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The Men of the Borough Force

DESPITE BEING A relatively small borough force, the Huddersfield police under the 1848 Improvement Act was an evolving and complex entity. While it is important to be aware of the broad contours of the force in the 1850s and 1860s – the length of service, the disciplinary record, the resignations, the dismissals and the like – behind the statistical abstractions were men, of varying ability and commitment, who, for varying lengths of time, were responsible for the policing of the town. These are the men who appear occasionally in faded Victorian photographs but whose voices are seldom heard directly in the historical record. Much about them is unknown and unknowable. However, it is possible to reconstruct something of their public life and their experiences as policemen. Unsurprisingly, there is more information relating to the successful and long-serving men but there is also material that casts some light on the less successful and more transient figures who donned the police uniform. No two police careers were the same but, for the purpose of analysis, it is useful to distinguish between five broad categories of men: first, the short-stay men, who rarely served more than a year or two and never made a career of policing; second, the longer-serving men, often serving for a decade or more but who never moved on from the rank of constable; third, another, smaller group of career policemen, who only managed to gain promotion to sergeant; fourth, an even smaller group, the high-fliers who achieved two or more promotions; and finally, the men at the top – the superintendents, who were at the interface between the local politicians and the men of the force. The first group, by definition, falls outside the scope of this chapter

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– the peccadillos that led to their dismissal and, to a much lesser extent, their reasons for resigning have been discussed in chapter two – while the last group has been discussed in chapter three.[1] The remaining groups will be examined here in as much detail as the historical record allows. The emergence of a core of experienced men, many of whom never moved beyond the rank of constable, was significant in the creation of a policed society in Huddersfield but it was the small number of high-fliers who provided leadership, as well as experience, in a force beset by ongoing tensions between Watch Committees and superintendents.

Promotion was determined by the interplay of three broad factors: ambition, ability and opportunity. Although promotion had obvious attractions – not least, better pay and enhanced status – not all long-serving constables either wished to take on additional responsibilities or had the ability to do so. Capable men such as John Boler and James Gledhill, whose records are comparable with colleagues who were promoted, seem to have been satisfied with life as a constable. Others simply lacked the physical or mental wherewithal to be considered for promotion. The long-serving James Hirst had a dismal performance record and limited physical fitness. John Dodson was little better as his 'blissful ignorance' while a robbery took place on his beat in 1854 bears witness. Others such as Henry Beevers and Hamor Sedgwick clearly showed both some ambition and ability but lacked the discipline required. However, ambition and ability alone did not guarantee promotion. Opportunity was critical. The expansion of numbers and the growth in complexity of the force in the early 1850s created opportunities for promotion but with able men in post and a stabilization in the size of the force, thereafter opportunities dried up. As a consequence, a number of men, for example John Nutton and Noah Worsnip, had to wait many years, not gaining promotion until after incorporation when the town force was significantly expanded.

All of the men whose careers are analysed here started their police careers in the lowest rank before gaining promotion and, as a consequence of their experience on the beat, there were certain important commonalities, irrespective of their different career trajectories.[2] Policing in Huddersfield, as in other boroughs, was arduous but often mundane and tedious. Tramping the streets of the town throughout the year and in all weathers was physically demanding. Consequently, greater experience was bought at the

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price of decreasing physical efficiency. In addition to such routine hazards, there were less predictable dangers – runaway horses, and dangerous dogs, floods and fires and, last but not least angry men, women and even children.[3] As the briefest perusal of the town's crime statistics reveals, the bulk of police time was devoted to low-level crime and regulatory offences. Maintaining 'order and decorum' in public places, containing anti-social behaviour – especially where it impinged upon 'respectable' rate-payers and the town's elites was at the heart of policing. Much of every constable's time was given over to dealing with beggars and vagrants, with gamblers in beerhouses or in the streets and back lanes, with drunk and disorderly men and lewd and disorderly women. The bulk of the crime prosecuted in the town was dealt with summarily by the local magistrates. Drink-related offences, particularly assaults, were commonplace as were petty thefts from shops and lodging houses or from the person, often in a public house or beershop.[4] There were relatively few serious crimes that led to a trial at the local quarter sessions and even fewer that were serious enough to warrant trial at assize. Furthermore, the more serious crimes were predictably but disproportionately dealt with by the abler and experienced (usually higher ranking) men and also by the specialist detectives appointed from the mid-1850s onwards. For some men the routines and realities of the beat was but a phase in a career that brought promotion and more responsibility but also more pay and some escape from basic policing. For others, this was the totality of their police careers and it is to this group that we first turn.

Long-serving Constables

There were eighteen long-serving men in the Huddersfield police force who never rose beyond the rank of constable.[5] All were appointed to the lowest rank – night constable before the 1863 reorganization, third-class constable thereafter – and (with one partial exception) progressed no further than first-class constable. These men were very much the workhorses of the force, familiar figures patrolling the streets of the town, day and night, for several years. Of the eleven who completed their careers before incorporation, two were forced to retire because of ill-health, one died in service while three resigned and five were dismissed. In contrast, of the seven men in post on the eve of incorporation, only one of whom had been

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appointed before 1856, six were subsequently superannuated and one retired. In part, this contrast between early-appointees and late-appointees reflected the belated introduction of a superannuation scheme in Huddersfield. Men joining in the late-1840s and early-1850s had no prospect of a pension. Consequently, some worked until their health failed; others resigned or were dismissed as frustration at their lack of progress and concern at the lack of security about their future kicked in. However, there was a more significant division that owed less to the date of appointment. 50 per cent of this group had an exemplary (or near exemplary) disciplinary record whereas the remainder did not. Indeed, three men were dismissed, re-appointed and subsequently dismissed a second time. The former were solid, reliable men but demonstrating little potential for more senior roles; the latter were often men of some ability, which often compensated for their poor discipline. A closer examination of individual careers brings out the variations within this group of men.

Henry Beevers was appointed a supernumerary constable in January 1849 and a month later made a permanent night constable. His record (in terms of arrest, at least) was modest.[6] Most of the cases he brought before the local magistrates involved breaches of licensing laws and gambling, though he was involved in the arrest of notorious local criminal 'Slasher' Wilson in December 1854. Reprimanded for being drunk and unfit for duty in 1850, he was fortunate not to be dismissed in 1855 when he (and a fellow officer, William Redfearn) were found drunk on duty in the *Wheatsheaf* in Upperhead Row. His career appeared to take off in the following year. In February 1856 he was appointed a day constable and in the November, as part of a general restructuring, he was appointed night-sergeant. Progress was undermined by his weakness for drink. In March 1857 he was severely reprimanded and demoted from sergeant to day constable and in October 1858 he was further reduced to third-class constable for being drunk and unfit for duty. His last years were plagued by ill-health. In March 1860 he was incapacitated by 'a paralytic stroke' which led to his retirement from the force.[7]

Beevers was the only man in this group to be (albeit briefly) promoted but there were several others whose competence as policemen was undermined by ill-discipline. William Redfearn started his police career as an additional winter constable in 1853/4 but soon became a first-class night constable (1856) and a first-class day constable (1859). His arrest record in the years 1857 to 1859

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show him to be one of the most efficient men in the force. Many of his cases were (unsurprisingly) mundane. In October 1858 he brought charges against 'two of the frail sisterhood' for theft from the person of weaver, Benjamin Bottom, with whom they had been drinking in the *White Horse* beerhouse in Castlegate. Others were more dramatic: a pickpocket operating at a funeral at the parish church was chased and arrested in Bull and Mouth Street but there were also more serious cases. In August 1857 the Great Northern Railway Company was the victim of a major embezzlement and it was PC Redfearn who finally arrested Edward Thorpe in Hull. After five years in the force and on the brink of a promising police career, and in circumstances that were never made clear, in July 1859 he was found guilty of insubordination to a senior officer and reprimanded. Worse, one month later he was demoted to the third class, allegedly for 'gossiping with a civilian unnecessarily for fifteen minutes when on duty'. That proved to be the final straw. Redfearn handed in his resignation immediately. Likewise, David Hutchinson served successfully for six years (even taking on additional responsibilities) before a clash with a senior officer and a charge of insubordination led to his resignation.

Other cases were more problematic and raise questions about the judgment of the Watch Committee. Hamor Sedgwick's chequered career has already been considered (see chapter two) but his was not an isolated case. Joseph Graham, in a career that spanned twenty years, was disciplined on more than a dozen occasions for neglect of duty and being under the influence of alcohol. Other than displaying bravery in the flood at Aspley in October 1857, there was nothing in his record that stood out. His promotion to first-class constable in 1867 was very much a reward for diligent, long service and in less than a year another drink-related incident saw him demoted to the third class. John Spivey was another reappointed after dismissal only to be dismissed for a second time. Although praised for his actions during a flood, this time at Folly Hall in 1858, his performance record was barely average and he was a repeat offender, appearing before the Watch Committee on charges of neglect of duty and insubordination. The reasons behind the Watch Committee's decision were not recorded. It is impossible to say whether it was a case of over-optimism and misplaced faith or a reflection of the poor quality of applicants. Whatever the reasons, one conclusion is

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clear: several long-term policemen were of limited effectiveness as well as being problematic for their superiors.

There were, however, several men who, while lacking the ability to progress rapidly up the police hierarchy, did not exhibit such lack of discipline or frustration but were held back by lack of opportunity. None exemplified this more than John Boler, Noah Worsnip and John Nutton. Boler was appointed in 1861 and with his large, flowing beard was a well-known figure in the town. A conscientious policeman, a frequent figure in the local courts and with only a couple of minor blemishes on his record, he was a reliable and effective man but was still a constable when he was superannuated in 1876. Worsnip's career was very similar. He was first appointed in 1857. Seven years later he became a first-class constable and in March 1868 he was awarded a merit badge for his long service. The praise accorded him by the magistrates at the West Riding Sessions in January 1868 summed up his career: 'very prudent and very proper'. He was the epitome of the exemplary constable. Only after incorporation, and some fifteen years into his police career, was he promoted to sergeant. John Nutton, appointed in 1859, was another slow-burner whose career only took off after incorporation and at the end of a long career. Despite an above-average record in terms of arrests in the early 1860s his career appears to have been held back by some disciplinary problems, including a conviction by the local magistrates for an assault that he made during an 'Irish row' in 1863. However, by the time sciatica forced his retirement in 1890 he had made the rank of inspector.

What was the work of these stalwarts of the town police? In so far as they were crime fighters, they dealt mainly with petty thefts. Maidservants stole shawls and sheets; workmen stole materials from their masters and tools from their mates; and men and women stole from their neighbours. Many of the cases were so blatant that the thief was caught in the act and brought to the police by the victim. Many others were 'solved' when the appropriated goods were presented to one of the many of the pawnbrokers in town, who in turn (and for obvious reasons) duly informed the police. Rarely was much 'detection' required and rarely were the police required to pursue their enquiries and activities outside the town. More importantly, crime fighting was but a small part of police work. More often the constable was a 'domestic missionary', maintaining 'order and decorum' in public places through the imposition of laws

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and values that were not always shared by the public at large. Much police effort was directed at the disorderly and disruptive but also the destitute.[8]

A substantial amount of time was devoted to keeping under surveillance the numerous public houses and beerhouses in the town. There was a shared perception among the local magistrates, senior police officers and members of the local elites that such establishments, through their encouragement of drinking and gambling, were breeding grounds of vice and crime.[9] There was not a single officer, unless he left within days or months, who had not brought a charge against some pub landlord or beerhouse keeper. Over the years the local magistrates heard literally hundreds of cases of breaches of the licensing laws. There were prosecutions for selling liquor before or after permitted hours and particularly for sales made during the hours of divine service on Sundays. There were prosecutions for permitting gambling on the premises, for not maintaining order, for harbouring known thieves and prostitutes and other suspicious characters. The police, usually but not exclusively singly, were regular visitors and when they were refused admittance prosecution followed. Furthermore, it was in such drinking establishments that numerous thefts from the person were perpetrated.

Drunk and disorderly behaviour in the streets of the town was the most common problem facing the police. Many incidents were relatively low-key. Some verbose but not obstreperous drunks were guided home; others, less capable, were taken to the cells to sleep off their excesses. When PC Graham found Susanna Gibson in a drunken stupor in Kirkgate in April 1855 'she was so drunk that he was obliged to wheel her to the lock-up on a cart' whereas John Delaney, once woken from his drunken slumber in a pigsty in Boulder's Yard, was able to stumble to the cells in the company of the same officer.[10] Not all arrests of drunks were so uneventful. The public were more likely to be unhelpful, if not outrightly hostile, when drunks were dragged along the streets or handcuffed and carted to the lock-up and there were parts of town where there was limited respect for the officers of the law.[11] The journey to the lock-up could be hazardous, particularly for an officer on his own. While handcuffs helped restrain the prisoner they also limited the action of the officer. There were several attempted prisoner rescues though, somewhat surprisingly, relatively few were successful.[12]

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Violence was commonplace in mid-century Huddersfield and the police had a central but hazardous role in containing it. Stopping a fight between men or women, especially if inebriated, or intervening in a domestic quarrel, let alone quelling an Irish row, was a high-risk activity. At 7 p.m. one Saturday evening in early May 1864 PC Boler encountered two women fighting in Castlegate. As he stepped in he was attacked by four men who inflicted upon him 'the gross indignity of dragging him up and down the street by his beard' which was described as 'very flowing'.[13] Five years later, attempting to break up a drunken brawl outside Matthew Moran's beerhouse, also in Castlegate, he was once again 'brutally assaulted'.[14] Similarly, PC Worsnip was subject to a violent mass assault when he was called to stop a fight in Swallow Street one Sunday in June 1859. A crowd estimated to be between 200 and 300 had gathered to watch the fight and did not welcome Worsnip's intervention. Amazingly, he parted the fighters on two occasions before being driven off by members of the crowd.[15] On another occasion, attempting to stop a brawl in Manchester Road, a woman 'bit him … seized him by the hair, scratching and mauling him' as he effected an arrest.[16] A number of assaults were so serious that men were unfit for duty for days, even weeks. PC Benjamin Crowther, an ex-soldier with a distinguished military record, suffered a broken nose, a dislocated ankle and was 'otherwise badly injured' when he went to the assistance of Mrs Flanagan, who was being beaten by her husband in Water Lane, 'a low Irish-street' off Manchester Road. Her husband barricaded himself in his house and proceeded to throw at Crowther various items, including part of a fire grate, which broke the constable's nose. Eventually forcing his way into the house, Crowther was attacked by both husband and wife![17] Thomas Graham was more fortunate, not having to go on sick leave despite the fact that part of his finger was bitten off in an Irish brawl in the *Wheatsheaf* in Upperhead Row in 1857.[18] Finally, brief mention needs to be paid to the enduring hostility between the police and soldiers. There were a number of unpleasant clashes, though none that assumed the proportions of the Leeds riot of 1844.[19]

There were other sources of physical danger, not least from the 'furious driving' of cab-men, lurry-drivers and the like. Patrolling in Westgate, as people were leaving church one Sunday in 1862, PC David Hutchinson narrowly escaped serious injury as a driver 'with a profane expression threatened to drive over him.[20] But not all

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injuries were sustained in physical encounters with members of the public. PC Joseph Haigh was on night duty, checking the security of property, when he had a near-fatal accident when he fell down some unguarded stairs in White Horse Yard, Beast Market. With a broken collar-bone and severe head injuries he managed to crawl into the open where, at about 11 p.m., he was found 'leaning over a railing in a state of stupefaction'.[21]

The physical dangers of policing were clear to see but the mental pressures were less obvious. Although most policemen were not attacked on most days and nights of the year, the risk was ever present. There was considerable hostility to the police, particularly in areas with a large number of Irish, such as Castlegate or Upperhead-row and their surrounding lanes and yards. Patrolling such areas required a strong nerve as well as a physical presence. In addition, there were the verbal threats and abuses that the police (and occasionally their family members) faced.[22] In hindsight, it is clear that the threats to 'poise [kick] the b****y bobby' or the appeals to mount a rescue of a prisoner more often than not came to nothing, but such an outcome was far from guaranteed. Dispersing a crowd of a dozen young men, especially after a drinking session, let alone a crowd of 200 watching a fistfight or a dogfight was not to be taken lightly. There were other sources of psychological pressures that are easily overlooked. Violence was also self-inflicted and dealing with suicides and attempted suicides added to the mental pressures of the job. Between November 1860 and March 1862 PC Joseph Graham arrested three attempted suicides – one threatening to throw herself out of an upstairs window, another attempting to drown herself in the canal at Aspley and the third swallowing oxalic acid – and was called upon to cut down the body of a man, suffering from 'bodily illness and depression'.[23] Similarly, PC Boler on two occasions dragged the lifeless bodies of men from the canal at Aspley as he worked his night-time beat.[24]

Reflecting a wider societal concern, the police also devoted much time to the problem of vagrancy. For the most part this was mundane – arresting rough sleepers, 'professional' beggars and those with no visible means of support – but some of it was harrowing and occasionally it was dangerous. When PC Hamor Sedgwick arrested Benjamin Taylor at 5 a.m. in February 1857 for sleeping on a step in Threadneedle Street, it transpired that Taylor had recently been discharged from the army and did not have enough money for a

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night's lodging.[25] Similarly the vagrant that PC Worsnip arrested at 3 a.m. for sleeping in the open at the back of the bazaar in Lord Street had arrived in town from Guiseley 'to seek work on the new railway' but with little money and not knowing the town had 'no where else to go'.[26] Other vagrants made their way to the lime kilns at Aspley to get some warmth as they slept rough and hoped to escape arrest. Periodically, men were brought to court but few officers were as zealous as PC Boler who, ascertaining that the sleeping vagrant (one Joseph Hicks) had 'no visible means of subsistence', proceeded to kick him 'three or four times before he awoke'.[27]

And finally, there were the unusual incidents that throw light, not just upon the variety of police work, but on the wider tensions in society. Two examples must suffice. In June 1868 PC John Nutton was assaulted by a stone-throwing crowd, largely made up by angry Irish men and women, as he escorted a Mr. Flynn to the railway station. But this was not an 'ordinary' demonstration of anti-police feelings. This was the culmination of events that had been sparked off by a provocative series of five lectures on Roman Catholicism, advertised under the slogan 'Popery and Puseyism Unmasked', given at the Gymnasium Hall. The original lectures, given by James Houston, including one entitled 'The Seven Sacraments of the Church of Rome: Unscriptural and Superstitious', had aroused considerable hostility from the local Irish community, notwithstanding advice from two local priests to treat Houston with 'silent contempt'.[28] On the fifth evening Houston was replaced by the openly avowed Murphyite, Flynn, whose lecture was provocatively entitled 'Maynooth and its teachings and the confessional unmasked, showing the questions bachelor priests ask married and single women in private'.* It had its desired effect but the unfortunate PC Nutton had to run the gauntlet of irate Irish on two occasions: the first, attempting to find refuge for Flynn after the lecture and the second escorting him to the station the following day. The second incident coincidentally also took place near the railway station. In April 1867

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* William Murphy, born an Ulster Catholic but a convert to Protestantism, was the best-known and most inflammatory of a number of Protestant lecturers who were highly critical of Catholicism. In the 1860s organisations such as the Protestant Evangelical Mission hired Murphy (and others) to deliver lecture tours on the mainland. There were anti-Murphy riots in several places. See D C Richter, *Riotous Victorians,* Athens, Ohio University Press, 1981, chapter three.

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PC Boler was sent to arrest the leaders of a group of lurry-drivers who were creating a disturbance. The men, all employees of Mitchell Brothers, an important local haulage firm, were protesting against one of their fellow-workers for 'ill-using his wife'.[29] An effigy of the offending man, bedecked with placards stating 'C Beckett woman tamer' and 'Charles Beckett, woman hammerer, furniture smasher', was carried through the streets to the station warehouse, where it was exhibited all afternoon. The intention was to take the effigy and burn it outside the man's house in Albion Street. However, Boler was sent to seize the effigy and arrest the ring-leaders. He failed. Faced with 'hundreds of spectators, who hooted and yelled vociferously', he was unable to seize the effigy and was forced to look on as men took it to the *Wellington Inn* in Westgate, where another large crowd had assembled. The significance of events such as these will be discussed more fully later, but suffice it to note at this point that they reveal the limitations of police powers when faced with a large and determined group and the ease with which the police could be associated with unpopular figures or ideas when simply carrying out their normal duty of preserving the public peace.

The experience of long-serving constables has been discussed at length, partly because they constituted the largest group of 'career' policemen, and partly because the experience of beat policing was common to all, including the most successful men. No one career can encapsulate their experience but the words of one of the longest serving men, James Gledhill, captures much of the essence. Gledhill was one of the founding members of the borough force and had served as a night-watchman before 1848. He had arrested more than his fair share of petty thieves, common prostitutes and offending beerhouse keepers in a career that ultimately lasted thirty years, during which time he never rose beyond the rank of first-class constable. He had been attacked on duty several times, though his worst injuries were sustained when the stairs in the police house collapsed in 1867. A 'much respected figure, an old and trusted officer', in October 1873 he was asked, at the fourth annual police dinner, hosted by the mayor of Huddersfield, to reply to the toast 'The health of the Force'. He spoke 'from experience of the boisterous wind, rainy, snowy weather which policemen had to brave in their nightly perambulations' and concluded that 'the shattering of their [policemen's] health was out of all proportion to their remuneration, considering that in the discharge of their

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duty they incurred much unpopularity'.[30] It might not have been the sentiment his superiors expected, or wished to hear at such an occasion, but it provides an insight into the views of men whose voices otherwise do not appear in the historical record.

Promotion Through the Ranks

Since the creation of the Metropolitan Police in 1829 the principle of promotion from within was clearly enunciated. In theory, the prospect of a career pathway through the ranks was one of the attractions of the job. In practice life was somewhat different. In the larger city forces and the more-rapidly expanding borough forces there was a realistic chance of an able and ambitious man gaining promotion. In the smaller and more stable borough forces such as Huddersfield, promotion opportunities were limited. When the force was first established in 1848/9 the only senior officers were a superintending constable, an inspector and a sergeant of night constabulary. This changed in the early-1850s when the number of sergeants was increased to two and then three but an additional inspector's post was not created until the late-1850s. This remained the position until the mid-1860s when an additional sergeant's post was added. Only in 1868, as preparations were made for the larger force required to police the new, larger incorporated borough, did promotion opportunities open up significantly. Put another way, for most of the 1850s and 1860s there were only five or six senior posts and four men dominated these positions. Jonas Mellor was promoted to sergeant in May 1849 and remained in that post until 1868. Abraham Sedgwick was a sergeant in January 1849 before being promoted to inspector in April 1852, a post he held until his resignation in 1856. The beneficiary, on both occasions, was Ramsden White who succeeded Sedgwick as sergeant and then inspector. The fourth man was William Townend. Promoted to sergeant in 1850 and to inspector in 1858, he remained in post until the early 1880s. These men were undoubtedly able and experienced but they were also promotion-blockers to their colleagues. Nonetheless, a further ten men were promoted to sergeant and two to inspector during the period of the Improvement Commission.

For the sixteen men who made the rank of sergeant, it took on average five years from appointment to gain promotion but this figure hides significant variations. Such was the rapid success of

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Mellor, Sedgwick and Townend that men such as John Kaye and Benjamin Marsden, despite having been appointed in the earliest years (1849 and 1850), had to wait almost eight and in the case of William Ramsden eleven years to achieve their first (and only) promotion. Hugh Moore, appointed in 1854, had to wait almost ten years to become a sergeant, though within five years he had become a sub-inspector and then an inspector. Similarly, Thomas Galvin, appointed in 1860, became a sergeant in 1866 but had to wait until after incorporation to reach the rank of inspector. Even the very energetic and able David Hayes had to wait five years for his first promotion, though it took him only a further four years to become an inspector. The careers of Moore, Galvin and Hayes abundantly demonstrate the importance of opportunity. Without the expansion of 1868, either their careers would have stagnated or they would have had to be pursued in another force.

The Next Rung on the Ladder: Sergeants

The role of a sergeant in any police force was crucial to its effectiveness. A sergeant was responsible for the conduct of the constables under him, ensuring they were sober, properly dressed and ready for work, and aware of any orders of the day. Their responsibilities also included ensuring that beats were properly worked and that any breaches of discipline were recorded and reported to superior officers.

In terms of day-to-day experiences, their working-lives were very similar to the men under them. They took part in raids on public houses selling outside licensing hours and beerhouses permitting gambling and prostitution; they were assaulted on the streets of the town as much as the ordinary constables; and their disciplinary records were not always perfect. Sergeant Kaye failed to report one of the constables in his section for drinking on duty and later disobeyed an order from Inspector White. Within a matter of months, he had resigned to go into an unspecified business. Two others – Sergeant Morton and Detective-sergeant Partridge – were asked to resign and one, Sergeant Marsden, was dismissed for drunkenness and neglect of duty. The numbers in this category are too small to draw meaningful conclusions but an examination of the careers of three of these men throws further light on the realities of mid-nineteenth century policing and the problems of establishing an efficient 'first generation' police force.

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Jonas Mellor was undoubtedly a stalwart of the force but his career also illustrates that trade-off between experience and efficiency that characterised every force. Long years of service were undoubtedly important in building up knowledge and developing skills but the demands of the job also took their toll. Described as a man who was 'strict, punctual and steady … stern and severe when on duty' his obituarist also noted that 'in the vigour of his manhood, he was hale, hearty and strong.'[31] Sadly, his strength had been failing for some while and he died only months after retiring on the grounds of ill-health in 1869 at the age of sixty-two. Mellor was one of a number of ex-army men recruited into the new borough force. He had already been a night-watchman before 1848 and his army experience stood him in good stead. In May 1849 he was made drill sergeant, a post he held, and for which he was praised, until 1860. His record, in terms of arrests, was one of the best in the force in the late-1850s and early-1860s. Living in Dock Street, off the notorious Castlegate, he was a well-known figure both on and off duty. Mellor met more than his fair share of violence. On a dozen or so occasions during his nineteen-year career he was assaulted by various members of the public. In September 1852, for example, he was stoned by a crowd while arresting a drunk; and a similar occurrence took place in the summer of 1859 when he tried to arrest a violent drunk, the notorious local criminal Joshua Stringer and the prostitute with whom he was consorting at midnight in Castlegate.[32] Mellor was clearly a hard man who knew how to look after himself. Earlier in 1852 he had been the victim of an attempted rescue as he arrested a drunk in Upperhead Row but found himself facing a counter-claim of violence. The charge was thrown out by the magistrates but the following month a further accusation was made relating to the same incident. The court heard how Mellor 'and seven or eight officers' beat a man they had thrown to the floor during an arrest. The assault charge, however, related to the man's twenty-year-old sister, who claimed that Mellor had beaten her with his stave. Mellor claimed he had been defending himself in the face of a mob attack but the magistrates found him guilty of using unnecessary violence. Several more routine arrests were also dangerous. On one occasion, a drunk with a mattock-shaft attacked him, while on another he found himself face-to-face with Nick Hannigan, 'a notorious prize-fighter and beerhouse keeper in Post-Office Yard.'[33] He also arrested on three occasions another violent local criminal, 'Slasher' Wilson, though on all three occasions the charge was permitting gambling

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and harbouring prostitutes. Indeed, much of Mellor's time was given over to preserving public decorum from the threat posed by beggars, gamblers and other undesirables on the streets. On a few occasions he was involved with more serious crimes. In October 1855 he was sent to investigate a house robbery in Quay Street at 4 a.m. The burglar had clearly jumped from an upstairs window and, having made a soft landing, made his way home. Mellor, spotting the footprints in a dung heap, followed the manure-strewn trail until he found the accused, whose shoes he seized and matched with the prints at the scene of the crime. Such was the highlight of Mellor's crime-fighting career. Mellor was a man of action; his strength lay in maintaining or restoring order, and he led from the front. There is no evidence to suggest that he wished (or was considered) for further promotion. Despite an impressive arrest record, there were signs that his health was beginning to fail. In 1861 he relinquished his position as drill sergeant to William Ramsden, though he still drilled the force at the annual inspection as late as 1865. By 1866 he was not fit for beat work. As part of the reorganization introduced by the new Superintendent Withers, and recognizing his long service, Mellor was put in charge of the police office during the day (i.e. from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.). Such was his failing health that he was 'privileged by Mr. Withers to commence and cease duty at his own will and pleasure' until in March 1869 he was finally declared to be medically unfit for duty. His retirement was short – within three months he was dead. Two important conclusions can be drawn from this brief account of Sergeant Mellor's career. First, on the positive side, through his persistence and physical presence he made a significant contribution to the creation of an 'efficient' force – in terms of the elite values of the day – maintaining order and decorum in the streets of Huddersfield. Second, on the negative side, his recurrent conflicts with certain sections of Huddersfield's working-classes, not least but not exclusively the Irish, his career illustrates the limits of police legitimacy in the public eye, the resultant difficulties facing the individual policeman and, more generally, the limits of police power.

Edward Morton was a very different type of policeman, whose relatively short and troubled career throws light on some of the problems and tensions that beset the early force. Morton's strength was his administrative skills. Superintendent Hannan praised him for 'abilities of the highest order' while his obituarist described him as 'a most intelligent officer'.[34] It was a measure of his ability, and the relative absence of such skills among employees of the Improvement

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Commission, that he was seconded to reorganise and rationalise the library of patent books held by the commissioners and was responsible for the collection of statistical information for the commissioners for their discussion of the abolition of the Moldgreen toll bar.[35] He was also largely responsible for the compilation and writing of the superintendent's annual report. His career started conventionally enough. He was initially appointed as an extra winter night constable in 1856 before becoming a permanent officer, quickly becoming a day constable. He was one of the more successful officers in terms of arrests and was involved in number of more serious cases, not least the embezzlement charge against a well-known local figure, Titus Thewlis.[36] Nonetheless, it was his administrative skills that led Superintendent Beaumont to use his talents in the police office, effectively doing those parts of his job that the superintendent was unable to do.

Ironically, the employment of Morton in the police office was to lead to Beaumont's downfall. It was clear that police book-keeping was deficient at best, corrupt at worst. For many months there were suspicions that Beaumont and his large family were living in a style well beyond his means but the Watch Committee were determined to stand by its man. However, the meticulously detailed evidence provided by Morton made this impossible as he demonstrated 'not a single or isolated offence but a series of petty but fraudulent acts' by the superintendent over several months.[37] With the removal of Beaumont, who had blocked his promotion to sergeant, Morton's career resumed its upward path under the new superintendent of police, but he clashed with Priday's successor, William Hannan, over the question of amalgamating the day and night force in 1863. The matter was resolved without any immediate dismissals and, at the next annual police dinner in March 1864, there was a symbolic reconciliation as Sergeant Morton proposed the toast: 'The health of the Superintendent'.[38] Yet within little more than six months he was asked to resign. The formal record stated that Morton, along with PC Cummings, had been drinking in the *Ramsden Arms* while on duty. For a man with an unblemished record this was strange but even more unusual was the presentation ceremony in January 1865, at which Hannan praised the former sergeant, referring in passing to a 'certain misunderstanding' that had caused Morton to resign. In his speech thanking his colleagues for their generosity, Morton spoke of 'something strange and something wrong somewhere' which had

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forced him to leave the force 'with some regret'. Had men been honest, saying to his face what they said behind his back, he claimed that he would still have been in the town force. It is impossible to determine what had happened. Hannan's claim that he was simply enforcing discipline in the force is not entirely convincing, but Morton had no friends on the Watch Committee to argue his case.[39] Although only moderately successful in personal terms, Morton's career highlights another set of problems related to the management of an emerging and increasingly complex organisation. Poor book-keeping had been identified on a number of occasions by the inspector of police but bureaucratic skills were not readily found among the men who applied to join the town force. This impacted on efficiency but also opened up opportunities for corruption.

The final man to be considered, Nathaniel Partridge, highlights a different set of problems as more emphasis was placed on the detection of crime. He was one of several Huddersfield policemen who had served in the army but unlike the others had been a policeman before a brief spell of service during the Crimean War. Partridge was discharged from the army as 'unfit for further service' in July 1856 and later that year he was taken on again, initially as a supernumerary constable. In August 1858 he was promoted from night- to day-constable and six months later he became a detective constable in the first class. His early career was undistinguished as he dealt with a predictable round of badly-run beerhouses and disorderly drunks. On his return it was a very different story. In the late-1850s and early-1860s he was the most successful officer in the force. At a time when the median number of arrests per officer was in the region of fifteen to nineteen a year, Partridge's tally was over seventy. In 1861 he was responsible for ninety-one cases. Predictably many of these were for low-level offences but, as the only detective in the force, he was also involved in a number of high-profile cases. In 1859 he was awarded a gratuity of £1 for his 'meritorious conduct' in identifying and arresting men responsible for a series of robberies from the Cloth Hall; while in 1862 he solved another major cloth robbery for which he was given a reward of £5. It is difficult to judge Partridge's detection skills – hiding in the Cloth Hall and spying through a hole drilled in the roof was hardly sophisticated. Rather, Partridge's success was based on good contacts with local pawnbrokers and beerhouse keepers and on his contacts with the criminal fraternity and their hangers-on. It

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also depended on a willingness to bend rules when necessary. As a consequence, alongside his commendations were a series of official rebukes. On more than one occasion he was cautioned by the Watch Committee for 'not strictly obeying orders' and admonished by the magistrates for the less-than-careful way in which he gave evidence. His involvement with the criminal classes also caused him trouble. In November 1862 a beerhouse case was dismissed because the magistrates 'did not like the source from which the information came … [believing] that with a well-organised, active and efficient police force, information might be obtained from other sources'.[40] This was somewhat harsh as the only direct witnesses were the two girl prostitutes who testified that their mistress had refused to pay their fines. There were more firmly based suspicions. The *Chronicle* damned Partridge for 'taking men honester than himself through the streets of Huddersfield with handcuffs on their wrists'.[41] Even more problematic was his financial involvement in 1864 with the landlord of the *Globe Inn*, from whom he borrowed £2, which was almost certainly related to his drink problem. By the mid-1860s, although he was still playing an active role, not least in the pursuit of the so-called Irish Small Gang, problems were becoming apparent. In March 1865 the Watch Committee was informed of his drink-related 'ill health' and a month later he asked to resign. He was treated generously. Commissioner Tolson conceded that 'Partridge might have gone a little beyond discretion' at times but rationalised this by arguing that 'in the obtaining of evidence it was almost impossible to avoid having a drink'. Further, he was promised 'employment until he could get something else to do' and a gratuity of £20.[42] In fact, he struggled to find work. In 1869 he was recorded as a coalman – he was accused of embezzlement from the coal dealer who employed him – and in 1871 he was a labourer in the iron works. Partridge was undoubtedly an important figure in the policing of Huddersfield in the 1850s and 1860s but his career highlights the rudimentary, and potentially counter-productive, nature of detective work.

Inspectors

Under the Improvement Commission only five men achieved the rank of inspector, two of whom were promoted in 1868 on the eve of incorporation. One, Hugh Moore, was something of a slow-burner. First appointed in 1854, it was almost exactly a decade before

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he was made a sergeant. For much of this time his experiences were very similar to those described above. However, from the early 1860s he worked on a number of cases with detective Partridge connected with beerhouse prostitution, and in August 1863 he was made a detective constable. The police campaign intensified with the appointment of William Hannan as superintendent. One target was Charles Shaw, a Zetland Street beerhouse-keeper. At his trial in November 1864 Moore and Partridge 'described minutely the details of their several visits, showing that the house was full of abandoned women, and that men were constantly in the habit of visiting it'.[43] Moore also gave evidence that the women of the house frequented the railway station, the *Argyle Music Hall* and other places of amusement, touting for custom. Notwithstanding 'a long "sensation" speech … stigmatizing the conduct as the police as "incompetent, insulting and tyrannical" by the well-known defence lawyer, W P Roberts, Shaw was found guilty of brothel-keeping. Having proved himself in a number of similar cases and a major robbery at Beaumont's tobacco warehouse in 1867, it was no surprise that Moore was promoted, first to the rank of sub-inspector, then later to full inspector in 1868. In contrast, David Hayes was a rising star from his appointment in 1859. A sergeant after five years, he was promoted to inspector at the same time as Moore. Even as a constable he was involved in a number of more serious, robbery cases. In one, a burglary at the *Star Inn*, Moldgreen, Hayes arrested (among others) James Sutcliffe, a shoemaker from Castlegate. Sutcliffe, better known as 'Old Sut' was none other than the self-styled 'King of Castlegate' the notorious beerhouse-brothel keeper of the late 1840s, who had been transported for a robbery committed in the yard of his beerhouse.[44] Hayes had ability but he was fortunate to be in post at a time when new opportunities opened up. He was seen as 'a very meritorious officer … [whose] promotion in the service was rapid and creditable'.[45] The early promise was never fully realised. He was badly injured when making an arrest and was on sick leave for much of 1869. He returned on desk duty but his injury deteriorated to the point where his hand had to be amputated and within months he died.

Of the remaining three men, the most interesting is Abraham Sedgwick. He had been appointed a parochial constable in 1845 and was one of several of the town's 'old police' who were sworn in as members of the borough force in January 1849. His rise was dramatic

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but doubly fortuitous. Within a month he was made sergeant, following the early dismissal of Sergeant Brown; within another few months he was made an inspector as John Thomas became police superintendent, following the unexpected incapacitation of the first superintendent, John Cheeseborough. Sedgwick was a determined and able officer, even as a parochial constable. He was highly visible on the streets of the town and was involved in a number of serious disturbances. He was also a man who was not afraid to criticise his senior officer, if he believed wrong had been done. His first clash was with a drunken Superintendent Thomas, who had verbally abused him in the street. Later the same month Sedgwick was one of two officers accusing Thomas of immoral conduct. Thomas escaped dismissal but the incident did not have a serious effect on Sedgwick's career. To the contrary, he was held in high regard by many of the Improvement Commissioners. Unfortunately, his career ended dramatically when he fell foul of the regime implemented by the new superintendent, Beaumont. The precise details of the dispute between the two men was never recorded but Sedgwick had confided to a sympathetic commissioner that he could 'neither speak right, act right, nor do anything to the satisfaction of the Superintendent'. The debate that took place among the commissioners was bitter but critics of Beaumont complained that 'there was no end of the surveillance and pettifogging interference of every kind' that drove out 'all efficient and spirited officers.'[46] Sedgwick's abrupt departure from the borough force was not the end of his police career. In moves that reflect the complexity and fluidity of policing in the mid-nineteenth century he first became the paid constable for the nearby village of Meltham before joining the newly-formed WRCC with whom he served as a sergeant until his retirement in 1872.

Sedgwick's resignation opened the way for Ramsden White, who was another founding figure and whose career mirrored that of Sedgwick. At the young age of twenty-two White became night sergeant when Sedgwick was promoted to inspector; and then inspector when Sedgwick resigned. For much of his early career he worked closely together with Sedgwick, particularly on a number of more serious robbery cases.[47] He was the obvious choice to replace Sedgwick and in the late-1850s and early-1860s he played an active part in the moral crusade against beerhouses, prostitution and gambling but he also successfully investigated a number of serious thefts. In one high-profile case in 1864 the superintendent

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of scavengers, John Broome, a long-time servant, absconded with £100 that belonged to the Improvement Commissioners. White finally arrested him in Liverpool as Broome was trying to buy a ticket to America where he planned to meet his daughter.[48] Scarcely less dramatically he was responsible for the identification and arrest of thieves responsible for a series of thefts from the Cloth Hall in late 1864.[49] Such was success that in October 1865 he was made detective inspector.

White continued to serve in the new borough force until in 1880, 'unable to walk' and with 'no probability of him ever being able to do so', he retired after over thirty years as a policeman. His career was unusual in that he was promoted twice and at an early age. In other respects, it was more typical. Much of his time, even as an inspector, was taken up with relatively minor offences against the licensing or vagrancy laws; and such policing brought him into contact (and conflict) with certain sections of local society. He was the victim of assault on more than a dozen occasions. In 1854 as a sergeant he was knocked senseless by a crowd of men and women, estimated to be at least 100-strong, and responding to 'the Irish cry' as he attempted to bring a drunk back to the prison house.[50] Fourteen years later, in a similar situation but as a superintendent, he was savagely attacked by several men 'each armed with a stout stick'.[51] Such were the harsh realities of mid-nineteenth century policing.

White was a stalwart of the Huddersfield force for many years. As an inspector he provided continuing leadership at a time when the position of superintendent of police in Huddersfield was precarious indeed. And yet the surprise is that his career as an inspector did not end almost as soon as it had begun. White was at the centre of a highly-publicised sex scandal which could easily have ended his career. In August 1858, rumours spread through the town about the behaviour of Inspector White and his 'improper intimacy' with Sarah Kearney, also known as 'Black Damp'![52] An incredible story unfolded. Initially, White had been a regular visitor to Kearney's cellar-dwelling in Dundas Street. Amazingly, White then proceeded to take her in as a lodger in his house in Prospect Row where, or so it was said, 'Mrs Kearney and Mrs White became very intimate, dressed exactly alike, were often out walking together and were frequently mistaken for sisters'. It might have remained a bizarre story when Kearney left to live in Halifax but it became a scandal when White visited her there and she visited him in Huddersfield. Matters came

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to a head on the Sunday of Almondbury rush-bearing, which White and his wife attended. Claiming 'he had to return to Huddersfield for "night duty"', the inspector went home. Neighbours noticed 'Black Damp' nearby and alerted Mrs. White who was still in Almondbury. She returned to Prospect Row at 1 a.m. (Monday) to find 'Mrs Kearney sleeping on the sofa in a position so questionable as to raise the gravest suspicions'. An angry crowd assembled but 'Black Damp' 'escaped from the house and took refuge in a cellar in John Street'. White returned – presumably from night duty – and 'gave his wife a sound thrashing'. The crowd re-assembled and remained outside the house for most of the day. Such was 'the demonstration of public feeling' that Inspector White was 'overpowered … and unable to go out on duty that night'! The saga continued. 'Black Damp' returned to collect her clothes; only to be refused entry by Mrs. White, who demanded payment of rent arrears and 'a bonus of £5 for "extras" she had received'. Yet again a crowd assembled and forced 'Black Damp' to flee. Indeed, 'the mob … followed and it was feared would have given her a specimen of Lynch law if the police had not intervened, put her in a cab and guarded her safely out of town'. The Watch Committee had to act. White was suspended and he secretly left town while an inquiry was held. In early September the Watch Committee announced its decision: White was to be reprimanded. They explained their decision thus:

> altho' no positive criminality has been established between the Inspector and Sarah Carney [*sic*], yet this committee considers that such Inspector has acted very indiscreetly in having a woman of such questionable character lodged in his house.'[53]

Perhaps White was helped by the fact that his misdemeanours were overshadowed by the greater scandal involving Superintendent Beaumont; perhaps his undoubted effectiveness as a police officer won him friends in influential places – whatever the reason, White was lucky to survive but the leniency of the Watch Committee was rewarded by the success of his subsequent career.

The final career to be considered is that of William Townend. It was highly unusual in that he served in all for thirty-five years, reaching the rank of Superintendent in 1875 and retiring at the age of seventy-five in February 1885; and yet it encapsulated so much of the experience of 'new policing' in Huddersfield. A whitesmith by trade, he was elected a parochial constable in 1845, along with

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Abraham Sedgwick. Having proved his ability as a constable, he was sworn in as a day constable in the new borough force in January 1849. A year later he was promoted to sergeant but his career almost came to an end in 1852. As noted in chapter two, his disciplinary record was far from exemplary but his reputation as a policeman saved his career. When the Watch Committee recommended his dismissal, the commissioners were persuaded not to proceed in the face of 'numerously signed memorials [all] praying for the reappointment of Townend.'[54] Their faith in the man was rewarded. His arrest record in the late-1850s and early-1860s was second only to PC (later detective) Partridge. Furthermore, as Inspector of Common Lodging Houses and Master of the Vagrant Office he played a key role in tackling two of the most pressing problems facing the town. Despite his contribution to the policing of the town, he was overlooked for the post of inspector on the resignation of his close colleague, Sedgwick. However, in the interim, following the dismissal of Superintendent Beaumont, it was Sergeant Townend (rather than the philandering Inspector White) who became *pro-tem* superintendent. Townend was duly rewarded a month later when he was made an inspector, albeit with no increase to his wages. History repeated itself following the enforced resignation of Superintendent Priday in 1862. This time Townend was included on the list of candidates for the vacant post. After a long discussion, in which it transpired that Priday did not hold Townend in high regard, a motion to appoint Townend was defeated by nine votes to five.[55] The man appointed, William Hannan, was in post for five years and, following his resignation, Townend once again filled in. [56]

After incorporation Townend took on a more administrative and ceremonial role – he became mace-bearer to the corporation and court crier – but under the commissioners he remained an active figure, well-known in the town. In 1866 the Philosophical Hall became the scene of regular Sunday night disturbances. Revivalist meetings held by 'the Hallelujah Band' led to crowds of several hundred, mainly young men and women, gathering and 'making a burlesque of these strange proceedings'.[57] Refusing to obey the instructions of Superintendent Hannan, 'a ruffianly crowd unflinchingly stood their ground' which necessitated 'immediate corporal punishment' by the police. Within minutes 'a handful of energetic police-officers, foremost among whom was Inspector Townend, actively and promptly cleared the streets'.[58] Townend

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was a mere fifty-seven years old. Like other long-serving men he spent much time dealing with furious drivers, disorderly drunks, lewd prostitutes and homeless (and often helpless) vagrants. Winning popular acceptance (let alone support) was a long, difficult and never wholly successful process. Unsurprisingly in a long career, he found himself under attack from both truculent individuals and angry crowds. His 'domestic missionary' responsibilities brought him into conflict with notorious beerhouse-keepers, such as 'Big Dick' Ramsden, and local villains, such as 'Slasher' Wilson.[59] In the narrower role of crime fighter, the cases were often undramatic – thefts of tools or clothing – and, lacking the skills of fellow inspector White, only very occasionally was he involved with more serious crimes but in this respect he was more typical of the force at large than other senior figures.[60]

Conclusions

Huddersfield was not unique in experiencing a high turnover of men during the first generation of 'new policing' but it was highly unusual in having such a high rate of turnover of police superintendents. Whereas in some forces strong leadership from the very top was a key element in the creation of an efficient force, this was not the case in Huddersfield. Nonetheless, after the introduction of government inspection, the town force was always deemed to be efficient. Credit for this goes to the various long-serving men, whose careers have been considered in this chapter. They were at the core of the force, providing continuity, local knowledge and, increasingly, experience of the practicalities of policing. At almost any time from the mid-1850s onward, there were a dozen or more men with at least five years' service to their name. In 1868, on the eve of incorporation, twenty men fell into this category.

However, there are three important qualifications to be made. First, the whole question of efficiency is problematic in theoretical and practical terms. What constituted efficiency and how could it be measured? Did a high rate of crime indicate an efficient or inefficient force? Did a high arrest rate indicate an efficient or officious constable?[61] Efficiency in the minds of mid-Victorian inspectors was, more often than not, considered pragmatically and defined in purely quantitative terms – the police population ratio – and even this was not rigorously defined. Further, annual inspections

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were not necessarily sufficiently rigorous to pick up problems – and local police chiefs and politicians were hardly willing to point up problems with their forces. Second, there was an almost inevitable trade-off between experience and effectiveness. When the borough force was established the Improvement Commissioners appointed a number of men with proven ability but who were relatively old. While this made much sense in terms of founding a force, it created a problem that would only become apparent a decade or so later. As demonstrated by the figures compiled for the Watch Committee when it considered its annual allocation of the perquisite fund, there were a number of men who made little contribution to the force. Furthermore, the belated creation of a superannuation scheme meant that Huddersfield policemen were more likely to work on even though facing ill-health and injury. Again, the minutes of the Watch Committee bear witness to the men whose health failed them and yet remained on the books, blocking a new appointment, for months, in some cases years. Finally, the nature of crime in Huddersfield – its blatancy and persistence – must be noted. The blatancy of much petty crime can hardly be overstated. It took no great effort to find landlords selling liquor out of hours, permitting gambling on their premises, failing to maintain order or harbouring known thieves and prostitutes. For reasons that will be considered in more detail later, the art of policing was knowing when not to prosecute. As a consequence, the recorded crime figures provide, at best, a very rough guide to the actual level of crime and the effectiveness of the police in dealing with it.[62] Similarly, the sheer stupidity of many petty criminals has to be acknowledged. Year after year petty criminals effectively handed themselves in as they took their stolen goods to local pawnbrokers. The local press may well have praised gallant policemen for their skill and determination in apprehending daring or audacious thieves but little detective skill was required (or used) to effect an arrest. In a number of cases arrests followed a period of surveillance by police officers. In a smaller number of cases the ability to match up boots and footprints at the scene of crime was critical but for the most part the police relied upon identification by victims of crime or information from members of the criminal fraternity as well as the public at large. Similarly, the persistence of certain problems, notwithstanding the wishes of the Improvement Commissioners and the actions of the police, cannot be ignored. In the late-1840s the beerhouses

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of Castlegate, not least that of John Sutcliffe, with its barracks for prostitutes in the yard, gave rise to moral outrage, police action and a successful prosecution. Two decades later, Superintendent Hannan was battling the same problems. Likewise, violence towards the police was as much an unsolved problem in the late-1860s, as the Irish Small Gang stoned the police and terrorised the public, as it was in the late-1840s when the police were driven from Market Square on the 5th of November. There was only so much the police could (or chose to) do. To examine this further we must take to the streets of mid-Victorian Huddersfield.

Endnotes

1 All police superintendents in Huddersfield were appointed from outside the town, even though there was at least one able and experienced candidate from within. On three occasions the Watch Committee had the option of appointing a local man to the most senior position in the town's force; on three occasions it chose not to do so. There were several examples of men who had worked their way through the ranks to become the head constable of a borough force. See, for example, the success of William Ashe in Middlesbrough, discussed in detail in D Taylor, *Policing the Victorian Town: The Development of the Police in Middlesbrough c.1840–1914,* Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2002, pp.47–9.

2 The analyses are based on the careers of thirty-four men. A small number, for whom information was extremely patchy, have been excluded but this is unlikely to have any significant effect on the general findings.

3 The situation in Huddersfield (as in some other towns) was complicated by the fact that some members of the police force doubled as firemen. As explained above, the details of this responsibility fall outside the scope of the present study, though they are of significance regarding the fundamental question of police legitimacy.

4 This does not mean that the items stolen were not important to both the thief and the victim. Historians, in talking of 'petty thefts', have often given the misleading impression that the loss of a pair of boots, for example, or the theft of half-a-crown (12½p) was of little matter. For many men and women, who lived lives of poverty and economic insecurity, the items involved were important indeed. See chapter six for a fuller discussion.

5 'Long-serving' is defined, somewhat arbitrarily, as being in post for at least five years. The Improvement Commissioners were aware of the need to address the problems of men who had been in the force for several years without gaining promotion but never formally defined 'long-term'.

6 The most detailed information relating to performance (i.e. arrests) comes from the information put before the Watch Committee when the annual distribution of the perquisite fund was approved, particularly for the years 1857 to 1862. This has been supplemented by information from the local

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press. However, press coverage of the local magistrates' court was not comprehensive.

7 The precise date of his retirement is not recorded in the Watch Committee minutes but there is no reference to him in the 1862 perquisite fund list.

8 The classic statement is R Storch, 'The policeman as domestic missionary', *Journal of Social History,* 9, 1976.

9 The question of prostitution is considered in detail in chapter five.

10 *HC,* 28 April and 16 June 1855.

11 *HC,* 5 & 19 December 1863, 27 April and 14 September 1867. See chapters five and eleven.

12 See for example *HC,* 30 October 1852, 16 February 1856, 13 September 1862 & 11 April 1863.

13 *HC,* 7 May 1864.

14 *HC,* 23 January 1869. In all Boler was the victim of serious assaults, including attempted rescues, in at least seven years between 1861 and 1869.

15 *HC,* 25 June 1859.

16 *HC,* 23 March 1861.

17 *HC,* 11 July 1863. Crowther had also been badly lamed in another assault in 1861. Crowther had been awarded three medals during his army career and he wore these on his police uniform as he worked his beat. Not everyone respected his heroism once he swapped the red for the blue.

18 *HC,* 23 July 1853.

19 See for example *HC,* 4 October 1856. For details of the Leeds disturbance see R D Storch, 'A plague of blue locusts: police reform and popular resistance in northern England, *1840*–1857', *International Review of Social History, 20,* 1975, pp.74–5.

20 *HC,* 22 November 1862. See also 23 June 1860 & 21 November 1863 for similar incidents with a van driver in Kirkgate and a lurry-driver in John William Street, respectively.

21 *HC,* 5 November 1853.

22 Very occasionally cases of verbal abuse came to court. See for example *HC,* 16 July 1864. It is very difficult to establish the extent to which family members were subject to verbal or physical attack but the incident in May 1867, while unusual, was probably not unique. William North was fined 5s (25p) for using 'opprobrious epithets' against Alice Sedgwick, the wife of PC Thomas Sedgwick, as the couple were walking in Kirkgate. *HC*, 18 May 1867.

23 *HC,* 3 November 1860, 20 April 1861, 13 July 1861 & 1 March 1862.

24 *HC,* 30 December 1865 and 25 April 1868. The second incident was not clear cut and the death may have been accidental but Boler still had the unpleasant job of retrieving the corpse from the canal.

25 *HC,* 21 February 1857.

26 *HC,* 29 April 1865. The magistrates discharged the case but ordered Carr to leave Huddersfield immediately! See also *HC* 10 September 1859, 16 July 1864 & 7 September 1867.

27 *HC,* 20 February 1864 but see also 20 January 1866.

28 *HC,* 27 June 1868.

29 *HC,* 27 April 1867.

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30 *HC,* 17 October 1873.
31 *HC,* 19 June 1869.
32 *HC,* 9 July 1859.
33 *HC,* 22 May & 25 September 1852.
34 *HC,* 21 January 1865 & 3 February 1866.
35 *HC,* 10 January & 7 March 1863. See also his two guinea (£2-20) reward for 'extra services … in the commissioners' office.' 8 January 1859.
36 *HC,* 30 July 1859.
37 Watch Committee Minutes, KMT 18/2/3/14/1, 11, 8 October 1859.
38 *HC,* 26 March 1864.
39 In the immediate aftermath of his resignation, Morton set himself up as an 'accountant, commission agent, rent & debt-collector etc'. He soon returned to policing, joining the Dewsbury police and becoming a sergeant before his sudden death in January 1866. *HC,* 1 April 1865 & 3 February 1866.
40 *HC,* 15 November 1862.
41 *HC,* 30 July 1864.
42 *HC,* 10 June 1865.
43 *HC,* 26 November 1864.
44 This case is discussed in more detail in chapter seven.
45 *HC,* 1 April 1871.
46 *HC,* 9 February 1856.
47 See for example *HC, 9* October 1852, 19 February 1853 and 16 June 1855. The problem of unlicensed lodging houses was a major concern. (See also chapter five) For examples of police action see *HC*, 22 April & 23 September 1854 & 26 May 1856.
48 *HC,* 23 & 30 April 1864.
49 *HC,* 31 December 1864 & 14 January 1865. For other cases in which White played a major role see 7 & 14 November 1853 for thefts from local counting houses, 6 February & 28 April 1866, 3 December 1864 & 13 July 1867 for warehouse robbery and 26 January 1867 & 25 July 1868 for housebreaking.
50 *HC,* 25 February 1854.
51 *HC,* 15 February 1868.
52 *HC,* 7 August 1858.
53 Watch Committee Minutes, KMT 18/2/3/14/1, 11 August 1858.
54 *HC,* 7 August 1852.
55 *HC,* 4 October 1862.
56 This was not the last time that Townend stepped into the breach. In 1878 he became acting-superintendent due to the illness of Superintendent Hilton.
57 *HC,* 20 January 1866.
58 *Ibid*.
59 See chapters five and six for further discussion of local crime and criminals.
60 Townend was involved with a number of embezzlement cases as well as a child-murder and a rape.
61 The Improvement Commissioners clearly put great emphasis on arrest rates. In the late-1850s/early 1860s the arrest rate per constable per annum was about fifteen. Putting this into context is difficult. Returns a decade earlier, excluding Huddersfield, showed considerable variation in Yorkshire. The

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highest figure was York (twenty-two) which was significantly higher than Leeds (ten), Halifax (eight), Sheffield (seven) and Wakefield (six). The figure for both Bradford and Hull was four. City and borough police. Abstract of returns, *Parliamentary Papers,* 1854 (345).

62 It is also the case that an unknown (and unknowable) number of criminal acts never came to the attention of the police. For whatever reason – the costs (not simply financial) of prosecution or the inappropriateness of formal action – a range of crimes were either dealt with informally or simply ignored by the victims.