10 The medium-sized forces: Halifax and Huddersfield

THE SHEER SIZE of Leeds and the spectacular growth of Bradford has attracted considerable attention across the years. However, nearby Halifax and Huddersfield were important, and growing centres of trade and commerce, which, coincidentally, saw the foundation of their police forces in the same year, 1848. Police histories, with the early emphasis on London, and more recently on the great cities, have virtually nothing to say about these towns.[1] Yet the development of the forces in the two towns was shaped by distinctive factors that add further to an understanding of the complexities of policing in the West Riding.

Table 10.1: Population of Halifax & Huddersfield, 1851-1901(000s)

	Halifax	Huddersfield
1851	34	31
1861	47	61
1871	66	70
1881	74	82
1891	90	95
1901	105	95

Source: B R Mitchell & P Deane, *Abstract of British Historical Statistics*, Cambridge University Press, 1962

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Halifax, that 'astonishing trading town'* at the centre of worsted production in the West Riding during the early years of the industrial revolution, remained a thriving town with a diversifying economy, even as it was overtaken by Bradford.[2] Its governance was in the hands of commissioners or trustees who derived their powers from legislation dating back to 1762 and improvement acts in 1768 and 1823. In 1848 it became a municipal borough whose boundaries were extended significantly in 1866 and 1891. In accordance with the 1835 Municipal Corporations Act, Halifax established a police force in 1848. Huddersfield, in contrast, was an 'insignificant cluster of irregularly built lanes' in the early nineteenth century with 'houses poor and scattered, the streets narrow, crooked and dirty.'[3] By 1837, however, *White's Directory* described it as 'a populous, flourishing and handsome market town,' governed under an improvement act of 1820. With the passing of a further improvement act in 1848, the commissioners established a police force which operated in an increasingly-anachronistic area of 700 acres within 1200 yards of the town's market cross specified in the 1820 act. It was not until 1868 that the town became a municipal borough, at which point its policed area expanded to 10,000 acres, with a further boundary extension in 1891.

The Halifax force grew from twenty-five at its inception to thirty-five a decade later. New boundaries necessitated a force of fifty-six in 1866. Thereafter, the force grew steadily in size. By the 1880s the authorised strength had reached seventy-five. Further boundary changes in 1893 saw numbers rise to ninety. By the end of Victoria's reign, the force numbered 107 men. The size of the Huddersfield force remained largely unchanged (thirty to thirty-two men) until boundary changes in 1868 brought a dramatic expansion to sixty-eight men. By the end of the 1880s the Huddersfield force was eighty-four strong, rising to 112 in the early 1890s and topping 120 at the end of the century. As they grew in size, both forces developed more complex structures. The demands for managerial and administrative skills grew but, particularly in Huddersfield, there were significant weaknesses in early leadership.

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* Charles Dibdin, the prolific songwriter and composer, perhaps best remembered for 'Tom Bowling,' described Halifax thus in his 1788 *The Musical Tour of Mr Dibdin*. He deemed Halifax 'the most musical spot for its size in the kingdom' but also described the town as 'black [and] dismal.'

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Table 10.2 Policed population and acreage, Halifax & Huddersfield, 1857 – 1901

	Halifax Population per constable	Halifax Acres per constable	Huddersfield Population per constable	Huddersfield Acres per constable
1857	959	28	833	23
1861	1000	26	738	23
1871	1002	54	1003	145
1881	987	50	899	115
1891	986	45	852	105
1901	980	130	702	99

Source: HMIC annual reports

Police/population ratios worsened in the third quarter of the nineteenth century, more so in Huddersfield. The situation remained largely unchanged in Halifax thereafter but improved appreciably in Huddersfield. Indeed, by the end of the century the Huddersfield ratio was comparable with that of the riding's great towns.

The early years, 1848 – c.1870

In 1820 'an Act for lighting, watching and cleansing the Town of *Huddersfield*' was passed, followed three years later by another 'Act for paving, lighting, cleansing, watching and improving the Township of Halifax.' Under these act night watches were established. In Halifax, where an additional two day-constables were later appointed, there was general satisfaction with policing arrangements, especially as in 1844 beats were reorganised and a compendium of rules and regulations issued to every man in the force. Despite two bodies responsible for policing in the town, there was no great pressure among the town's elites for more than improving existing practices.[4] Thus, on the eve of incorporation, Halifax was policed by two day constables and twenty night watchmen, overlooked by a recently created watch committee. Huddersfield had between eight and twelve nightwatchmen (in the summer and winter months respectively), a day constable and two paid day constables but, in contrast, there was growing dissatisfaction with the lack of coordination between the three bodies responsible for policing and

demands for a new force.[5] Perversely, 1848 was more of a break with the past in Halifax, where the newly-appointed watch committee stressed the need for younger men, that is aged twenty-three to twenty-four, physically strong, morally upright, industrious, disciplined and literate.[6] Such paragons of 'policely' virtue were not to be found among the town's existing officers, many of whom were either too small, too old or illiterate. The new men were overwhelmingly local but the break with the past was not total. John Rawson, a 'well known and respected' detective, was retained. So was the highly-experienced Thomas Spiers, who was appointed superintendent of a force comprising an inspector, a detective, four sergeants and eighteen constables.[7] Spiers had been in the Leeds borough force for seven years before becoming deputy constable under the old system in Halifax. Spier's career highlights the fluidity in mid-nineteenth century policing, for, in addition, he went on to serve five years as the superintending constable for the West Morley petty sessional division, before joining the WRCC in 1857. In Huddersfield, the pattern of recruitment was opposite that of Halifax. Men were brought in from outside to fill two of the three senior posts – inspector of the night constables, John Thomas, came highly recommended from Ripon and the night sergeant, John Brown, had been serving in the Manchester force. Only the superintendent, John Cheesebrough was local and he had to retire through ill-health shortly after appointment to be replaced by Thomas. The captain of the old night watch was interviewed but not appointed. Six members of the old watch (of eight interviewed) were appointed as were the two paid parochial constables and the patrolman, responsible for the town gaol. Eight new men were appointed as constables but 60 per cent of the new force were old! The contrast between the two towns is surprising, given the radical/chartist presence (70 per cent) on the newly-elected Halifax council.[8] Fears of the police as an oppressive army rapidly evaporated.[9] The one attempt to reduce police expenditure (in 1850 proposed by the radical alderman Ramsden) was defeated by seventeen votes to nine.[10] The radical presence in Huddersfield was limited and attempts to reduce expenditure on the police in the early 1850s were comfortably defeated, though there was a small cut in numbers in the early 1860s.

The performances of the two forces also differed markedly. In the first two decades, 150 men were recruited in Huddersfield and 170 in Halifax.[11] 56 per cent left the Huddersfield Force within their first year compared with 35

per cent in Halifax. The annual average turnover was roughly 30 per cent in Huddersfield, roughly 20 per cent in Halifax. Overall resignation rates were only slightly higher in Huddersfield (28 per cent compared with 25 per cent), though they were worryingly high during superintendent Beaumont's tenure in the mid-1850s. Overall dismissal rates were much higher in Huddersfield (46 per cent) than Halifax (20 per cent). Again, individual years were highly problematic. In 1849 half the Huddersfield force was dismissed; in 1857 60 per cent of the force were dismissed or resigned; while between 1858 and 1860 the thirty-strong Huddersfield force experienced twelve resignations and fifteen dismissals. As a consequence, whereas 33 per cent of the Halifax cohort went on to serve for twenty years or more, compared with less than 10 per cent in Huddersfield. The emerging core of long-serving men was significantly larger in Halifax.

The contrast between the two towns is perplexing. Their economic fortunes were comparable and they recruited from a similar labour pool. Good management, from the watch committee and senior police officers, was of the essence and it was sadly lacking in Huddersfield. It was unfortunate that Cheeseborough, the first Huddersfield police superintendent was soon struck down by illness but the appointments of Thomas and Brown were strikingly ill-judged. Brown was dismissed in June 1849, having been found absent from duty, asleep on duty and discovered in a brothel, while on duty. Two months later the watch committee recommended the dismissal of Thomas for drunkenness and neglect of duty. The recommendation was not acted upon. Thomas was reprimanded and, within months, was appointed superintendent. Indiscipline at the top was mirrored by indiscipline in the Huddersfield ranks. Clashes – physical and verbal – did nothing for the discipline of the force but the situation was not helped by the inconsistent approach to discipline adopted by the watch committee. 'Gross neglect of duty' generally led to instant dismissal, as Clayton Connard found when he was found ratting in a local beerhouse, stripped to the waist and challenging all and sundry to a fight. But the treatment of minor offences -- neglect of duty and drunkenness – was more varied. For some, a first offence brought a reprimand or fine and a second offence dismissal but for a large number (sixty-four men) leniency was shown by the watch committee, usually on the grounds that the individual was deemed to be 'active and intelligent' or 'otherwise an efficient officer.' Nineteen men took advantage of a second

chance and in the case of Hugh Mellor, Ramsden White and especially William Townend made a significant contribution to the force but thirty-two men so treated were subsequently dismissed and a further thirteen resigned. The force had several men with patchy disciplinary records, or worse. Detective Sergeant Marsden, for one, was eventually dismissed after four drink-related charges in as many years; his successor, Nathaniel Partridge, had a similar problem with drink and debt that compromised his career and led to enforced resignation. Hamer Sedgwick was fined or cautioned seven times in an eight-year career which saw him twice dismissed. Joseph Graham managed to survive for twenty years despite a string of drink-related offences which finally saw him dismissed as 'a habitual drunkard.' The Halifax force was not without its problem officers but not on the same scale. As the *Huddersfield Chronicle* concluded 'the continual reports of drunkenness … [reflected either] very little care exercised in the choosing of men … or that the force must be in a very defective state of supervision.'[12]

Despite high variations and disciplinary problems, notably in Huddersfield, neither town were formally adjudged to be inefficient. Indeed, when colonel Cobbe sought to incorporate Huddersfield into the WRCC, HMIC Woodford made it known that he believed the town would be better policed if it stayed independent. But it is difficult to see what this meant in practice. A partial snapshot can be gained from the Huddersfield watch committee minutes in the late-1850s, which contain information on individual performances.[13] The most detailed figures relate to the year 1859 when the force comprised thirty-two men, eight of whom had been in post from the outset but seven were in their first year and a further twelve (40 per cent) had less than five years' service. Two men were on long-term sick and seven had been disciplined that year. From a policed population of approximately 25,000, ninety-eight felonies were recorded and 491 summary offences, or roughly three felonies and sixteen summary offences per constable. These figures hardly suggest a heavily policed town but, in fact, the work of the force was unevenly distributed. Three-quarters of the force were involved with three or fewer felonies, including ten men with none at all during the year. The newly-appointed detective Partridge alone was responsible for twenty-six cases, approximately 25 per cent of the total, and three other men, two inspectors (Townend and White) and sergeant Thorpe, collectively responsible for a further twenty-one cases.

Responsibility for summary offences was also unevenly distributed across the force, though to a less marked degree. Partridge topped the table with fifty cases, followed closely by Thorpe (forty-five) and, at a distant, by Townend and White (twenty each). 70 per cent of the force had twenty or fewer cases to their name, of whom eight had fewer than ten. Unsurprisingly, these were overwhelmingly recently-appointed men. More surprising, was the mixed performance of experienced men. Putting aside the two men with health problems, six of the eleven had only between ten and nineteen cases to their names. Arrests and summonses were only a partial measure of police activity but the figures raise questions about the efficiency and impact of the police. These figures reinforce the qualitative evidence of poorly-led force of limited efficiency, though the absence of comparable information for nearby towns, including Halifax, makes further comparison impossible.

The question of leadership was a final and significant difference between the two towns. By the time of incorporation, 1868, Huddersfield was on to its fifth (or sixth, if the brief, illness-terminated career of Cheeseborough is included) head constable.** In contrast, Halifax had but two in the same period.[14] These very different experiences raise important questions about the leadership and management of the police and the relationship between chief constables and watch committees.

Thomas Spiers was already an experienced policeman when he was appointed superintendent in 1848. In recommending him, the Halifax watch committee highlighted that as deputy constable the 'discharge of his duties has been unexceptionable.'[15] He was, it continued, expected, 'next to the watch committee, be responsible for the efficiency of the men.' The watch committee kept a close eye on recruitment, discipline, pay and police priorities, such as enforcing various of the town's eighty-eight bye-laws.[16] In other words, Spiers was to take orders and ensure that they were carried out. Nor did this change when John Pearson was promoted from inspector to superintendent following Spier's resignation in 1851. The watch committed prioritised such matters as gambling, on the streets and in beerhouses, and prostitution, in brothels, beerhouses and dram shops, but took a pragmatic approach. Drunks

** Huddersfield was unusual but not unique in this respect. By 1869 Birkenhead was on its eighth head constable since 1837. Other problem forces include Boston, Dover, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Plymouth and Portsmouth.

capable of walking were not to be arrested and only the worst brothels to be prosecuted.[17] Pearson, like Spiers before him, was happy to take orders and go along with a low-key, semi-consensual and non-confrontational form of policing.[18] From 1857, the initial government inspections were generally positive – the men were in 'a very satisfactory state of efficiency,' organisation was improved in 1860 and 1861, and the response to the need for an extra constable in 1862 was prompt – and the relationship between watch committee and superintendent constructive. The situation deteriorated from the mid-1860s onwards. In part, this was due to external factors – there was 'difficulty in obtaining good and steady men' since augmentation in 1866, which had seen the appointment of a 'considerable proportion' of inexperienced men – but there was also a growing sense that earlier police pragmatism had turned into something more sinister. The law was not being enforced with sufficient rigour, not least because of an over-cosy relationship between the watch committee, especially its long-serving members such as Aldermen Swales and Walsh, and the police superintendent. The first doubts emerged as early as 1863. Despite concern with the number of 'Houses of Ill-fame' in slum districts of Halifax identified by Pearson, the watch committee refused to name their owners in 1863, thereby protecting those members who were slum landlords.[19] More serious was the growing concern with the failure to enforce licensing laws. The temperance movement, strong in Halifax, began to assert increasing influence on the watch committee in the late-1860s. Further, HMIC Woodford privately expressed concern over the lack of action against law-breaking licensees. Pearson, a man known to like a drink, was seen to be too close to the drinks interest in Halifax. There were allegations that he turned a blind eye to out-of-hours drinking – even of participating in lock-ins – and used his position to stop officers bringing certain landlords to court. In March 1872 the recently appointed detective-inspector, John Lawton, unusually an outsider from the Manchester force, resigned because of the obstacles thrown in his way when trying to prosecute the landlord of the notorious Black Bull Inn.[20] A letter in the *Halifax Courier* from alderman Longbottom drew further attention to the alleged failings of superintendent Pearson.[21] In the face of demands from influential local temperance leaders, the watch committee held an enquiry.[22] Opinion in the town was divided. Pearson was forced to resign but the council was split. The acrimony generated by the incident cast a dark shadow over a long career in

policing and threatened to undermine the watch committee's reputation for efficient management of the police.

There might have been a sense of *schadenfreude* in Huddersfield in 1872 as its history of police management and leadership was poor. Over two decades it proved impossible to establish a long-term working relationship between watch committee and the police superintendent. Initially, the situation appeared positive. John Thomas, for all his personal failings, was initially seen as an effective, hands-on officer, taking an active part in quelling trouble in Huddersfield's notorious Castlegate area and being acclaimed as 'most praiseworthy' in the local press.[23] Rather like Spiers in Halifax, Thomas was doing what the watch committee wanted. Conflict between Thomas and the watch committee broke out in 1855 but the roots of the clash go back to the earlier electoral success of an 'economy' faction led by C H Jones.*** Jones' first victim was the town's superintendent of scavengers, John Jarrett, but it was clear that he had his eyes on the police, opining that 'sufficient supervision was not exercised … by Superintendent Thomas.'[24] Jones was not simply interested in waste (or, in the case of Jarrett criminal behaviour), he wanted to introduce a business model of local government, in which the elected commissioners acted as a board of directors, with Jones as 'CEO' and the police superintendent as a senior manager.[25] Thomas, in contrast, remained a hands-on thief-taker. Jones' views were shaped by his knowledge of the larger, more bureaucratic Manchester police force and he never doubted that they could be transferred to a smaller force. Jones and his supporters also had a clear view of the personal qualities of a head constable. Thomas, with his well-known predilection for drinking and gambling, did not fit the bill. The first major clash between the two men – and personal animosity exacerbated matters – centred on the accusation that Thomas was drinking and gambling at the Golden Lion Inn, Pontefract, while on duty taking a prisoner to the quarter sessions. A special meeting of the commissioners was called and, after a vituperative debate, the vote went against Thomas. Adverts were placed for a new police superintendent and, after lengthy consideration of applicants, the watch committee decided the best man for the job was – John Thomas! The decision provoked a crisis in local politics. At a second special meeting, Jones, and his supporters, launched an excoriating attack

*** Jones went on to become the first mayor of the town in 1868.

on the professional and personal qualities of Thomas. The commissioners were divided and a vote for dismissal resulted in a tied vote, with the casting vote with the chair – C H Jones! Nothing new emerged from this unseemly clash of views – it was hardly a debate – but Jones made clear his belief in the primacy of the watch committee and its responsibility to micro-manage the force.[****]

The departure of Thomas provided Jones an opportunity to appoint a man who would implement 'a new system [with] new discipline, new orders [and] new men.'[26] George Beaumont, inspector of the night police, Halifax, was the chosen new broom. With powerful support among commissioners, and especially among members of the watch committee, Beaumont, adopting an office-based managerial stance, set about his task, dismissing men deemed to be inefficient and improving discipline, including the banning of smoking on duty. The relationship between watch committee and head constable could hardly have been closer. The new era, however, was short-lived. Beaumont lost the support of the force, several of whom resigned, including the long-serving and well-regarded inspector Sedgwick. Jones and Beaumont were accused in the *Huddersfield Chronicle* of presiding over 'a system of espionage,' characterised by 'pettifogging interference of every kind,' not to mention fabricating charges against Sedgwick.[27] A special meeting of the watch committee considered the efficiency of the police and also the grievances of the constables. The latter were dismissed as 'paltry' and Beaumont was rewarded with a salary increase.[28] Unfortunately for Jones, Beaumont was less than a paragon of moral virtue. Although he survived a high-profile sexual scandal –he was accused of seeking sexual favours from a female prisoner –his 'series of petty but fraudulent acts,' over several months led to his dismissal.[29] The first attempt to implement Jones' model and style of management had been tried and failed.

Although Jones was no longer on the watch committee, several of his supporters remained and participated in the appointment of Samuel Priday, inspector of B division, Manchester. Priday's experience made him an obvious person for the post but he did not share the approach of the Jones faction. Based on his recent Manchester experience, he believed that, as chief

**** The matter did not end there. Thomas met Jones on the streets of Huddersfield, tweaked his nose in public and found himself in court at the Quarter Sessions at Wakefield, where he was fined £5 for assault.

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constable, he was responsible for the day-to-day management of the forces and that his recommendation, especially regarding disciplinary matters, would be acted upon by the watch committee. While he was able to improve morale among the men, his position was weakened by the watch committee's decision to reduce the size of the force in the early 1860s but it was the determination of the watch committee to be involved in the day-to-day running of the force that undermined Priday's authority and provoked him to write to the local press, complaining about 'a want of … cordiality and support.'[30] He accused an unnamed 'principal officer of the Commissioners' who took upon himself to 'countermand my orders.' Further, he felt undermined by the refusal of the watch committee to support him by punishing appropriately men 'brought before the Committee for improper conduct.' Priday spelt out an alternative, not significantly different from the practice emerging in Halifax, in which the head constable could 'exercise his judgment' in carrying out the functions of a superintendent of police but to no avail.

Priday resigned in 1862, to be replaced by William Hannan, the major figure in the foundation of the 'new police' in Middlesbrough. Initially, it looked as if the right man had been chosen. Hannan looked to bring flexibility and efficiency through the amalgamation of the night and day force, the issue of new regulations, improved record keeping as well as pressing for a superannuation scheme, for all of which he was complimented by the watch committee and HMIC. He played a very active role in restricting the beerhouse/brothel problem that stained the reputation of the town . The election of 1865 was the start of Hannan's problem. On the day, things ran very smoothly thanks to the combined efforts of Hannan and Cobbe, chief constable of the WRCC but in the subsequent parliamentary inquiry, to which he was called to give evidence, Hannan was accused by local politicians, notably Joel Denham, of giving evidence in a partisan manner. Local elections in 1867, which brought a 'godly leaven of the Puritan element,' added to his problems. His suggestion of low-key policing of the November 5th celebrations, probably wise in terms of police/public relations, was rejected by the watch committee. The outcome was predictable. Bonfires were lit and squibs let off in St. George's Square and the 'over-zealous and frog swelling pride,' particularly on the part of certain members of the watch committee, made them 'the butts of fun, frolic and scorn of the assembled crowd.'[31] Rather than accept responsibility for an ill-judged approach, the recently-

elected 'Puritans' blamed Hannan. More damaging were the criticisms of his alleged failure to deal with the problem of drunkenness in the town. Hannan had been a critic of beerhouses and the evils attendant upon them, but he found himself under attack over allegations that Huddersfield had one of the worst records in the country. Hannan produced a report for the watch committee, which made clear his condemnation of beerhouses in particular and also highlighted the varying ways in which drunkenness was recorded. In Huddersfield all known cases of drunkenness were recorded, which made the town look worse than others who chose a less strict approach. His arguments failed to carry the day and, once again, he found himself criticised by Denham and his supporters for not improving the moral condition of the town. Taken together with his declining health, these criticisms led to Hannan's resignation. It is unlikely he would have been able to stay on much longer as his critics in the commission were already letting it be known that they did not see him as a suitable figure to lead the larger force needed for the about-to-be incorporated town. Hannan left the force to become the landlord of the Bull and Mouth Inn, ruefully noting that 'not one Superintendent had left Huddersfield to go to a better situation but had left in disgrace.'[32] Over two decades successive local politicians were unable to develop a constructive relationship with the town's various superintendents of police. The management model that Jones brought from Manchester was tried and failed twice. Notwithstanding Hannan's somewhat rough-and-ready ways, it was not immediately obvious that he lacked the qualities to be a successful head of a small to medium-sized provincial force. Indeed, he had demonstrated his worth in a more problematic town, Middlesbrough. Likewise, Priday was a capable man whose position was undermined by the actions of the watch committee. On the other hand, Thomas was an old-fashioned 'thief-taker' with a poor disciplinary record, hardly leadership material, whereas Beaumont was simply a bad choice, lacking the managerial, let alone, moral qualities to do the job well.

The first generation of 'new' policing in the two towns was strikingly different. Notwithstanding the inglorious end to Pearson's career in 1872, the overall experience in Halifax was positive. The force was less unstable and saw the emergence of a larger cohort of experienced, career constables than in Huddersfield. Further, the relationship between the Halifax watch committee and its superintendents of police was for the most part good,

which could not be said of Huddersfield. Nonetheless, the signs of difficulty in recruiting suitable men during the period of economic growth in the 1860s, coupled with Pearson's more minimalist style of policing and his eventual fall from grace gave rise to a feeling that policing in Halifax needed to be put back on an even keel. Even more so in Huddersfield where the force was poorly-managed, often ill-disciplined and less stable and the town faced the challenge of incorporation. In both towns there was a feeling of trepidation as the faced a new decade with new men leading the police.

Refounding and consolidation, c.1870 to 1900

Charles Tempest Clarkson was the man chosen from an initial field of thirty-eight to be the new superintendent of police in Halifax. He combined both experience and ambition and appeared to be the man to restore integrity and efficiency into the town force. His self-confidence was considerable and he moved quickly to implement his ideas to invigorate and modernize the force. The force was to take a pro-active role, strictly enforcing the law, particularly in relation to drunkenness, prostitution and Sunday trading. Some of his reforms were relatively minor and uncontroversial – helmets, whistles, improved quality uniforms, and the photographing of criminals. Other changes – accelerated promotion and greater use of the recently-introduced merit class – proved divisive as he set about creating a force in his image, promoting sympathetic officers and marginalizing others. Of ten newly-promoted sergeants, only one was from the Pearson era. Clarkson sought to improve discipline, and at the same time strengthen his position. He recommended the dismissal of inappropriate men – at least sixteen men were dismissed for drink-related offences, including ten for their first offence. He encouraged the resignation, on the grounds of ill-health, of four long-serving sergeants. He also believed that the watch committee should not interfere with the day-to-day running of the police.[33] In 1873 alone, roughly a third of the force left, seventeen men resigned, including at least seven experienced officers, and a further five were dismissed. The Clarkson cohort, recruited between 1872 and 1876, comprised some 100 men. Just under 40 per cent left within the first twelve months and almost 80 per cent less than five years. Only ten men, or just over 10 per cent served for twenty years or

more. 65 per cent of the cohort resigned and 33 per cent were dismissed. These statistics were worse than those for the first cohort of Halifax police. Further, Clarkson's workforce strategy effectively divided the force in two, those he had appointed or promoted and those inherited from the previous regime, many with a residual sympathy for Pearson, who, by now a local councillor remained a potent focus of opposition. It also meant that the force comprised many inexperienced constables led by equally inexperienced officers. The rigorous enforcement of laws and by-laws, especially the 1872 Licensing Act, was initially welcomed in many quarters, not least the new watch committee but the continuing zeal with which his men brought to their work soon became counter-productive. The police were increasingly seen as arrogant and overbearing. Hostility was not confined to 'the usual suspects,' of unskilled working-class youths and men, particularly from the Irish community. Respectable working-class men and women, petty bourgeois shop-keepers, and even middle-class drinkers criticised the police as they fell foul of the law. The dismissal of detective inspector Birkenshaw and sergeant Holmes for improper conduct and gross breaches of duty led to widespread criticism of police behaviour. The wrongful arrest of Patrick Manley and Henry Holland (subsequently re-arrested) created such ill-feeling that Clarkson was booed in the streets. Finally, his operational independence brought him into conflict with the watch committee. The positive relationship of the early months soured. His defence of his men and his resentment at being asked to account for police behaviour by the watch committee raised questions about his judgment and fitness for the post. The town council set up a special commission to look into the behaviour of the police and within days Clarkson resigned. Despite seeing himself as the expert on policing, Clarkson failed on three counts. First, police actions alienated swathes of the town's populace in a way that threatened effective policing and undermined popular support. Second, Clarkson's beliefs and actions undermined the necessary working partnership with the watch committee. Third, it left the force itself divided, demoralised and distrusted.

Charles Pole, Clarkson's successor, was appointed for his experience, having worked his way through the ranks to chief constable of Grantham, his administrative skills as chief clerk of the Leicester force and his less divisive man-management.[34] He served from 1876 to 1903, the last two decades characterised by a striking degree of stability in terms of retention and a

significant reduction in indiscipline. In total, over 200 men were recruited, of whom eighty-four (42 per cent) served for twenty years for more, and ninety-three (47 per cent) who were pensioned. The number of men leaving in their first year was low (thirty or 15 per cent), with a clear contrast between the opening and closing decades of his tenure. Overall, resignation levels remained high but there was a significant reduction in the number of men dismissed. Pole had a reputation for discipline but also for encouraging able men and there were some striking success stories – most notably Joseph Farndale, who became chief constable of Bradford, via Margate. But this masked the reality for the majority of recruits who served with little chance of promotion. Even those who did become sergeants had to wait a decade or more for promotion.[35] Indeed, Pole was criticised for his reluctance to recommend ordinary constables for promotion to the merit class.

The fall in the number of men dismissed from the force is striking. In total fifteen men were dismissed, including six in Pole's first year and thirteen in the decade 1876-85. Pole inherited a police scandal with allegations of wrongful arrest and financial malpractice among senior officers. A scathing report from the Police Inquiry Committee led to demotions (detective-sergeant Bootham and PC Wadsworth), dismissals (sergeant McKenzie) and forced resignation (inspector Sinkinson).[36] The initiative already rested with the watch committee but Pole was happy to endorse a policy of tighter discipline. From the mid-1880s the number of reprimands, fines and demotions agreed by the watch committee fell by more than 50 percent while the force grew in size by roughly a quarter.[37] The figures are skewed by the transfer of responsibility for minor disciplinary matters to the chief constable in 1878 and a less strict approach to drink-related offences, especially among longer serving, more experienced men. Nonetheless, there was a real, if less spectacular, decline in disciplinary offences through to the early twentieth century. Drunkenness remained by far the most common offence but declined from c.65 per cent of the total in the early years to c.40 per cent in the latter.

Finally, when Pole took office in 1876, HMIC Elgee was expressing concern at the high rate of turnover in the force. A decade later, and for the rest of the century, it was very low, averaging 6 per cent in the late-1880s, falling as low as 3 per cent in 1891 and never exceeding 8 per cent. These figures were significantly better than those from the Clarkson and Pearson

eras. In part, this can be explained in terms of the personality and policies of the chief constable. Pole was held in high regard by many, though not all. The radical *Halifax Comet* depicted him as 'a composite portrait of Von Moltke and Bismarck …[typifying] the iron discipline of official rule.' The more mainstream *Halifax Evening Courier*, while seeing him as 'a strict disciplinarian,' praised him for his 'high standards and efficiency,' while the *Halifax Daily Guardian* deemed him 'an efficient, a courteous and a humane officer.' [38] He was undoubtedly strict but also fostered a greater sense of belonging, an *esprit de corps*, supporting claims for improved pay (at least after 1890) and conditions of work, and also encouraging the growth of social and sporting clubs as a means of boosting morale, though he drew the line at men playing professional rugby. But there were external factors involved, not least a less favourable labour market, which highlighted the various advantages of employment in the police.

Table 10.3 Average annual variations (as %) for selected northern towns, 1885/9 – 1895/9

	Force size 1885-9	1885-9 variations as % of force	Force size 1890-4	1890-4 variation as % of force	Force size 1895-9	1895-9 variation as % of force
Halifax	77	7	85	6	96	5
Huddersfield	98	6	113	3	118	4
Blackburn	114	6	128	10	135	7
Bolton	113	11	119	6	135	11
Burnley*	73	12	80	6	92	8
Oldham	122	10	137	11	157	12
Preston	104	5	109	8	114	5
Middlesbrough	70	6	81	6	91	5

*1887-9

Source: HMIC annual reports

The Halifax force by the end of Victoria's reign was larger, more complex, more bureaucratic and better led. The basic structure for constables (third, second and first class) remained but now there was a merit class and provision for longer serving constables as they reached five, seven, nine, eleven- and fifteen-years' service with good conduct. A similar format existed for sergeants (up to

ten years' service) and inspectors (up to seven years' service). Equally important was the administrative and managerial strengthening that eventually came with the appointment of a chief clerk (1881) and a superintendent and deputy chief constable (1896). Pole also created and sustained a good working relationship with the watch committee. To some extent he was helped by the fact that there was a new generation of relatively inexperienced men on the watch committee, who were more dependent on his experience, but he also encouraged a less combative approach and he was allowed a degree of autonomy that none of his predecessors in Halifax had enjoyed.

While the late-Victorian improvements were real, there was still more to do. Expectations of the police, at all levels, and not just in Halifax were changing. Policemen needed to be better trained and better educated. Size and fitness were no longer enough. Instruction and education classes were introduced by chief constable Richardson, Pole's successor. Police standing orders and regulations were revised and updated in 1906. In the same year, the introduction of street telephones improved communications between stations and men on the beat. There was an awareness of new techniques – fingerprinting etc – to aid detection. Nonetheless, over the previous half century the Halifax force had become significantly better organised, disciplined and efficient.

Huddersfield's 'new broom' came in the form of James Withers, who joined from the Preston force in December 1867, the seventh man since 1848 to lead the Huddersfield police.[39] The task confronting him was made more difficult by the fact of incorporation, which increased the area to be policed from 700 acres to 10, 000 and a population to be policed that more than doubled to 72,000. The police force itself was augmented from thirty-two to sixty-eight men and Withers had the task of training up a large cohort of new men, and combining them with those he inherited, for whom pay was low and discipline patchy, to form an efficient force. He was assured that he would have 'the full charge and superintendence of the whole Police general management Force [and] be held responsible for the general conduct and management thereof.'[40] Similar assurances had been given when Priday was appointed but not followed through. Withers was fortunate in that Joel Denham, and several other new members of the watch committee, were and remained staunch supporters. He set about his task with zeal. Within a week he informed the watch committee that he was restructuring the existing

pattern of police duties and running the force according to 'the Metropolitan System.'[41] In an implicit criticism of past practice, inspectors and sergeants were clearly instructed to 'visit the men on their beats at their usual points and also at uncertain times at different places on their beats' *and* to ensure that full records of such visits were kept. Withers also took firm action to improve discipline. On 21 January 1868, the watch committee had to hold a special meeting to deal with the volume of cases brought to its attention by the new chief constable. In the first six months of that year Withers reported twenty-one disciplinary cases, mostly drink-related, to the watch committee, which supported its man. Thereafter, the number of cases fell dramatically. At the annual police dinner, held with no sense of irony in the Ramsden Arms, the chair of the watch committee, Denham, spoke glowingly of the harmony and good feeling between the town's politicians and its police force and the continuing determination to continue raising 'the standard of discipline and efficiency of the force.'[42] Not only did Withers please his local masters, but he was also singled out for praise by HMIC Elgee. He also requested that he might discipline the men. The watch committee agreed that he could impose 'such penalties as will tend to abate drunkenness and neglect of duty,' though all disciplinary matters would be reported to the watch committee for consideration and approval.[43] Withers took firm action to improve discipline but also looked to improve police pay. Progressive pay scales were introduced in 1870 and pay was enhanced twice in 1871 and again in 1873.

Withers' approach was put to the test as men were recruited to meet the new authorised strength following incorporation. Rapid augmentation was associated with greater instability in the short-run, as had been abundantly evident in Leeds. The watch committee was highly satisfied with his approach – though not enough to meet his demands for a pay increase – but, on closer examination, the results were mixed. In October 1868 the first cohort of Withers' men were approved for service. In March 1869 he informed the watch committee that 'the new officers … are becoming more efficient and more conversant with their general duties.'[44] By December 1870, eighteen had been promoted to the first class (including one to sergeant) with two more still in the system. However, eleven had been dismissed and four had resigned. In other words, 44 per cent of the cohort had left in just over a year. A better picture of Withers' impact can be obtained from an analysis of the

career outcomes of all recruits during his term of office.[45] Men serving less than one year as a percentage of the cohort stood at 30 per cent, compared with 56 per cent for the years of the improvement commission, 1848-68. Men serving more than five years rose to 34 per cent compared with 15 per cent for the earlier period. Also positive, the percentage of men dismissed had fallen to 33 per cent from 46 per cent; as was the emergence of a small number of men (eleven or 8 per cent) receiving a pension. As one might expected, the bulk of dismissals (75 per cent) took place in the early years, almost 50 per cent before a year was out. Similarly, most resignations took place within the first months of service. However, men serving five years or more accounted for 25 per cent of resignations, a figure that rose to 46 per cent of all men serving more than three years. If, as contemporaries thought, it took at least three years to train an efficient officer, roughly half of the men trained to efficiency chose to resign, representing a significant loss of trained men and waste of resources devoted to training.

Although Withers' refounded force was an improvement on what had gone before, it still had weaknesses in terms of its health and discipline. In part, this was the result of inherited problems. Noah Worsnip, for one, appointed in 1857, had a chequered career, combining success as a detective with drink-related disciplinary and health problems. But these problems were also to be found among a majority (roughly two-thirds) of men recruited during Withers' period of office. Within twelve months, William Milnes was fined and reprimanded on five occasions before resigning in October 1869. Thomas Thornton was fined on four occasions for drunkenness on duty before being dismissed, having been found asleep on duty, in 1871 – a career that lasted eighteen months. Thornton was not the only multiple offender to be dismissed at an early stage, which pointed to a chief constable and a watch committee determined to clamp down on indiscipline, especially when drink-related. But the experiences of other men showed a less consistent and at times less successful approach. As under the improvement commission, men deemed to be promising were given a second chance which led, on a number of occasions, to a successful and long career. Firth Jaggar (1869-98) was reprimanded for being drunk early in his career but ended as an inspector; Thomas Roberts (1871-91) likewise became an inspector, while Waller Wigglesworth (1868-96), who had a poor disciplinary record in his early years, became a stalwart long-serving constable. In others the outcome was poor. Iddo Wood's career

(1869-77) started well but fell apart after seven years. Five disciplinary offences, four in one year, led to his resignation in December 1877, when he left to take over a pub in Manchester. Martin Lynch had problems almost from the outset and yet it was only after being fined or reprimanded for the sixth time in two years that he was finally dismissed. More surprising were the careers of some twenty longer-serving men, who were persistent offenders. John Taylor (1873-81) was disciplined fourteen times before he resigned; and Alfred Rayner (1872-80) was fined and reprimanded fifteen times, as well as being twice demoted before being required to resign. Lewis Smith (1868-96) was disciplined seventeen times, three times in his first year, and especially after 1890 had a poor health record, yet he remained in post until being superannuated in 1896. John Garside (1871-97) was also pensioned after a career that saw him disciplined on eighteen occasions as well as having poor a health record. If Smith's and Garside's survival in the force was something of a mystery, more so were the two careers of George Sedgwick, (1870-8 and 1879-87) both characterised by a poor disciplinary and health records and both terminated by dismissal. The majority of the Huddersfield force recruited under Wither had a disciplinary record, albeit a majority with fewer than five and concentrated among short-serving men. Notwithstanding an easing of recruitment difficulties in and after the 1880s, the watch committee and chief constables continued to tolerate (or felt they had to tolerate) the employment of a significant minority of repeat offenders, notwithstanding the impact on efficiency, morale and reputation.

Sickness, which was to become a particular issue under chief constable Ward, was a further drain on efficiency and was also, in part, an inherited problem. John Boler, for example, joined in 1861 and was superannuated in 1876, during which time he was on sick leave on eighty-six separate occasions, the bulk for a period of seven days, and concentrated in his later years. But between 25 and 30 per cent of the men recruited under Withers suffered from poor health. Seven men resigned because of ill-health – three a matter of months after appointment. Another six were discharged due to long-term sickness and given a gratuity. Several were absent sick almost from the outset. Thomas Hamer (1874-9) was appointed in October 1874 and was off for two days in December, followed by five more recorded absences in 1875. By the time of his discharge he had forty-six sickness absences recorded, amounting to 233 days, or 16 per cent of his career. The

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presence of such problem figures raises questions about the rigour of the recruitment process. Other cases were less problematic. A number of men, such as the unfortunate Benjamin Broom, who broke an arm and a leg in separate incidents, suffered injuries while on duty. Others, such as Thomas Burns (1871-97) and John Salter (1873-89), as well as the aforementioned Firth Jagger and Lewis Smith suffered recurrent bouts of ill-health in the last four or five years of long careers. However, for slightly more men, ill-health punctuated almost all of their careers. Thomas Laycock (1868-81) had only one illness-free year. In all, one-tenth of his career was spent on the sick. At the very least, the loss of manpower was a drag on performance but, given the suspicions of malingering that were formally noted later, there was probably also a negative impact on morale.

Withers period in office undoubtedly saw an improvements in the town force but the refounding was not wholly successful. Problems of recruitment and retention remained, albeit to a lesser degree than before, but exacerbated by the number and severity of assaults on the police."[46] So too did problems of ill-discipline and ill-health. Nonetheless, Withers was held in high regard by many Huddersfield politicians. It appeared that the town had solved the police managerial problems that had beset it for the past twenty years. Then, in 1874, he resigned. Costs had always been an important concern for successive watch committees but only briefly in the early 1860s had the 'economical' commissioners reduced police numbers. In the early 1870s the debate revolved around the chief constable's pay. Opponents of 'municipal government' won council seats in 1872 and 1873 and turned their attention to the pay of senior council employees. The question of Wither's salary became a major issue in successive council elections. His salary had risen from £220 to £300 per annum in 1872 but he believed he was worthy of a further increase. The upshot of an often-bitter political conflict was a triumph for the 'economical faction' over their 'pragmatist rivals.' Despite warnings that a refusal to improve salaries would result in the loss of men, such as Withers, the council refused his request and he left to become chief constable in Bradford.[47] Further, they agreed to advertise for a new chief constable at a reduced annual salary of £250.

Contrary to the claim made by Withers opponents – that there were numerous men willing to take the post at £250 p.a. – only twenty-six men, of varied and generally limited police experience, applied. The council opted

for Henry Hilton, the chief constable of Glossop, who came with glowing references. The appointment was perplexing for two reasons. First, Glossop, a town of some 20,000 people, had a force of only eight men; second, it was deemed to be 'wholly inefficient.' in 1872, 1873 and 1874. Hilton's brief period in office in Huddersfield was a disaster. He was effectively forced to resign when a special sub-committee was set up to 'investigate the conduct and management of the Police Department by the Chief Constable.' In a short space of time, the watch committee appeared to have undermined the recent gains and brought the town back to the problems that had dogged it a decade earlier. The town force, as well as being badly led, was again characterised by poor discipline and a high level of sickness- related absences from work. This was John Ward's inheritance when he took over.

Ward was serving in the Leeds police force when he was appointed to the Huddersfield force. In less than a decade he had gone from being a third-class constable, to chief clerk in four years and then to superintendent of the detective department in Leeds three years later. He took the post of chief constable at Huddersfield, and all that went with it in terms of additional duties, for a salary of £300 per annum.***** The thoroughness with which he approached his job was reflected in the long and detailed reports he submitted to the watch committee. His first months saw him tackling head-on the problems of ill-discipline and lengthy (and frequent) sick leave among the men.

Under the old regime, constables absenting themselves on the grounds of ill-health simply sent a message to the police office. There was little or no supervision, no medical evidence was required, even when a man had been off for weeks, and no pay was deducted. Ward highlighted the problem in his first report to the watch committee. '25 men [out of a force of 75] have averaged more than 20 days' sickness each annually. 14 of these average over 30, and 6 over forty.'[48] In any one week, there were as many as sixteen men (approximately 20 per cent of the force) absent sick. Ward suspected a degree of malingering. A new system was introduced almost immediately, under which a certificate from the police surgeon was required, or else pay would

***** He was to be captain and superintendent of the fire brigade, chief inspector of lodging houses and hackney carriages and markets, and responsible under the Explosives and Petroleum Acts and the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act.

be deducted accordingly. The next task was to identify those who were unfit for police work and who could be encouraged to resign. The problem was, in part, a product of success. As more men made a career of policing, job-related illness and conditions became more common – bronchitis, often severe, and pleurisy were cited, as were flat feet and even an ulcerated big toe. A special sub-committee was set up to consider seven of the worst cases. By May 1879, Ward could report 'the amount of sickness is very much less.'[49] Several men were subsequently certified by the police surgeon as 'unfit for further duty' and left the force with a weekly allowance from the superannuation fund. A month later he declared 'the health of the force has generally been good.'[50] The likes of PC Hamer had departed but there were a few long-serving men, who had joined before incorporation, who remained in post. Detective Inspector White, appointed in 1849, was eventually superannuated in 1880. Inspector Galvin, appointed in1860, likewise in 1886.[51] The same year saw the death in post of William Townend, a paid constable in the 1840s and a founder member of the town force. All had been physically incapacitated and with a lengthy sickness record in their latter years. Ward's later reports to the watch committee contain few references to sickness but there was still a tolerated level of sickness across the force. The Defaulters Record book details several problematic cases.[52] John Beaumont, who was appointed in 1872, had 104 cases of recorded sick leave, equivalent to just over a year-and-a-half in a twelve-year career. Importantly, his poor health record was clear when Ward took over but it was a further five years before he was ordered to resign. He was not alone. Daniel Runham, who was pensioned in 1911, had lost almost a year in sixty-one cases of sickness, the bulk of which occurred after 1880. Similarly, PCs Branland, Collier and Horner, who lost, respectively 611, 309 and 557 days, but were not required to resign. While these men were exceptional, losses to sickness, usually a week or less, were a commonplace occurrence, effectively factored into the assessments made by senior police figures but the efficiency costs of illness, whether in the form of sick leave or sub-optimal performance, should not be minimized.

The second major problem explicitly tackled by Ward was that of police indiscipline. The minutes of the watch committee contain numerous references, especially in 1879 and 1880, to the failings of ordinary constables and, less frequently their superiors. Once again, the watch committee was generally happy to endorse Ward's recommendations. He was determined to

make a firm stance. For the most part, indiscipline was an individual problem but in May/June 1879 there was a collective problem at the Lockwood sub-station. Starting as a complaint against Sergeant Thornton for neglect of duty, improper conduct and making false entries in his report sheet, it became apparent at a special meeting of the watch committee that the problem was more systemic. As a consequence, 'the majority of the Constables stationed in the Lockwood Section' were removed and replaced.[53] A new book of 'Police Regulations and Instructions' was issued in August 1879 and in December classes were introduced for 'the instruction of the men [in the rules and regulations] as well as for general instruction and practice.'[54] In July and August a further seven men were 'reported for misconduct,' ranging from being 'under the influence of liquor' or 'drunk on duty' to 'gossiping on duty.' [55] Fines were levied but two constables were severely admonished. Eight men, including two sergeants, were reported and punished in December of the same year. Two were reprimanded by the mayor, two were demoted two fined, one constable allowed to resign and a probationary officer dismissed.[56] His improvement drive continued throughout 1880 by which time he confidently reported to the watch committee the 'great improvement' in discipline.[57] Thereafter, his monthly reports routinely detailed one or two, occasionally three men for a variety of predictable offences – being late on duty, neglecting duty, varying degrees of intoxication and occasionally fighting or insubordination. The relatively low-key approach, and Ward's oft-repeated judgment that 'the conduct [of the men], with a few exceptions, has been satisfactory,' should not obscure the on-going extent of low-level ill-discipline. Once again, the Defaulters Conduct book throws light on the scale of the problem. The vast majority of men, including long-serving men and those who gained promotion, had a disciplinary record. For some men disciplinary problems brought a sudden end to their careers but others were still treated with a surprising degree of leniency. Thomas John Emerson was punished on four occasions for drink-related offences but only on the fifth was he cautioned that another such offence would result in dismissal. He served a further ten years before retiring on a pension. In contrast, Owen Townsend, Fred Robinson and John Gray were ordered to resign after sixteen offences each for Townsend and Robinson, and fourteen for Grey. Thomas Lowcock was more favourably treated, in being discharged with a gratuity after his thirteenth offence. Others were even more fortunate,

Thomas Farnell appeared before Ward on sixteen, and Henry Harrison fourteen times but both continued to a pension. Frederick Collier, the man with health problems, was also disciplined on fifteen occasions yet was still serving when he died in post, over twenty years after his appointment.[58] The records contain no indication of the thinking behind these decisions but, for whatever reason, Ward and the watch committee adopted a lenient policy. Nowhere was this clearer than in the aforementioned two careers of George Sedgwick, who joined in June 1870 but was dismissed, having been found drunk on duty in Paddock, his ninth drink-related offence, in September 1878. Five months later he was re-employed only to be ordered to resign in June 1887, having been on sick leave for 269 days and disciplined eight times, mainly for being drunk. The problem, while never disappearing, diminished over time. Ward, reflecting on his years in post, had no doubt that there had been improvements. 'The force today,' he told the watch committee in July 1888, 'was more effective and far better mannered – they had men of better education and better able to do their duty.'[59] More importantly, in 1891 HMIC Legge adjudged the Huddersfield force to be 'one of the most efficient and best equipped forces in the country.'[60] Late-Victorian Huddersfield was undoubtedly a policed town but among the men who patrolled the streets were still those whose discipline and health were questionable.

A third problem was the ongoing difficulty in recruiting suitable men particularly in the 1870s but also in the late-1880s. Despite a number of pay rises, men continued to leave for better pay and/or conditions. When Ezra Bostwick resigned in 1880, Ward ruefully noted that he was leaving after five years 'in consequence of having obtained a situation where he will receive more pay and shorter hours.'[61] Albert Hawkyard left after eighteen months 'to go to America,' while Joseph Sykes was one of many who gave his reason for resignation simply as a desire 'to improve himself.' As a consequence, in the early 1870s, the town was less well watched during the day. A further augmentation in 1876 led to 'difficulty in meeting with suitable men' and 'several of the newly appointed constables [being] below the average in physique and general appearance.' By the late-1880s HMIC was stressing the need for a further increase in numbers to ensure enough men for night, as well as day, duty. Numbers were duly increased in 1890 and again in 1896 in the light of official criticism. Annual variations were low as the numbers dismissed dropped dramatically. But if the problems

of the mid-Victorian years had been largely overcome, there were different problems to be solved and new expectations to be met. As early as 1879 Ward had shown an awareness of the need to improve the knowledge and skills of officers but there is no evidence of any follow-up to this initiative. A different set of skills were developed through St John's ambulance training but it is less clear that Ward was interested in newer developments such as fingerprinting. Nonetheless, Ward was held in high regard by local politicians. Such was their unwillingness to lose him that in 1881, when he applied for the post of chief constable of Nottingham, the watch committee increased his salary from £300 per annum to £350. As with Pole in Halifax, there was widespread agreement that Ward had been successful in overcoming 'many difficulties,' inherited from his predecessor and had left the force 'very much more efficient' than it had been on his arrival.[62]

Some conclusions

Despite sharing similar socio-economic characteristics and common problems, there were significant differences in the development of policing in the two towns, particularly in the early years. The Huddersfield force was bedevilled with leadership problems almost from the outset. The determination of the watch committee, particular under councillor Jones, to impose its management model and the continuing concern with economy led to conflict with able men, such as Priday and Withers, but the situation was exacerbated by the personal short-comings of men like Beaumont and Thomas. The refounding of the force under the very capable Withers was only partially successful. Problems of recruitment and retention were particularly acute in the 1860s and 1870s but problems of ill-discipline and ill-health persisted longer. Recruitment and retention difficulties led to a more lenient management approach, which saw some men being given a second chance (and more) and others being retained despite mounting absences due to illness. However necessary, such policies reduced the overall efficiency of the force and probably damaged morale as well for much of the period. The Halifax force was not without its problems but to a much lesser degree. Nonetheless, it was only from the mid-1880s onwards that recruitment, retention and discipline became relatively unproblematic.

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However, by the late-nineteenth century both towns compared favourably with their counterparts in Lancashire.

As both forces grew in size and took on a wider range of responsibilities, administrative and managerial skills assumed greater importance. The expectations of a head constable went beyond being a good 'thief taker,' and both towns, but notably Huddersfield, struggled to find a suitable person. And when they did, there was the problem of retaining a good but ambitious man. An unwillingness to increase his salary saw Huddersfield lose chief constable Withers to Bradford, though the lesson was learned later when one of his successors, Ward looked to move on. The continued growth of both forces necessitated a strengthening of management. A superintendent, and deputy chief constable, was appointed in Huddersfield in 1875 but it was only in 1896 that the same post was created in Halifax. Administrative skills became increasingly important, especially after 1856. A small number of men with clerical experience were appointed but the absence of administrative ability was an ongoing problem for the Huddersfield force in the 1850s and 1860s and it was not until 1879 that a chief clerk was appointed. Boundary changes and subsequent augmentations created new problems. Out-stations needed to be managed on a daily basis by men who, for the most part, had been recruited more for their physique and for a different role. Unsurprisingly, given the absence of specific training, a number of men promoted to the rank of sergeant were unfit for the post. The scandal at the Lockwood sub-station, Huddersfield, was a stark illustration of a wider problem in both towns.

1848 marked a turning point in the policing of both towns but the first generation of 'new' policing was beset by major challenges in terms of management, administration and rank-and-file performance. Training, at all levels, took place largely on the job and a significant number of men – again at all levels – were found wanting. Society was policed but often partially and imperfectly. Significant improvement, never linear, was discernible in both towns from the 1870s. The simple passage of time meant that – yet again at all levels – there were more men who had proved themselves of doing the job. Other, wider factors, not unique to Halifax and Huddersfield, also played a part – changes in the labour market, changes in the basic skills of the workforce and changing perceptions and expectations of policing. By the late-nineteenth century both forces were not only larger, more complex and more bureaucratic but also more efficient than their predecessors.

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Appendix 1

Table 10A : Comparative pay, constables and sergeants, Halifax & Huddersfield, 1870 -1901 -(1st class constable and 1st class sergeant shillings and pence per week and 1st class inspector pounds and shillings per annum)

	1870	1881	1891	1901
Halifax 1st Class Constable	23	26/6 – 28	25/6 – 30	25 – 33
Huddersfield 1st Class Constable	22 – 23	28	28 – 30	29 – 35
Halifax 1st Class Sergeant	28	31 – 35/6	31 – 33	33 – 40
Huddersfield 1st Class Sergeant	24 – 27	34	34 – 37	34 – 38
Halifax 1st Class Inspector	78	104	110	105 – 130
Huddersfield 1st Class Inspector	104	106 – 12s	119-12s	150

Source: HMIC annual reports

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Endnotes

1 C Emsley, *The English Police: A Political and Social History*, Harlow, Pearson, 1996 makes no reference. D Taylor, *The new police in nineteenth-century England*, Manchester University Press, 1997 makes a few passing references as does S H Palmer, *Police and protest in England and Ireland, 1780 – 1850*, Cambridge University Press, 1988. N Pye, *The Home Office & the Chartists, 1838 -48*, Pontypool, Merlin, 2013 considers the towns at greater length but within a specific focus and time frame.

2 For details see the excellent and succinct account in J A Hargreaves, *Halifax*, Lancaster, Carnegie, 2003.

3 G Philips, 'Walks Around Huddersfield. No.1,' *Bradford Observer*, 2 September 1847

4 See *Halifax Express*, 21 November 1841 and *Halifax Guardian* 7 January 1843 and 6 June 1843. For a more critical view see *Halifax Guardian* 21 September 1844. Public health rather than public order dominated the incorporation campaign. See J Posner, 'The establishment and development of the New Police in Halifax, 1848 – 1914,' unpublished Ph.D., University of Huddersfield, 2014, especially p.37ff.

5 Minutes of the Proceedings of a Parliamentary Inquiry on the Huddersfield Improvement Bill, February 1848, Kirklees archive, KMT 18/2/1/1. See particularly the evidence of local magistrate, John Sutcliffe and the paid parochial constable, William Townend.

6 *Halifax Guardian*, 19 August 1848

7 *Leeds Mercury*, 27 May 1848 and *Halifax Guardian*, 8 July 1846. 178 applications were received for the posts of sergeant and constable.

8 Figures calculated from Posner, 'New Police in Halifax,' appendix 1, p.294'

9 For details see Posner, 'New Police in Halifax,' pp.37-43

10 *Halifax Guardian*, 2 February 1850

11 The figures for Huddersfield refer to the period 1848-68.

12 *Huddersfield Chronicle*, 2 November 1850

13 Huddersfield watch, fire and lighting committee minutes, KMT 18/2/3/14/1, 10 February 1857, 22 February 1858, 21 February 1859 and 23 January 1860. The forces perquisite fund was distributed in terms of performance, albeit tempered by considerations of seniority.

14 For a more detailed account see D Taylor, "A fit man to be at the head of the police': Police Superintendents and Watch Committees in the first generation of 'new policing': a Yorkshire perspective,' in K Stevenson, D J Cox & I Channing, eds, *Leading the Police: a History of Chief Constables, 1835 – 2017*, Abingdon, Routledge, 2018, pp.15 – 32.

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15 *Halifax Guardian*, 19 August 1848. The word was used in the sense of excellent.

16 *Halifax Guardian*, 9 September 1848. The bye-laws ran to sixty-five pages but leaflets were distributed explaining the regulations.

17 *Halifax Guardian*, 29 September 1849 and Halifax Watch Committee Minutes, HXM, 10 October 1853

18 The number of pamphlets and leaflets distributed to shopkeepers and households in the town, explaining various by-laws or changes in legislation, was evidence of such an approach.

19 Halifax Watch Committee Minutes, HXM, 23 February 1863. Slum-owning council members had been noted earlier in the Ranger report on Halifax. Posner, 'New Police in Halifax.' P.71.

20 *Halifax Guardian*, 16 March 1872

21 *Halifax Courier*, 22 June 1872

22 *Halifax Guardian*, 23 March & 17 August, 1872 and *Halifax Courier*, 15 June 1872

23 *Huddersfield Chronicle*, 11 May 1850

24 *Huddersfield Chronicle*, 8 April and 15 July 1854

25 Commissioner Shaw compared members of the watch committee to company directors, *Huddersfield Examiner*, 4 August 1855

26 *Leeds Mercury*, 3 January 1856

27 *Huddersfield Chronicle*, 16 October 1858

28 *Huddersfield Chronicle*, 7 November 1857. The minutes of the watch committee contain no reference to this matter.

29 Huddersfield Watch Committee Minutes, 18/2/3/14/1,11 for 8 October 1859

30 *Huddersfield Chronicle*, 11 October 1862 citing letters dated 25 & 30 August and 2 September 1862. The *Chronicle* was edited by Joshua Hobson who had contacts among the commissioners, who leaked him information that was not recorded in the official minutes.

31 *Huddersfield Chronicle*, 9 November 1867

32 *Huddersfield Chronicle*, 7 July 18661859 and

33 For further details see Posner, 'New Police in Halifax,' chapter 3.

34 *Halifax Courier*, 21 February & 13 June 1903 and *Halifax Guardian*, 13 June 1903

35 Thomas Hemingway and William Bradley served eleven and twelve years respectively before being promoted while George Crossley waited seventeen years, though he did make inspector two years after his first promotion.

36 Halifax Watch Committee minutes, 3 & 23 October 1876, *Leeds Times*, 8

July & 28 October 1876, *Leeds Mercury*, 5 October 1876 and *Bradford Daily Telegraph*, 26 October 1876

37 Data from the watch committee minutes collated by Posner show 78 recorded offences in the years 1876 -85 when the force numbered approximately 75 men. In the years 1895 -1903 the number of recorded offences had fallen to 28 in a force of around 100 men. In other words, a shift from an average of one offence per man to an average of one offence per three men.

38 *Halifax Comet*, 20 June 1903, *Halifax Evening Courier*, 17 February 1903 and *Halifax Daily Guardian*, 9 January 1909

39 For a more detailed account see D Taylor, 'Policing Victorian Huddersfield: Chief Constable Withers and the Refounding of the Borough Force,' in D Griffiths, ed., *Making Up for Lost Time: The Pioneering Years of Huddersfield Corporation*, Huddersfield Local History Society, 2018, pp.61 - 83.

40 Huddersfield Improvement Commission, Minutes of Watch, Fire and Lighting Committee, 1860 – 68, 18/2/3/14/2, 23 December 1867 Committee, KMT 18/12/2/84/1, 8October 1868 and 11 January 1869

41 Huddersfield Improvement Commission, Minutes of Watch, Fire and Lighting Committee, 1860 – 68, 18/2/3/14/2, 30 December 1867

42 *Huddersfield Chronicle*, 23 May 1868

43 Huddersfield Minutes of Borough Watch Committee, KMT 18/12/2/84/1, 8 October 1868 and 11 January 1869

44 Huddersfield Minutes of Borough Watch Committee, KMT 18/12/2/84/1, 8 March 1869

45 In total there are complete records for 132 men. Partial records exist, either in watch committee minutes or the Defaulters Book, for a further eighteen individuals.

46 In his annual report for 1869 he wrote of assaults that 'deter many persons from joining and cause many to leave' the force. *Huddersfield Examiner*, 15 January 1870

47 Withers was not the only senior figure to be 'poached' by Bradford, as several of his supporters pointed out.

48 Huddersfield Minutes of Borough Watch Committee, KMT 18/12/2/84/3, 7 April 1879

49 Huddersfield Minutes of Borough Watch Committee, KMT 18/12/2/84/3, 12 May 1879

50 Huddersfield Minutes of Borough Watch Committee, KMT 18/12/2/84/3, 9 June 1879

51 In July 1880, having already lost ninety-one days to sickness, the police

surgeon reported that White would 'never be able to resume his duties,' but White requested to continue and was granted three-months' sick leave. At the end of this period the police surgeon reported that White was 'unable to walk' and repeated his earlier judgement. Still White asked for a further period of sick leave but this time the watch committee refused and superannuated him.

52 This evidence is not comprehensive and does not compare with the detailed examination of police health in Hull by the police surgeon, Henry Munroe, *Medical Statistics of the Hull Police Force from November 19, 1857, to 19 November 1879* cited in D R Welsh, 'The Reform of Urban Policing in Victorian England: A Study of Kingston upon Hull, 1836 -1866,' unpublished Ph.D., University of Hull, 1997, p,357ff.

53 Huddersfield Watch committee minutes, KMT 18/12/2/84/3 30 May and 9 June 1879

54 Huddersfield Watch committee minutes, KMT 18/12/2/84/3 8 December 1879

55 Huddersfield Minutes of Borough Watch Committee, KMT 18/12/2/84/3, 7 July and 11 August 1879

56 Huddersfield Minutes of Borough Watch Committee, KMT 18/12/2/84/3, 8 December 1879

57 Huddersfield Minutes of Borough Watch Committee, KMT 18/12/2/84/4, 10 January 1881

58 He was not alone, see the record of Samuel Horner and Daniel Runham for a similar combination.

59 *Huddersfield* Chronicle, 23 July 1888

60 *Huddersfield Chronicle*, 20 August 1891

61 Huddersfield Minutes of Borough Watch Committee, KMT 18/12/2/84/3, 9 February 1880

62 *Huddersfield Daily Examiner*, 28 July & 7 August 1897

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