

## *Thomas Heaton and the Superintending Constable System*

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF the Huddersfield borough force extended to the limits specified in the Improvement Act; for policing the rest of the Huddersfield (or Upper Agbrigg) district, responsibility rested with the magistrates of the West Riding. Their decisions led to a distinctive, but neglected, form of policing, and one that casts new light on a neglected aspect of the mid-nineteenth century experimentation in police reform. Marginalized in most police histories have been the ‘Tory initiatives’ embodied in the Parish Constable Acts of 1842 and 1850, which provided for the appointment of a paid superintending constable responsible for coordinating the activities of parochial constables – and other paid constables – in any petty sessional division.<sup>1</sup> Although this model of policing was ‘decisively rejected in 1856’, these acts were used in the West Riding of Yorkshire, particularly in the Huddersfield district, to create a system of policing that satisfied many of the needs and expectations of local magistrates and manufacturers, who voted consistently not to establish a county force under the 1839 Rural Police Act. Furthermore, despite difficulties that were perceived at the time, the superintending constable system was an important transitional phase in the policing of the West Riding, providing significant elements of continuity, in terms of personnel and policing practice, which linked the ‘old’ police with the more ‘closely supervised’ ‘new’ police.<sup>2</sup>

The Parish Constable Acts of 1842 and 1850 were an important element in the mid-nineteenth century debate on policing. A number of counties, notably Kent and Cheshire – both at the forefront of

thinking on police reform – adopted the superintending constable system in an attempt to introduce ‘some measure of professional policing’ into the old parish constable system.<sup>3</sup> The 1842 Act provided for the appointment of superintending constables, paid for by the county and responsible to quarter sessions, but linked these appointments to the establishment of lock-ups. The 1850 Act dropped this requirement and enabled the appointment of superintending constables with oversight of all unpaid and paid parochial constables in any petty sessional division. This system has been criticised by several police historians as little more than a dead-end, being unable to deal with anything other than relatively minor offences.<sup>4</sup> While many superintending constables were professional, it has been argued that the men under their command, the parish constables, ‘were not, and had no intention of becoming such’.<sup>5</sup> Even more sympathetic historians have argued that ‘their great defect was particularly felt in cases where they had to deal with serious violence, robberies and burglaries’.<sup>6</sup> Even in counties heavily committed to the superintending constable system, by the mid-1850s magistrates were convinced that a system heavily reliant upon parochial constables could not deliver the protection deemed necessary at the time.<sup>7</sup>

Much of the evidence on which these judgments rest is drawn from proponents of county-based police forces, many of whom had direct experience of the much vaunted Essex county force.<sup>8</sup> Witnesses from county forces, in addition to extolling the virtues of their own forces, condemned failures in neighbouring counties. Captain John Woodford of the Lancashire County Constabulary lamented the ‘want of a proper police establishment in Yorkshire’ and complained of the ‘great disorder and rioting in Yorkshire, immediately over the borders of Lancashire’.<sup>9</sup> Given the volume of contemporary criticism, the decision of the Yorkshire magistrates to implement the superintending constable system requires some explanation and this can be found in their debates in the 1840s.<sup>10</sup> Financial considerations undoubtedly played an important part, not least the fear that relatively quiet rural areas would be unfairly burdened by the cost of a county police, but many of the magistrates were confident that traditional parish-based policing could be modernised. Within months of the passing of the 1842 Act, the county magistrates received applications for the appointment of superintending constables from eighteen towns, including Bradford, Huddersfield and Halifax, even though in only four were lock-ups already in existence.<sup>11</sup> In view of the set-up

costs involved, the magistrates proceeded with caution. In June 1843 they voted that lock-ups be provided and superintending constables appointed for Bradford, Knaresborough, Dewsbury, Halifax and Huddersfield.<sup>12</sup> More superintending constables were subsequently approved and by the time of the 1852/3 Select Committee twenty-two had been appointed, covering almost all of the county.<sup>13</sup> Among the first was Thomas Heaton who assumed responsibility for the Upper Agbrigg district in June 1848 and held the post until December 1856, at which point he became superintendent of the Upper Agbrigg division of the newly-founded WRCC.<sup>14</sup> Little is known about Heaton when he first took up office, despite being presented to the county magistrates as 'the unanimous choice of the Huddersfield bench from a number of candidates' by proposers who paid 'a high compliment to his character and qualifications'.<sup>15</sup> He had had a seventeen-year career in local government, first as clerk to the Board of Highways and later as poor-law relieving officer for Huddersfield.<sup>16</sup> There is no record of his views on policing at the time but, from later comments he made to newly sworn-in parochial constables, he believed in a causal link between gambling, drinking and criminality. In his mind the contamination that followed from the intermixing of petty and serious criminals added urgency to his task of controlling beerhouses and brothels. As superintending constable, Heaton had responsibility for the local lock-up and for the oversight of annually-appointed parochial constables and any paid constables in the district.<sup>17</sup> Although appointed by the county magistrates, he was expected to work closely with their local counterparts.<sup>18</sup> The magistrates (both county and local) saw the dissemination of information and the regulation of parochial constables as central aspects of his work but also expected him to play an active role, including cooperating with existing local law-enforcement agencies, particularly the Woollen Inspectorate that dated from the late-eighteenth century.<sup>19</sup> Taken together, though never formally defined, these elements constituted the superintending constable system as it operated in Upper Agbrigg.

The central role of superintending constable was challenging and Heaton, though relatively old and inexperienced on appointment, proved to be a highly active police-officer. To dismiss him simply as a 'neighbourhood pest' does not do justice to the scope of his activities, nor to his beliefs about the causes of crime.<sup>20</sup> He was undoubtedly greatly exercised by illegal, out-of-hours drinking and 'unacceptable' working-class leisure activities. In particular, he set

his sights on those 'vile places, [the] sinks of iniquity and vice', the beershops in Castlegate, but his net was cast wider.<sup>21</sup> Success was hard to come by. An early attempt to tame Guy Fawkes celebrations in the town's market square was an ignominious short-term defeat. The sight of a mud-sodden police superintendent, his uniform torn, struggling to his feet, as young men kicked out at him, did little for dignity or reputation.<sup>22</sup> Heaton was undeterred and continued his energetic attack on local crime.<sup>23</sup> His pre-occupation with breaches of the licensing laws, especially at Easter, Christmas and during local feasts; his determination to stop young men taking part in 'nude' races or playing pitch and toss\* in the highway; and his willingness to use arcane and ancient pieces of legislation to prosecute make him appear a driven and somewhat ridiculous figure.<sup>24</sup> Above all he kept a close eye on publicans and beer-house keepers who sold liquor outside licensing hours (and particularly during the hours of divine service), and on their customers, and brought many of them to court. His methods could be dramatic. Suspecting malpractice at the *Horse and Groom*, Linthwaite, one Sunday in the summer of 1852, he drove there from Huddersfield, 'ran round the front door and met two men coming out'. Suspicions roused by the fact that 'the passage was wet here and there, as if some liquor had recently been spilled' he entered the bar to find 'a can containing about a quart of ale of fresh-drawn ale, having the froth upon it.'<sup>25</sup> In another case his detective skills came to the fore when he raided a Lindley beer-house, run by a Mr. Walker. As the press reported the case, 'the superintendent spied some wet marks upon the [beer-house] table which Mrs Walker said were caused by her child's breakfast cup; but the cup would not fit the impression. Looking under the settle [Heaton] saw a beer glass and on the carpet alongside its recent contents'.<sup>26</sup> Individual cases do not do full justice to Heaton's commitment. Take for example a day's work in the winter of 1852. In the morning, while out in his gig, he found the landlords of both the *Sovereign Inn* and the *Star Inn* in Fenay Bridge serving drinks illegally between 10 and

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\* Pitch and toss was one of the most common forms of gambling. Players would pitch coins at a mark (or a wall) and the person closest to the mark had the right to toss all the coins into the air, winning all those landing heads up. Variations were to be found in different parts of the country. Rudyard Kipling, in his much-loved poem *If*, seen by some as a guide to manliness, extols the virtue of being able to shrug off the loss of 'all your winnings' on a game of pitch and toss!

11 a.m. Continuing on his way, just before midday he came across some young men, playing pitch and toss and causing an obstruction in the road, near Shepley, whom he apprehended and summonsed, before arriving at the *Sovereign Inn*, Shepley, where he found the landlord selling alcohol out of hours. Not content with that haul, between 3 and 4 p.m. he found time to catch the landlord of the *Star Inn*, Shelley, and a beer-house keeper in Netherton similarly breaking the law. In total he had travelled over 20 miles that day in his pursuit of lawbreakers. All were subsequently prosecuted; and the precise date – the 25th of December, Christmas Day!<sup>27</sup> Much of his time was concerned with petty crime, particularly non-violent theft. Heaton arrested servants who had stolen linen and clothing from their masters and mistresses; workmen who had stolen from their employers; and workmates who had stolen from each other. In most cases little in the way of detective skills was required as the stolen goods were quickly pawned and there was a good working relationship between local pawnbrokers and the police, which regularly resulted in the latter reporting suspicious characters to the authorities.<sup>28</sup> Heaton was nothing if not tenacious and patient. James Aspinall stole and subsequently hid money from his employer. He confessed and Heaton arrested him and took him to the county lock-up, where ‘he was placed in an upstairs room ... [Heaton] alone remaining with him’ through the night. The wait was worthwhile as ‘at four o’clock in the morning in the ordinary course of nature a sovereign and two half-sovereigns (£2) passed from his body and were identified as the property of the prosecutor’.<sup>29</sup>

Heaton’s police methods made him unpopular. Using men in plain clothes led to accusations of introducing a despotic ‘Austrian’ spy system while, more mundanely, checking public houses and beerhouses as soon as the church bells stopped ringing gave rise to charges of unreasonable zealotry. Undoubtedly Heaton was at odds with late-night drinkers, cockfighters and players of pitch and toss, but he was not acting simply on his own beliefs and initiatives. The local magistrates repeatedly stressed the importance of containing and restricting gambling and illegal drinking at the annual swearing-in of parochial constables; and many local organisations and individuals were similarly concerned with the threat posed by working-class leisure activities and particularly by the ‘wild, rough youths of the neighbourhood’.<sup>30</sup> The scale of police activities and their success in marginalising pastimes such as cockfighting and

prize fighting in the early and mid-1850s was considerable, not least at a time when the advent of the railway made it easier for people to travel to such 'sports' from miles around. When Heaton first took office, well-organised and well-attended fights took place not just close by the town, notably on Castle Hill, but even in Castlegate itself. Acting in line with the local magistrates' condemnation of the 'disgraceful pastime' of dogfighting in particular, Heaton, sometimes alone, at other times accompanied by two or three constables, first succeeded in disrupting such events and dispersing the crowds and then gradually drove them into remoter locations further into the Pennines.<sup>31</sup> By the mid-1850s, to escape 'the vigilance of Superintendent Heaton, battles [cock fights] are generally fought among the moors and thinly populated districts on the confines of Yorkshire, Lancashire and Cheshire'.<sup>32</sup> Even then Heaton continued his campaign despite the more difficult terrain on which the fights took place. For instance, forewarned of a cockfight that was to take place on an isolated farm, close to the *Victoria Inn*, Upper Maythorn, over ten miles from Huddersfield, Heaton and two police officers were able to arrest and bring to trial the major protagonists.<sup>33</sup> This success (and it was not unique) was the product of Heaton's personal determination and his ability to coordinate the activities of parochial officers.

Although Heaton's campaign against petty crime had its limits, there was a greater degree of effectiveness than is often suggested by police historians with their eye to a model of policing that was to triumph in 1856. However, the question remains: could the superintending constable system cope with public disturbances and serious crime? The evidence from the Huddersfield district suggests that it could. Despite the turbulent history of the town and the surrounding district in the late-1840s, Heaton, as superintending constable, had to deal with only one major incident of public disorder. Early in his career, in April 1849, there was an 'alarming riot' at Milnsbridge, just under two miles outside the town, involving the navvies building the Manchester to Huddersfield railway. Tensions fuelled by the non-payment of wages were exacerbated by hostility between English and Irish labourers. Acting on a tip-off that the Irish were planning to drive out the English workers, Heaton arrived while the men were being paid out and managed to arrest and handcuff seven suspected ringleaders. This sparked the riot. An eighth man 'set up one of those dismal yells peculiar to the Irish' which led to a full-

scale assault by a crowd estimated to be 500 or 600 strong. Heaton, unable to prevent the rescue of the prisoners, managed to send word to Huddersfield requesting reinforcements. Abraham Milnes and twelve men, constituting 'the whole of the night watch' duly arrived. The rioters were eventually put to flight and twenty-nine men (including but two of the original arrestees) were brought to the town's two lock-ups. Eventually fourteen men were found guilty at York Assizes of conspiracy, riot and assault.<sup>34</sup> It would be foolish to generalise from one incident but the Milnsbridge riot revealed both the immense self-confidence of Heaton and, more importantly, the ability of the local police to come together and successfully contain a major disturbance.

Heaton, who often worked closely with the town constables, Sedgwick and Townend, was also determined to bring to justice high-profile local criminals, such as John Sutcliffe and Henry 'Slasher' Wilson. Almost from the day he took up post Heaton determined to bring to book John Sutcliffe, the notorious 'King of Castlegate' and a few years later Heaton showed equal commitment in prosecuting 'Slasher' Wilson. His involvement with serious crime was not restricted to local 'celebrity' criminals. His skills of detection enabled him to arrest three weavers guilty of a particularly bloody assault in nearby Kirkheaton; one of several such cases with which he dealt in the winter of 1849/50.<sup>35</sup> Most serious crime was more mundane. Thefts of cloth were not uncommon. In 1851, for example, his investigation of the theft of thirty-two yards of cloth from William Ashton, a cloth-dresser of Folly Hall, brought him to a beershop in Sheffield where the stolen material was being sold.<sup>36</sup> Heaton was also successful in a safe-breaking case at Meltham Mills, 'a robbery of somewhat extraordinary character both as to boldness in design and dexterity in execution', which brought nationwide coverage.<sup>37</sup> Horse thefts, similarly, were relatively common occurrences and offered him opportunities to demonstrate his skill and determination in apprehending law-breakers. On more than one occasion, Heaton came into conflict with the Seniors, father and three sons, a well-known family of horse thieves who also carried on 'a wholesome trade in horse flesh'.<sup>38</sup> Heaton's 'persevering and unceasing activity', involving a trip to London to arrest one of the sons, finally led to the arrest of three of the four men. Not for the last time there was a touch of the melodramatic. Having traced them to their dwelling in Lowerhouses, Heaton had the house surrounded. Two men were arrested but it was feared that George Senior had escaped. Heaton led the search of the house and

on examining the bedroom chimney ... found the extremities of the unfortunate culprit dangling down the chimney within reach. Mr Heaton seized hold of the legs but found Senior had squeezed himself so unmercifully into the small aperture as to require the utmost exertion to release him.<sup>39</sup>

Heaton gave evidence at Senior's trial at York Assizes and was praised by the magistrates for his perseverance.<sup>40</sup>

Heaton's undoubted enthusiasm and success in pursuing petty and serious criminals could, nonetheless, be seen to confirm the judgement of the 1852/3 Select Committee, namely that individual superintending constables could be 'useful as police officers'. However, there was more than individual commitment. This can be seen, firstly, in the way in which he cooperated with other formal and informal law-enforcement agencies and, secondly, in the way in which he worked with both unpaid and paid constables.

The most important of the local law-enforcement agencies was the Huddersfield and Holmfirth Manufacturers' Association, whose chief inspector was R. H. Kaye, who regularly prosecuted under the Worsted Act. On numerous occasions Kaye and Heaton took action on behalf of the Manufacturers' Association, bringing men and women before the local magistrates.<sup>41</sup> Often there was a suspicion that stolen material was being sold in local public houses and beerhouses and on several occasions Kaye was involved in police raids on licensed premises.<sup>42</sup> A similar pattern of cooperation can be seen with the prosecution of local 'whisky spinners'; that is, men and women operating illicit stills.<sup>43</sup> This was a matter for the local Inland Revenue Officer, Mr. Wallis, who needed to work with the police who had the power of arrest. Intriguingly, in at least one raid Wallis was accompanied by Kaye (the Woollen Inspector) as well as Heaton.<sup>44</sup> Significantly, local manufacturers and magistrates expressed themselves satisfied with the effectiveness of such policing arrangements.

The relationship between Heaton and the various local prosecution societies is less easy to establish. Such societies were to be found in the 1850s in Holmfirth, Kirkburton, Lindley, Longwood, Marsh, Meltham and Saddleworth. All claimed to be 'prosperous' and 'efficient' but much of their time was devoted to giving salutary lessons to young boys guilty of trespass and the like. There were, however, more serious concerns. Following a successful



arrest for robbery with violence, the Meltham society gave a reward of £10 to their local parish constable; likewise the Saddleworth society gave rewards of £2 and £4 to local constables for their 'active exertions in detecting offenders' and the Longwood society bestowed praise (and a small memento) on Superintendent Heaton for 'the tact and energy that he displayed' in capturing a gang of burglars.<sup>45</sup> The importance of such societies and their actions must not be overstated but the fact remains that they did have links with parochial constables and the superintending constable, which could lead to successful prosecutions.

The greatest weakness of the superintending constable system, in the eyes of nineteenth-century police reformers and later historians, was its dependence upon parochial constables (unpaid and paid) who were simply not willing or able to be effective officers. Locally, the *Leeds Mercury*, ever-ready to criticize and deride Heaton, thought little more of the men under him. It observed sarcastically that 'it is amusing to read the recorded exploits of the parochial constables in the Huddersfield district, many of whom are wretchedly deficient in that tact and resolution in the discharge of their duties'.<sup>46</sup> There were also some concerns expressed in the local Huddersfield press about the lack of cooperation, though the local magistracy continued to view the parochial constables as 'indispensable officials'.<sup>47</sup> It is clear that Heaton made a conscious attempt to create a more coordinated and effective system. He advised parish constables of their duties and on occasion disciplined those who neglected them.<sup>48</sup> He tried assiduously to 'communicate frequently' with the constables in his district, which was no easy task in a district that had some 181 parochial constables in thirty-one locations.<sup>49</sup> In addition, the local magistrates, on swearing in the parochial constables, regularly recommended 'a small book of instruction for them' that had been compiled by Heaton as early as 1848.<sup>50</sup> Predictably it put emphasis on the need to keep public houses and beerhouses under close scrutiny and to guard against gambling, 'the greatest evil in the district'.<sup>51</sup>

It would be naïve to suggest that there were not shortcomings in this parish-based system. On a number of occasions, the meetings called to nominate parish constables were poorly attended; on other occasions, questions were raised about the number and quality of men being put forward. However, it would be misleading to suggest – as many police reformers did at the time – that parish constables were uniformly decrepit and incompetent. Ultimately, it

is impossible to offer a precise evaluation of the quality of parochial constables in Upper Agbrigg in the 1850s. Undoubtedly a small minority were totally incompetent, if not verging on the corrupt. John Halliday, one of the Kirkheaton constables, was described as ‘a fatherly Dogberry’, while constables in Longwood and Lindley were dismissed in similar ‘worthy Dogberry’ terms.<sup>52</sup> Ephraim Kaye, a Dalton constable from 1851 to 1854 appears to have had more success at the Kirkheaton horticultural show than in the courts.<sup>53</sup> Many more were well-intentioned but hampered by the fact that they were unpaid constables and had to look elsewhere for their income. John Cooper, elected parochial officer for Fartown in 1855 was a carpenter and wheelwright who spent more time earning a living than enforcing the law.<sup>54</sup> However, there were also some – again a minority but too easily overlooked – who were competent and aspired to be ‘professional’ in terms of their conduct, their commitment to enforcing the law and their ability to establish a degree of order and decorum even in localities such as Kirkheaton, Kirkburton and Scammonden, all known for their hostility to the police.<sup>55</sup> Francis Goodall, first appointed as parish constable for Marsden-in-Almondbury in 1851 was praised for ‘doing all that one man could do to preserve order’ and his ‘vigilance and successful efforts to preserve the peace’ at Marsden Feast in 1852 brought praise, especially as he was one of the unpaid [constables] to boot’.<sup>56</sup> William Taylor, a long-serving constable in Honley, was a well-respected local figure. Much of his work involved drunks and itinerant hawkers but he played an important part, along with Inspector Kaye and John Earnshaw, the Holmfirth constable, in a serious embezzlement case that saw five men brought to trial.<sup>57</sup> Similarly, Matthew Riley, a Berry Brow constable, effected a number of arrests for theft (and one case of highway robbery) as well as prosecuting dogfighters and offending local landlords.<sup>58</sup> Riley’s enthusiasm brought him a rebuke from the magistrates who dismissed a case against the keeper of the *Morning Star* beerhouse and told him ‘You’ve been too hasty, Matthew’.<sup>59</sup> The laughter in court was a blow to pride but Riley also suffered blows to the body on several occasions. In April 1850 two men were charged with assaulting Riley during an attempted prisoner rescue. The case was dismissed, ‘an announcement which seemed to give great satisfaction to a crowd of spectators from Berry Brow’ and the *Chronicle* noted that Riley was ‘not very popular among the working classes’.<sup>60</sup> Other parochial constables stand

out for their assiduousness, none more so than the long-serving Holmfirth constable, John Earnshaw, who dealt with a wide variety of crimes, both petty and serious. Like Heaton he brought charges against landlords who served alcohol outside hours and prosecuted lads who played pitch and toss on the roads; and also, like Heaton, he could be 'indefatigable in his endeavours'.<sup>61</sup> More importantly, on several occasions Earnshaw worked with, or on the instructions of, Heaton. In September 1851 offending publicans in Honley were brought before the magistrates after a joint action between Heaton, Earnshaw and the local parish constables. Three months later the two were in action against beerhouse owners in Holmfirth, who were permitting gambling on their property.<sup>62</sup> The recognition by local magistrates of the 'efficient services of Constable Earnshaw' reflected local satisfaction with parochial policing. Earnshaw was the most active parochial constable in the Huddersfield district but he was not alone. John Shaw, the Marsden-in-Huddersfield constable, was another man who worked with Heaton on a number of occasions; nor was Earnshaw the most controversial.<sup>63</sup> That dubious accolade fell to the parochial constables for Birkby and Fartown, Nathaniel Hinchcliffe and Miles Netherwood, who were first appointed in 1852. Netherwood, described by a local magistrate as 'an efficient constable', often worked with Hinchcliffe, bringing several offending landlords and gamblers to court. This made them unpopular in certain quarters and liable to physical attack. In 1855 Hinchcliffe was assaulted by a group of men as he tried to make an arrest at a local public house, the *New Inn*, Cowcliffe. Netherwood came to his aid but the prisoner was rescued and the two constables 'abused and assaulted ... in the public road'.<sup>64</sup> There were also legal challenges to their nomination as constables. In February 1854 Netherwood's nomination was almost overturned by a group of rate-payers led by the landlord of another local public house, the *Lamb Inn*, at Hillhouse, against whom Netherwood had given evidence in court.<sup>65</sup> The following year the two men were not appointed as parochial constables, following accusations of illegal drinking, exacting 'a kind of blackmail' and assault. Two of the three incidents brought to the attention of the magistrates involved the *Lamb Inn*, Hillhouse.

Matters did not end there as both men were nominated as parochial constables, albeit at a poorly attended meeting the following year.<sup>66</sup> At the swearing-in meeting before the magistrates in April 1856,

the solicitor, who had spoken against the two men the previous year, again raised objections. This time Heaton gave evidence on their behalf, claiming 'no two constables had taken such pain ... to discharge their duty efficiently' and singled out Hinchcliffe for particular praise, being, in Heaton's opinion, the 'most efficient man in the township'. The magistrates agreed and appointed both Hinchcliffe and Netherwood: a decision that 'appeared to give great satisfaction to a crowded court'.<sup>67</sup> The *Chronicle* made no editorial comment but the *Examiner* was scathing of the two men, allegedly known for their 'officious intermeddling'. Heaton was criticised for supporting them, the *Examiner* claiming that he 'knew his men ... and used them as his pliant tools'. Netherwood and Hinchcliffe were condemned for doing 'the dirty work at the bidding of the superintendent' and the bench of magistrates was condemned for forcing 'two obnoxious, meddling constables on the ratepayers'.<sup>68</sup> In fact, the situation was less clear cut. The memorial opposing Netherwood had been signed by over one hundred people but an equal number had supported his nomination. Indeed, supporters of Netherwood and Hinchcliffe argued that attempts were being made to discredit the men 'simply because they had done so much to put down gambling'. The chairman of the bench, George Armitage, agreed, referring to a 'conspiracy' against two men for doing their duty. In a telling observation one supporter of Netherwood and Hinchcliffe argued that 'it was necessary for Mr. Heaton to have men with whom he could work as constables'.<sup>69</sup> Whatever the merits of the case, and much remains obscure, it is clear that Heaton was trying to build up a group of men with whom he could work in his fight against both petty and serious crime; but it was equally clear that this gave rise to very real tensions in certain quarters.

In terms of foreshadowing later reform, the emergence of a small group of paid constables was of greater significance. The Parish Constable Acts had provided for the appointment of a paid constable by any township that wished to do so; and the West Riding magistrates exhorted local ratepayers to take advantage of this provision more than once. One local J.P. argued specifically that the various townships in the Huddersfield district could raise £400 through contributions of £10 to £15 each, which would make possible the appointment of five or six constables under Superintendent Heaton.<sup>70</sup> The suggestion was not acted upon but paid constables were appointed in several townships, including

Kirkburton, Marsden, Marsh and Meltham. The appointment in Marsh was uncontroversial – indeed the absence of trouble at the local feast that year (1854) was seen as evidence of his good influence on the community – while the appointment in Marsden was welcomed and the constable praised for the ‘untiring zeal’ with which he discharged his duties.<sup>71</sup> From Heaton’s perspective this boded well as here were yet more local constables with whom he could work.

Elsewhere matters were more problematic, most particularly in Kirkburton. A paid constable was first appointed as early as 1850 but had met with ‘a very warm but unsuccessful opposition’. The ‘poorer classes’ determined to ‘nurse their wrath’ and Constable Glover was assaulted in ‘the most cowardly and clandestinely manner’ on a number of occasions.<sup>72</sup> Matters escalated and in February 1851 local feelings ‘assumed a more excited tone, and burst out in all its pent-up vehemence at a town’s meeting’.<sup>73</sup> The meeting voted to dispense with the paid constable at the end of his period of service but it soon became apparent that ‘the manufacturers seem determined to retain the present paid constable, while the working classes seem determined to dispense with his services’.<sup>74</sup> There followed an acrimonious legal dispute in which ‘Mr Roberts of Manchester, the high-profile radical lawyer W. P. Roberts, represented those working men seeking to dispense with the paid constable. Ultimately the challenge failed and the paid constable remained in post for another year.<sup>75</sup> The extent of his continuing unpopularity soon became evident. In the following months the windows of his house were broken by stones and he was physically assaulted on at least two occasions. One assault led to a trial for cutting and wounding with intent to inflict grievous bodily harm, for which sentences of seven years’ transportation and twelve months’ hard labour were handed down.<sup>76</sup> It is all but impossible to establish the specific causes of the friction between Glover and certain sections of the Kirkburton community but his close association with certain local employers did not help; nor did his zealotry in ‘moving on’ people and enforcing the licensing laws. Whatever the precise reasons for his unpopularity, no paid constable was subsequently appointed in Kirkburton.

A similar set of difficulties emerged in Meltham, where the question of the appointment of a paid constable was debated for several years. For some local ratepayers the ‘drinking, swearing,

gambling, racing and all sorts of *immoralities*' demonstrated the need for reform but others felt the concerns were overstated and the parochial constable more than adequate.<sup>77</sup>

Reports of the debate in 1855 are more detailed and indicate a polarisation of views and considerable animosity. The situation was not helped by the misplaced zeal of the unpaid parochial constable, whose 'considerable desire to put down all immorality' led to 'sweeping charges without proof', in the view of the magistrates at the annual Brewster Sessions.<sup>78</sup> The *Chronicle* reported 'a great deal of prejudice against a paid constable' and, along with the *Examiner*, referred somewhat enigmatically to 'party spirit' running high on the subject.<sup>79</sup> In a poll only sixteen people voted for a paid constable while 129 voted against but this was not the end of the matter. In February 1856 an officer was appointed, paid for by 'a few [unspecified] gentlemen'.<sup>80</sup> Despite a claim that this was 'very generally approved' the new constable (former Inspector Sedgwick, recently of the Huddersfield town police) was assaulted soon after taking up post and a few weeks later had the windows of his house broken by stones.<sup>81</sup> As in Kirkburton, the intrusion of the police into working-class leisure activities appears to have been crucial.

Although there were a number of energetic parochial and paid constables in various parts of the Huddersfield district under Heaton's authority, the question remains: could they be brought together, when needed, to act more as a force rather than as individuals? As noted above, Heaton worked with various constables on several occasions.<sup>82</sup> There were also times when he worked in conjunction with several constables in a pre-planned operation. The most spectacular example was the apprehension of the Wibsey gang in which Heaton worked with another superintending constable, three parochial constables, a paid constable and two other men with previous police experience.<sup>83</sup> The theft of ten pieces of cloth, valued at over £100, from a warehouse just outside Huddersfield caused a stir in August 1856.<sup>84</sup> The subsequent conviction of the so-called Wibsey gang was a triumph for Heaton and the men who had worked with him over several weeks in bringing the gang to trial. The first problem was to locate the stolen goods. Having been tipped off that the stolen cloth had not been 'sprung' [disposed of] but was still in the locality, Heaton called upon the experienced Sedgwick. Together they spent a whole day searching various possible hiding places before coming across eight of the ten stolen pieces of cloth concealed in a false roof in a dis-used

church (now used as a school) in Quarmby, two miles from the centre of Huddersfield. There followed a period of surveillance. For a week Heaton and six constables maintained a nightly vigil, secreted in a mistal [a cowshed or byre] opposite the school, awaiting the return of the gang. The final act saw the spectacular arrest of six men during some dramatic events on the night of the 3rd of September 1856. At about 11 p.m. the gang came to collect the stolen cloth. The police were now hidden behind bushes, not far from the look-out set by the gang. The trap almost failed because 'one of the officers was troubled with a cough and Mr Heaton, to prevent him coughing and thus alarming the thieves gave him a lozenge'. It was to no avail: 'at this very moment ... the man left on watch ... called out "all away"' and a meleé ensued as the police sought to retrieve the situation. After a lengthy struggle two men were captured, one having been laid low by 'a terrific blow on the back of the head with his [Heaton's] stick'. The four other men fled the scene but, not to be thwarted, Heaton, who had recognised some of the gang members, ordered 'a coach with a pair of the best horses in Huddersfield' at 3 a.m. and set off with his men the fifteen miles to a beerhouse in Wyke Common (near Bradford) at which lived one of the gang whom Heaton had seen fleeing the school. The first arrests were made at 5 a.m. after Heaton 'hit one of the men, whose nose bled profusely'. The other gang members, including an accomplice who had not been at Huddersfield, were quickly apprehended, with the stolen goods, skeleton keys and other house-breaking tools found in their possession. The final arrest was made at 9 a.m., almost twelve hours after the police operation had begun, when Heaton personally seized the last gang member as he lay in bed in his house at nearby Wibsey Slack, outside Bradford.

Eventually five men were tried at Leeds Quarter Sessions in October 1856 and, in a widely-reported trial, found guilty and each sentenced to eight years' penal servitude. The chairman of the magistrates singled out Heaton for a £10 gratuity because 'very great credit was due to him' but also added that 'the activity, vigilance, zeal and patience of the Superintendent and the police are creditable to them in the highest degree'.<sup>85</sup> This was not a unique case. There had been a similar collaborative effort in the summer of the previous year. In August 1855 a major dogfight, reported as a clash between Lancashire and Yorkshire, was arranged to take place in a field behind the *Shepherd's Boy Inn* in Marsden. A crowd of between 400 and 500 assembled but Heaton mustered 'several

parochial constables' of whom four were initially sent into action by Heaton, who had 'given them previous instructions what to do'.<sup>86</sup> The fight was broken up and forty-three men, including beerhouse keepers, labourers, miners and weavers were brought to trial.<sup>87</sup>

### *Conclusion*

From these and other examples a picture emerges of a small core of men, maybe no more than ten or twelve in number, upon whom Heaton relied in enforcing the law in the Huddersfield district. However, while there was an important degree of coordination and cooperation in policing within this petty sessional district, there is little evidence to suggest similar action between the superintending constables and parochial constables of different districts, who for the most part focussed upon the problems within their localities and only infrequently helped out elsewhere.<sup>88</sup>

The superintending constable system was less inefficient than commonly claimed. There were a number of long-serving and capable men, though none matched Thomas Heaton in terms of his energy and resourcefulness in dealing with both petty and serious crime. Heaton's career demonstrates that it was possible to mobilise a combination of parochial and paid constables as well as working with other local law-enforcement agencies in a campaign against crime. That said, it is important to recognise the limitations of this system. In February 1857 Heaton was presented with a silver snuff box by the Longwood Prosecution Society in recognition of his astuteness and perseverance in bringing the Wibsey gang to trial and of the general 'high estimation' in which he was held. In his response Heaton made predictable reference to his commitment to make property and person safe but added that 'this had been a very difficult task, until the new system of police [the WRCC] had been brought into operation'.<sup>89</sup> Nonetheless, the superintending constable system paved the way for the introduction of the WRCC in terms of personnel, policy priorities and policing practice.<sup>90</sup> There was, therefore, a less dramatic discontinuity in 1856/7 than commonly suggested. Prior to the advent of the WRCC, Heaton, along with the paid constables and more active parochial constables in the Huddersfield district, had found through experience the limitations of proactive policing. They developed a *modus vivendi* with the communities they policed. They learnt that there were very real limits to police powers and



that winning consent required discretion, knowing as much how far or when *not* to act. The enforcement of the licensing laws provides a good example of Heaton's approach. Prosecutions were brought to show that the law could not be flouted but, on several occasions, he only sought costs if there were extenuating circumstances. Similarly, at the annual Brewster's Sessions, he only objected to the licences of the most frequent and blatant transgressors. He was not wholly successful, nor did lessons learnt guarantee success after 1857. Nonetheless, the experience gained under the superintending constable system proved useful in the early years of the new county-wide force. Ultimately the superintending constable system failed to provide a robust alternative to county-wide forces. However, it was not a dead-end but rather an intermediate stage on another route to 'new' policing in England and Wales. Superintending constables like Thomas Heaton and parochial officers, like John Earnshaw, who strove to make a reformed parish-constable system work, were part of a broader tradition of local policing initiatives, which can be traced back to the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, and which contributed to the complexity and dynamism of policing before the 'new' police.

### ***Endnotes***

- 1 Similar approaches to reformed rural policing can be seen in the proposals of the semi-professional, entrepreneurial Bedfordshire constable, J.H. Warden and the Hampshire magistrate, Sir Thomas Baring in the 1820s and 1830s respectively discussed in R D Storch, 'Policing Rural Southern England before the Police', in D Hay & F Snyder, eds., *Policing and Prosecution in Britain, 1750–1850*, Oxford University Press, 1989, esp. pp.217–9.
- 2 C A Williams, *Police Control Systems in Britain, 1775–1975*, Manchester University Press, 2014, p.52. Williams also stresses the proletarianised nature of the 'new' police.
- 3 R D Storch & D Philips, *Policing Provincial England, 1829–1856: The Politics of Reform*, London, Leicester University Press, 1999, p.215. See also C Emsley, *The English Police: A Social and Political History*, 2nd ed., Hemel Hempstead, Longman, 1996, pp.47–9. Buckinghamshire, Herefordshire and Lincolnshire also adopted this system.
- 4 T A Critchley, *A History of Police in England and Wales*, London, Constable, 1978, p.93, Emsley, *English Police*, pp.47–9 and 249, and S H Palmer, *Police and Protest in England and Ireland, 1780–1850*, Cambridge University Press, 1990, p.449.
- 5 Emsley, *English Police*, p.39.
- 6 D Philips, *Crime and Authority in Victorian England*, London, Croom Helm, 1977, p.62.

- 7 Philips and Storch, *Policing Provincial England*, p.231 but see also p.216–8. This conclusion is based on the direct evidence from Buckinghamshire and the assumption that ‘similar cautiously negative conclusions were being drawn elsewhere’ (p.218) but this was not the case in the West Riding of Yorkshire.
- 8 For a more detailed discussion see D Taylor, ‘“No remedy for the inefficiencies of Parochial Constables”: Superintending constables and the transition to ‘new’ policing in the West Riding of Yorkshire in the third quarter of the nineteenth century’, *Crime History & Societies*, 2015, 19(1), pp.67–88, esp. pp.68–70. Much of the evidence is drawn from the partisan First Report of the Select Committee on Police, *Parliamentary Papers*, 1852 (603). See especially the evidence of William Hamilton, esp. QQ 1014–5; and of David Smith Second Report, 1852–3, (715) esp. QQ 3672 and 3691–2.
- 9 First report of the Select Committee on Police, 1852 (603). Evidence of Capt. J Woodford, First Report, esp. QQ 1693 and 1699.
- 10 *LM*, 18 April, 12 & 26 September 1840 and 17 April 1841; *Sheff.I*, 1 July 1843 HC, 10 April 1852. See also Philips & Storch, *Policing Provincial England*, p.202–6.
- 11 *B.Obs*, 29 June 1843 and *Sheff.I*, 1 July 1843.
- 12 West Riding Quarter Sessions Committees: Minutes and Reports, Lock-up Committee Minutes, 1843–59. 3 April 1843 meeting, p.1; 5 May 1843 meeting, p.5 and 9 June meeting, p.8. *West Yorkshire Archive: Wakefield QC/4*. *B.Obs*, 29 June 1843 and *Sheff.I*, 1 July 1843.
- 13 Seven were superintendents of lock-ups and parish constables and fifteen for parish constables only. *Parliamentary Papers, 1852–3* (675) Returns of Superintendent Constables.
- 14 The Huddersfield district comprised the parishes of Almondbury, Kirkburton and Kirkheaton and also that part of the parish of Rochdale (roughly speaking the Saddleworth district) that fell in the West Riding of Yorkshire. In addition, it included the parish of Huddersfield but not the area covered by the town’s improvement act of 1848. Part of Heaton’s salary was paid by Huddersfield ratepayers within the limits of the act and, as a consequence, Heaton was expected to render assistance when asked by the superintendent of Huddersfield police.
- 15 *B.Obs*, 29 June 1848.
- 16 The relieving officers were essentially the front-line forces of the New Poor Law, determining the fate of those applying for relief. Hostility to the New Poor Law was particularly strong in Huddersfield.
- 17 *Sheff.I*, 1 July 1843.
- 18 For the relationship between magistrates and chief constables in the late nineteenth century see J Leigh, *Early County Chief Constables in the north of England, 1880–1905*, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Open University, 2013, esp. chap. three.
- 19 The Worsted Acts and the committees responsible for prosecution were the most important weapons used against workplace embezzlement. B Godfrey, ‘Judicial impartiality and the use of the criminal law against labour’, *Crime, History & Societies*, 1999, 3(2), pp.47–72 describes ‘the worsted committee and their inspectors’ as ‘a private, state-funded detection and prosecution agency’, p.58 fn.5. See also B Godfrey and D J Cox, *Policing the Factory: Theft, Private*

- Policing and the Law in Modern England*, London, Bloomsbury, 2013, and for prosecution societies see D Philips, 'Good Men to Associate and Bad Men to Conspire: Associations for the Prosecution of Felons in England, 1760–1860' in Hay & Snyder, *Policing and Prosecution*.
- 20 R D Storch, 'The Policeman as Domestic Missionary' *Journal of Social History*, 1976, 9, pp.481–509 at p.484.
  - 21 *LM*, 24 September 1848. The attack on Beerhouse Brothels is discussed above in chapter five.
  - 22 Interestingly, this was the last time that 'traditional' November 5th celebrations took place in the centre of Huddersfield. For a general discussion of the 'problem' of working-class leisure see H Cunningham, *Leisure in the Industrial Revolution*, London, Croom Helm, 1980. Many of the 'rioters' were otherwise respectable young middle-class men who resented Heaton's interference.
  - 23 The extent to which Heaton's concern with Sabbath-breaking was driven by religious beliefs is unclear. He makes no explicit reference to his personal beliefs when bringing prosecutions but, in a town with strong non-conformist traditions he may well have had a strong religious belief but one that he did not feel it appropriate to articulate. It is clear that other enthusiastic figures, such as William Payne, acted on strong religious beliefs.
  - 24 See *HC*, 3 June & 29 July 1854. Among his more bizarre but successful prosecutions was that of a seventy-year old man for shaving (another man) on a Sunday. On another occasion he prosecuted three men for watching a cricket-match, also on a Sunday, but the case was thrown out.
  - 25 *HC*, 7 Aug. 1852. See also similar cases in Almondbury (*HEx*, 14 August 1852), Milnsbridge (*HEx*, 7 August 1852) and the Isle of Skye (*HEx*, 5 February 1853).
  - 26 *HC*, 10 Jun. 1854.
  - 27 *HC*, 8 Jan. 1853. Nor was this a one-off event. See *HC*, 9 Jan. 1858 for details of another of Heaton's Christmas Day peregrinations. The earliest reference to Heaton's Christmas visiting comes from 1850 when a beer-house keeper in the village of Berry Brow fell foul of him but the Superintendent must have been somewhat provoked by the name of the beer-house – *Exchange Evil for Good!*
  - 28 See for example *HEx*, 23 February 1854 and *HC*, 3 January, 26 June & 18 December 1852; 29 January, 11 June, 2 & 9 July 1853, 20 January 1855 & 16 February 1856. See D Taylor, *Policing the Victorian Town: The Development of the Police in Middlesbrough, c. 1840–1914*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 2002, chapter four for an analysis of crime in Middlesbrough in the North Riding of Yorkshire.
  - 29 *HC*, 29 January 1853. See also 14 December 1850, 11 January, 22 February & 28 June 1851, 7 August 1852, & 15 October 1853 and *HEx*, 3 June 1854.
  - 30 *HC*, 16 June 1855. For a more general discussion of anxiety over working-class juvenile leisure see J Springhall, *Youth Popular Culture and Moral Panics: Penny Gaffs to Gangsta-Rap, 1830–1996*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1998 (esp. chapter one) and of Victorian explanations of criminal behaviour M J Weiner, *Reconstructing the Criminal: Culture, Law and Policy in England, 1830–1914*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990, and D Taylor, *Hooligans*,

*Harlots and Hangmen: Crime and Punishment in Victorian Britain*, Santa Barbara, ABC-Clio, 2010, chapter five.

- 31 *HC*, 5 & 12 May 1855. This is discussed further in chapter ten.
- 32 *HC*, 19 April 1856.
- 33 *HC*, 19 April, 10 & 24 May 1856.
- 34 *Hull Packet*, 27 April 1849, *LM*, 21 & 28 July 1849.
- 35 *LM*, 19 Jan. & 16 March, 1850, *HC*, 21 January & 14 December 1850.
- 36 *HC*, 22 February 1851. For similar successes in arresting thieves see the *LM*, 13 July 1850 and the *HC*, 15 March 1851.
- 37 *HC*, 29 April 1854. The wider coverage emphasised the audacity of the crime rather than the skills of the police.
- 38 *HC*, 5 April 1851. For other cases of horse theft see *HC*, 16 August 1851, 30 October & 27 November 1852, 10 & 17 November 1855 & 23 & 30 August 1856.
- 39 *HC*, 19 April 1851.
- 40 *HC*, 26 April & 19 July 1851.
- 41 See for example *HC*, 8 February, 1 March, 14 & 21 June 1851, 29 April & 27 May 1854; and *HEx*, 13 December 1851 & 13 March 1852. See also examples of Kaye working with parochial constable Earnshaw, *HC*, 4 January 1851, 13 September 1851, 14 May 1853 & 14 July 1855 but see *HC*, 2 November 1850 for magisterial complaint that Heaton was misusing the Worsted Act. Embezzlement in Upper Agbrigg is discussed more fully in chapter ten.
- 42 For example, the arrest for gambling in Scammonden, *HC*, 21 September 1850.
- 43 Illicit distillation was probably on the decline in the 1850s in the country as a whole. See B Harrison, *Drink and the Victorians: The Temperance Question in England, 1815–1872*, Keele University Press, 1994, pp.305, 327 & 359.
- 44 *HC*, 24 May 1851. It is not clear from the report whether there was a suspicion that there was also a case of embezzlement. Kaye appears to have taken his civic responsibilities seriously, on one occasion coming to the aid of a town constable who was being assaulted by the brothers Hulke and on another occasion trapping a mad dog and restraining it until it could be shot! *HC*, 20 March 1852.
- 45 *HC*, 20 August 1853, 12 August 1854, 19 January & 14 June 1856, 10 January & 7 February 1857.
- 46 *LM*, 25 May 1850. Such evidence, nonetheless, suggests a greater degree of activity among parochial constables than previously thought.
- 47 *HC*, 13 April 1850 and 3 & 10 November 1855.
- 48 See for example *HC*, 7 June 1856 when parochial constable Hoyle was charged with wilful neglect of duty, having been the only parochial constable not to attend during the peace rejoicings. It is difficult to establish how often Heaton took out disciplinary proceedings.
- 49 *HC*, 26 April 1851.
- 50 The handbook appears not to have survived but see *HEx*, 22 April 1854 for reference to first publication date.
- 51 *HC*, 19 April 1856.

- 52 *HC*, 10 August and 2 November 1850 and 3 April 1852. See also 11 January 1851 when two Lockwood constables were dismissed as ‘two officious Dogberrys’ as they summonsed various landlords for infringing licensing laws.
- 53 *HC*, 7 September 1850, 26 April 1851, 19 August 54 and 18 August 1855. Kaye won first prizes for his baking pears and yellow savoys but there is no evidence of him bringing any cases to court.
- 54 *HC*, 10 February 1855.
- 55 *HC*, 19 May & 16 June 1855.
- 56 *HC*, 18 September 1852. See also 3 January, 27 November & 4 December 1852.
- 57 *HC*, 14 September, 16 November and 28 December 1850, 31 March, 6 September & 4 October 1851. See also 4 June & 5 November 1853 for prosecutions for false weights and dealing with a suicide.
- 58 *HC*, 18 January, 1 February, 19 April 1851, 8 October 1853, 9 December 1854 & 3 March 1855.
- 59 *HC*, 8 October 1853.
- 60 *HC*, 27 April 1850, See also 12 October 1850 and 19 April 1851 for other examples of assaults on Riley.
- 61 *HC*, 16 November 1850. For examples of his involvement with petty crime see *HC*, 11 May 1850, 3 & 31 May, 13 September & 27 December 1851, 14 February, 29 May, 4 September, 13 November 1852, 8 January, 16 April, 25 June, 17 September, 12 & 26 November and 10 December 1853, 18 February, 15 April & 2 September 1854, 12 & 26 May 1855, 30 August & 20 December 1856.
- 62 *HC*, 13 September & 27 December 1851. See also 28 May 1853 & 20 December 1856 for similar joint action.
- 63 *HC*, 9 April 1853.
- 64 *HC*, 10 February 1855.
- 65 *HC*, 18 February 1854. Netherwood had given evidence against the same man in December 1852 and there was an ongoing feud between the two men.
- 66 *HC*, 10 February 1855.
- 67 *HC*, 19 April 1856. In contrast, Heaton claimed other parochial constables could not always be relied upon to respond to orders and discharge their duty.
- 68 *HEx*, 19 April 1856.
- 69 *HC*, 19 April 1856.
- 70 *HEx*, 22 January 1853.
- 71 *HC*, 18 February 1854 for a brief reference to the constable of Marsh and *HC*, 17 September 1853 for a longer piece on Goodall.
- 72 *HC*, 8 March 1851. Assaults on Glover are reported on 11 May & 17 August 1850 and 18 January 51 (the assault took place on Christmas Day, 1850). Glover was subjected to ‘opprobrious epithets’ including ‘Duck Stealer’ and ‘Highway Robber’.
- 73 *HC*, 12 April 1851.
- 74 *HC*, 8 March 1851.
- 75 *HC*, 12 April 1851.

- 76 *HC*, 26 July 1851. Both men had previously been fined for assaulting Glover, though it was claimed on behalf of one of the defendants that he had been the victim of three or four summonses from Glover. See also *HC* 26 April, 12 July 51 & 25 October 1851.
- 77 *HC*, 11, 18 & 25 September 1852. Two years later but 'there appeared an overwhelming majority against a paid constable' because it was widely (but erroneously) believed that it would mean 'a policeman in uniform with a salary of some £50 or £60 per annum'. *HC*, 24 February 1854.
- 78 *HC*, 25 August 1855.
- 79 *HC* and *HEx*, 17 February 1855.
- 80 *HC* and *HEx*, 8 March & 5 April 1856.
- 81 *HC* and *HEx*, 17 February 1855.
- 82 See also *HC*, 17 August 1850, 1 February & 16 August 1851 for examples of Heaton working with men of the Huddersfield force to deal with dogfighting, prize fighting and cockfighting respectively and 17 June 1854 for a joint venture with the Kirkburton constable to prevent a cockfight. In November 1854 Heaton broke up a gambling den in Golcar in conjunction with Superintendent Thomas and two other senior men from the Huddersfield force. These cases are discussed in more detail in chapter ten.
- 83 *HC*, 25 August & 3 September 1856.
- 84 The following account is drawn from the reports in the *HC* 25 August & 3 September 1856.
- 85 Italics added. For details of the trial see *LM*, 18 October 1856.
- 86 *HC*, 14 & 28 April 1855.
- 87 *HC*, 15 September 1855.
- 88 Too much should not be made of the fact that George Shepley of Scisset was involved in the Wibsey venture. This appears to be the only serious crime in which he was involved and the location of Scisset, less than ten miles to the south of Huddersfield and within the Upper Agbrigg petty sessional district, was hardly a barrier to cooperation.
- 89 *HC*, 14 February 1857.
- 90 Active parochial constables such as John Earnshaw (Holmfirth) and William Taylor (Honley) became members of the WRCC but others, notably Riley (Berry Brow) did not. Riley remained an active parochial officer throughout the 1860s.