup>2</sup> While differences of management were not denied here, it was nonetheless felt that the extent of shared experiences should be accorded more significance, for they are far less frequently outlined. Thus, when the subject was explored through the themes of morbidity and mortality, and discipline and default, the results showed a commonality of experience between the Metropolitan and Monmouthshire forces that contradicted the belief that the history of the former is irrelevant to the latter. In allocating a chapter each to the themes of morbidity and mortality and discipline and default, this research sought to provide new perspectives to themes that have been underplayed in many orthodox treatments of police history. And while it has to be acknowledged that there is still much more to be done, a small contribution has been offered, by the provision of new material, to the task of narrowing the lacuna.

The study began with an overview of the county and its system of law and order prior to the County and Borough Police Act of 1856. Chapter One not only dispelled any vestiges of the notion that the people of Wales were inherently more peaceable than their English counterparts, but demonstrated that the old parish constables were not nearly as hapless and corrupt as police reformers and traditional accounts of policing have implied. Indeed the Monmouthshire magistracy did not see the need to replace them altogether. There was a marked degree of consensus over the fact that while parish constables were not *absolutely* functional, they would do well enough with a little bolstering.

The magistracy did not embrace the idea of a county constabulary. Its profound unease centred on the key issues of finance and local hegemony. Reactionary, almost

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<sup>2</sup> F. Clements, 'The Development and Aims of the Denbighshire Constabulary in the Nineteenth Century' (unpublished PhD thesis: Open University, 2004), p. 331.

to a man, its argument was that no county force could ever be large enough to quell riots on its own, therefore the assistance of special constables and the military would always be needed. Furthermore, as taxpayers were already paying for the military, it made sense to use it. The portrait that emerged from this study is of a highly conservative, unelected magistracy ready to block any radical reform for fear both of the cost, and of central government becoming too involved in local affairs. The voices of the few who did believe in more progressive measures were drowned by the majority. The result was that when legislation enabled the creation of county constabularies in 1839 it was not implemented in Monmouthshire. Instead a patchwork of small policing schemes were developed and dispersed throughout the county. The 1856 Act swept some of them away immediately, whilst others were eventually absorbed into the county force. Parish constables, however, continued to be elected until around the century's end. This thesis therefore argues against the Whig interpretation of uninterrupted developments in police reform both prior to and following 1856.

When Edmund Herbert took office in March 1857, the sky looked fair. His constabulary was rapidly assembled, with the same pyramidal hierarchy that had been adopted in the Metropolitan Police, other forces, and various bureaucratic organisations, of which the Post Office is an example.<sup>3</sup> In county constabularies the Chief Constable occupied the top position, and the lowest ranking constables the bottom. The Metropolitan force differed in its top ranks, and its superintendents were not nominated to their positions as county superintendents were initially, but in every other sense the hierarchy was the same,<sup>4</sup> and opportunities existed in both for employees to rise through the ranks. Each level, as Shpayer-Makov points out, 'was not only responsible for the

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3 See M. Daunt, *Royal Mail* (London: Athlone Press, 1985), Chapter 7.

4 Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman*, pp. 110-11.

levels below it but accountable to the grades above',<sup>5</sup> thus 'superior officers ... held tremendous power over the lives of their subordinates', though subordinates were in turn depended upon by senior officers.<sup>6</sup>

It was Herbert's conviction that once the force was up and running crime would become 'a matter of rare occurrence' in the shire and the constabulary would be 'regarded with fear and terror by all evil disposed persons'.<sup>7</sup> But his optimism, or naivety, was not to last. He was hampered at every turn by the magistrates' parsimony and intransigence, which allowed significant deficiencies in infrastructure to impede the force's development and efficiency. Incompetent officers were another impediment to progress. Several of the early superintendents and inspectors lacked organisation, honesty, and leadership skills, which caused the system to falter in its development. Without adequate control default was rife. Constables also reacted to the force's strict code of conduct and the enforced separation from a familiar way of life, by either resigning or being dismissed for default. Wittingly, or otherwise, they wielded considerable power to generate change. Compromise, such as discretionary and selective judgment in favour of officers, was resorted to in an effort to stabilise the force, but this failed to promote good behaviour, though allowing gratuities to be retained did coincide with a reduction in default.

As gratuities had formerly been expressly forbidden it is difficult not to view Herbert's change of policy as a weakness, particularly, as Emsley points out, the system was open to abuse – 'on occasions it is clear that perks were extorted'.<sup>8</sup> There is insufficient evidence to make too many generalisations about the allowance of

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<sup>5</sup> Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman*, p. 111.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Herbert, *Orders and Regulations*, p. vi.

<sup>8</sup> Emsley, *Policing and its Context 1750–1870*, p. 159.



gratuities in Monmouthshire, other than when Bosanquet had them redirected into the superannuation fund far fewer appear to have been sought and levels of default continued to improve. Bosanquet obviously recognised the likelihood of abuse, and the attendant effects it would have upon the force. His actions were designed to tighten control over working habits. The fact that far fewer gratuities were recorded following his appointment as chief, does seem to suggest that in seeking rewards policemen had compromised legitimate working practices.

This thesis has paid extended attention to the causes of morbidity and mortality amongst members of the Monmouthshire Constabulary, as it has long been supposed that beatwork was the principal determinant of declining health in policemen. Unscientific medical reports and theatrical accounts by policemen themselves have tended to promote the belief, but it has been argued here that the association was not clear-cut. In Monmouthshire various strategies were adopted to protect the workforce from the extremes of heat and cold. The workforce was also adequately clothed and shod and the opportunity existed to purchase, at greatly reduced costs, old uniforms for use as spares. As Bosanquet understood that parsimony was partly responsible for recruits entering the service in a less than perfect physical condition, he sought to improve this by addressing the issue of cost and therefore greater stringency in the medical tests. But, as Hardy points out, 'varying degrees of ill health ... were widespread in the population' and people largely disregarded 'all but the most serious'.<sup>9</sup> If we bear this in mind, along with the fact that poor health was multifactorial, and policemen died from a variety of diseases, it cannot be stated 'unequivocally' that morbidity and mortality in the force were caused directly by policing.

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<sup>9</sup> Hardy, *The Epidemic Streets*, p. 269.

By the time Bosanquet came to office, society had undergone a substantial transformation. Political democracy had advanced and the labouring classes were combining against inequality and oppression. Inherent in this change was that elected councillors had become part of the force's governing body. The change of administration had not caused Herbert any difficulties, but there were to be monumental clashes (mostly after the period of this study) between Bosanquet and the Standing Joint Committee. The tempestuous nature of the relationship involved Home Office intervention on more than one occasion. Paradoxically, the expansion of democracy did little to diminish the powers of autocratic chief constables in the years prior to the First World War, and Home Office intervention frequently overrode local control. The new order involved the force in more conflict than had hitherto been seen, but conditions within the force stabilised, and professionalism, which had taken root under Herbert, began to bear fruit. Men were rising through the ranks with completely unblemished work records and remaining in the force until retirement age or longer. Competence in the duties of office undoubtedly influenced the lower ranks and promoted stability, thus giving shape to what was beginning to be regarded as a profession. As was demonstrated in the final chapter, improvements in police conduct and bureaucratic organisation helped foster the idea.

Power relations within the Monmouthshire force were seldom static. The locus of power shifted between the police committee, who controlled the county purse, the Chief Constable, or the Chief Constable in conjunction with the HMIC, or the Home Secretary. And, as a body, the rank and file wielded considerable power to generate change through mass departure and default. There was both conflict and consensus within these relationships, though as the force matured and the top officer ranks became available through promotion, consensus became more evident. There was conflict and

consensus in police/public relations too. Conflict was particularly evident, and often virulent, during Bosanquet's chief constablenesship, especially during the years leading up to the war, but it was ultimately transient. From the results of this research, therefore, it is clear that neither the conflict nor the consensus theories of police reform and development are wholly applicable to the Monmouthshire experience of policing between 1857 and 1914. As Emsley points out, the police and the law are 'multi-faceted institutions used by [people] of all classes to oppose each other, to co-operate with, and to gain concessions from, each other'.<sup>10</sup> This post-revisionist account fits well with the Monmouthshire experience.

'It is the power of expectation rather than the power of conceptual knowledge that moulds what we see in life', suggested Gombrich.<sup>11</sup> An image flashed onto a screen 'just long enough to induce a hypothesis but not long enough to check it' will create a fantasy, and the image can thereafter become difficult to detach.<sup>12</sup> Misleading and partial interpretations of the history of the police as well as visual sources, from humorous caricatures to high art, can also work in this way. During the second half of the nineteenth century, important names such as George Bernard Shaw and Ford Maddox Brown produced unflattering images of the police of the metropolis. In Shaw's description of law-keeping at the Albert Hall during a performance of Handel's *Messiah*: 'The police ... deal with the gallery as with a thoroughfare ... calling out "Pass along, pass along", and even going the length of a decisive shove when ... too many unreasonable persons [stop] to listen to the music'.<sup>13</sup> And in Ford Maddox Brown's painting *Work* 'a policeman who has caught an orange-girl in the heinous offence of

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<sup>10</sup> Emsley, *The English Police*, pp. 5-6.

<sup>11</sup> E. H. Gombrich, *Art and Illusion: A study in the psychology of pictorial representation* (Blantyre: The Eagle Press PLC, 1988), p. 188.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 191.

<sup>13</sup> G. Bernard Shaw, *How Handel is Sung*, 3 January 1889, cited in J. M. Golby (ed.) *Culture and Society in Britain 1850-1890* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), p. 234.

resting her basket on a post ... administers justice in the shape of a push, that sends her fruit all over the road'. Brown, somewhat tongue in cheek, dedicated this 'episode' to the Commissioners of Police.<sup>14</sup>

Unflattering portraits of policemen are apt to engage the attention of the observer in a way that flattering ones do not. Not only are good characters less interesting, but they cannot be as well drawn because they do not appear as frequently in the records. The findings of this thesis suggest that we should treat these images with caution. There is very little in the police archives to bring Inspector James Milkins to our attention, for example, yet following his death a splendid graveyard monument was donated by the many friends he had made in the Blaina district.<sup>15</sup> In Pontypool, Superintendent William McIntosh's funeral drew unprecedented crowds who stood for hours in 'cruel' weather to demonstrate their esteem for a man who had commanded 'such respect'.<sup>16</sup>

There were both good policemen and bad, but, as has been demonstrated here, the day-to-day 'lot' of the bad as well as the good was far more complex than unflattering images portray. Unfortunately, the time limit set for this research has not allowed as full a picture of the force to emerge as would have been desirable. There was always more to do. But, like a picture in its unfinished form, the image that is projected can still give a general effect, and it is hoped that this incomplete representation *has* given a general effect. On the other hand, whether a work is finished or unfinished it will always give rise to many more questions. As a cover illustration for *A Companion to the Study of History*, Michael Stanford has used a painting by Samuel van

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14 Ford Maddox Brown, on *Work* (1865), cited in J. M. Golby (ed.) *Culture and Society in Britain 1850–1890* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), p. 117.

15 GPA: A photograph and epitaph appear in a scrapbook of assorted prints.

16 *Pontypool Free Press*, 13 November 1880.

Hoogstraeten, entitled *A View down a Corridor*. The corridor in question, with recesses to its left and right, recedes into the distance. Details become less easy to discern as the foreground retreats into the background, but tantalizing images, amongst them two shadowy forms engaged in conversation, a slip of paper dropped at the bottom of a staircase, immediately give rise to a whole batch of new questions.<sup>17</sup> Fortunately, many of the primary sources drawn on for this research have allowed some of the hitherto unseen recesses in the corridors of the Monmouthshire Constabulary's history to be explored. It is therefore hoped that the new perspectives *will* give rise to a whole batch of new questions, and provoke a desire for further enquiry into the history of other local constabularies.

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<sup>17</sup> See M. Stanford, *A Companion to the Study of History* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1995).

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