



The history of
HER MAJESTY'S
INSPECTORATE OF
CONSTABULARY

THE FIRST

150
years

1856 to 2006



FOREWORD



On 21 July 1856, the statute was enacted that brought Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) into existence. One hundred and fifty years later, we can look back on the achievements of

HMIC with pride and admiration. An organisation conceived to ensure the wise spending of exchequer grants by police forces has become a catalyst for change and reform, the guardian of professional standards and the credible conscience of the Police Service in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

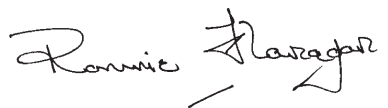
Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs), and latterly Chief Inspectors, have provided wise counsel and advice to government and the Service. Whether direct to the Home Secretary, to national organisations and representatives, or personally to individual police authority members or Chief Constables, HMIs have given advice impartially and often courageously, knowing that their message could be unwelcome or might meet strong challenge.

From the very first HMIs to the current team, the Inspectorate has attracted the highest calibre of operational and intellectual policing brains. A simple glance at the list of previous and current HMIs reveals an absolute 'who's who' of policing spanning three centuries. In that context it has been a humbling experience personally first to serve as an HMI and now as Chief Inspector. Even within that comparatively short time, I have had the honour to work alongside colleagues of immense experience,

ability and vision – colleagues to whom the most senior and influential police officers and politicians in the land have been confident to turn when in need of wise counsel.

Importantly, however, the sustained success and influence of the Inspectorate is not just due to the efforts of HMIs, it is equally reliant on the individual and collective qualities of all HMIC's staff members, whether seconded police officers, police staff or permanent Civil Service employees. I have been consistently impressed by the capacity for endeavour, the sheer energy and enthusiasm, and the untiring dedication to the cause displayed by staff members. Thanks to hard work and team effort, HMIC has earned a reputation as an organisation that 'punches well above its weight' and has the credibility always to command respect.

It is a significant challenge to sift through 150 years of history, documentation, memories and anecdotes and to extract and distil the most interesting and relevant issues. It is even more challenging to do so in one's spare time, but, in different ways, this book represents a labour of love for each member of the writing team. On behalf of all current and past members of HMIC, and all those interested in the Inspectorate as an organisation, I would wish to thank them for their sterling efforts.



Sir Ronnie Flanagan, GBE MA

THE WRITING TEAM

Richard Cowley: co-author and researcher



Richard Cowley is a retired Northamptonshire police officer, having served with the force from 1970 to his retirement in 1995. Born in Finedon, Northamptonshire, he attended

Wellingborough Grammar School from 1956 to 1961, when he left to become an apprentice compositor in the printing trade. He worked in estimating and production planning before becoming a typographer and graphic designer. He still retains a keen interest in printing history and typography.

In 1968, he joined the then Northampton and County Constabulary as a Special Constable, before joining the regular constabulary two years later. Always based in the north of the county, he served in large towns, small villages, desk jobs and specialist squads, and along the way acquired his interest in police, criminal and legal history.

He graduated from the Open University with a BA in modern history before going on to gain a master's degree (MA) in Victorian studies at Leicester University, where his thesis was on the subject of the Inspectorate of Constabulary. He has written two subsequent books, *Policing Northamptonshire 1836–1986* in 1986, and

Guilty M'Lud! The Criminal History of Northamptonshire in 1998. He is currently the honorary curator and archivist for Northamptonshire Police.

Peter Todd: co-author and editor



Peter Todd joined Bedfordshire Police as a cadet in 1972, and between 1973 and 1997 he served throughout the county, in uniform and the criminal investigation department, ending

as Commander of the Bedford Division. In 1988/89 he worked at the Home Office, leading project teams for the Association of Chief Police Officers and designing a national system for casualty bureaux, to deal with the flood of telephone calls following major disasters such as the Lockerbie air crash. In 1994 and 1995, he had two further attachments to the Home Office, this time as report writer for consecutive public inquiries into security within the Prison Service, following high-profile escapes from Whitemoor and Parkhurst prisons. In August 1997, he took up the post of Assistant Chief Constable (Crime and Operations) with Gloucestershire Constabulary.

In April 2001, he was seconded to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary as Assistant HM Inspector of Constabulary with portfolio responsibility for policy areas including

information and communications technology, professional standards, best value, performance management and leadership. Although he retired from the Police Service in December 2004, he has continued working as Assistant Inspector. In January 2005, he was awarded the Queen's Police Medal for services to policing.

Louise Ledger: additional research and production



Louise Ledger graduated in 2005 from the University of Sussex, where she specialised in Arthurian literature and modern culture.

She joined Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary in September 2005 as an inspection support manager and has provided support to a number of thematic inspections, including the substantial inspection of police professional standards – *Raising the standard*.

Her time at HMIC has provided opportunities to expand her research skills and develop her interest in publishing. She was personally responsible for locating Richard Cowley's earlier work, thereby bringing the writing team together. She also identified a number of sources for pictures used in the book.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors would like to thank all previous members of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary who contributed memories, photographs and other material for use in this book. Thanks also go to those responsible for maintaining libraries, archives and museums within individual police forces, without whose dedication and enthusiasm much of the information made available to this work would have been lost to posterity long ago.

Particular thanks are extended to the following, for permission to reproduce the photographs indicated:

The county archivist of the Northamptonshire Record Office for the photograph of William Cartwright and the copy of Cartwright's appointment warrant.

The county archivist of the Hereford and Worcester County Record Office for the photograph of Herbert Croft.

The Chief Constable of Northumbria Police for the photograph of Herbert Terry.

The Chief Constable of Norfolk Constabulary for the photographs of inspections by Commander Willis and others.

The Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police for photographs of wartime policing, the 150th anniversary and riot control.

The Commissioner of the City of London Police for photographs of inspection activity circa 1900.

The Chief Constable of Kent Police for photographs of constables and 19th century police buildings.

The Chief Constable of Sussex Police for photographs of Hastings Borough police officers (1928).

The Chief Constable of Northamptonshire Police for various pictures from the force archives.

Ex-Constable Ron Gamage for pictures of police vehicles of the 1960s.

The Chief Executive of Centrex for the picture of Barbara Denis de Vitré.

In addition, thanks go to Jane's publishers and Adam Matthew Publications for items from the *Police Review* and *Police Gazette* respectively.

CONTENTS

Foreword	1
The writing team	2
Acknowledgements	4
PART A: THE FIRST 100 YEARS	
Chapter One: 1856: The genesis of the police inspectorate	8
Chapter Two: 1857: The work begins in earnest	15
Chapter Three: 1857–1890: Efficiency and reform	23
Chapter Four: 1890–1945: The wilderness years	41
Chapter Five: 1945–1962: Back with a vengeance	60
PART B: THE MODERN INSPECTORATE	
Chapter Six: 1962–1990: Wider remit and influence	68
Chapter Seven: 1990–2006: Reform and modernisation	94
PART C: THE LEGACY AND THE FUTURE	
Chapter Eight: 150 years of the Inspectorate’s influence	116
Chapter Nine: 2006 and beyond	133
ANNEXES	
1: Her Majesty’s inspectors of constabulary, 1856–2006	137
2: The acting inspectors of constabulary, 1939–45	138
3: Barbara Mary Denis de Vitré: the first female assistant inspector	139
4: Family trees of English and Welsh police forces, 1814–2006	141
5: Reference notes and bibliography	182

PART A

THE FIRST 100 years

SIR,

NORTHGATE HOUSE,
WARWICK.

5th VIII. 98

Notwich

I beg to apprise you, for the information of the
of the Watch Committee, and the Council

duty as one of the Inspectors appointed
the Police in Counties and Boroughs

Thurs: 11th Aug: at 4th

Force under your command, and I have to re
assemble so many of the Officers and Constables
brought together, without prejudice to the Public
inspection the Arms, Accoutrements, Clothing, and other necessaries supplied
to them.

I should also desire to be furnished with the particulars on the
accompanying Forms, with a copy of the Scale of Pay now in
a List of all Books and Forms kept in your
ledge receipt to me at *The A*



*me a be
hand of hotel*

call at

CHAPTER ONE

1856: THE GENESIS OF THE POLICE INSPECTORATE

“*Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?*”

The quote above from the satires of Decimus Iunius Juvenalis (Juvenal) in 1st century Rome translates as ‘Who will guard the guards themselves?’ It represents an absolutely key question in considering how to guard the general populus against abuse or dishonesty from those placed in positions of power or trust. In modern Britain, the Police Service is afforded substantial power and demands significant trust. For the past 150 years, Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary has cast a watchful eye over the work of the Police Service and has helped to assure its integrity, efficiency and effectiveness.

Throughout its history, the Inspectorate has in many ways mirrored the Police Service; sometimes it has lagged behind developments but often it has led the way to significant evolutionary, even revolutionary, change. To fully understand the role of the Inspectorate, it is important also to understand the policing context within which its members work.

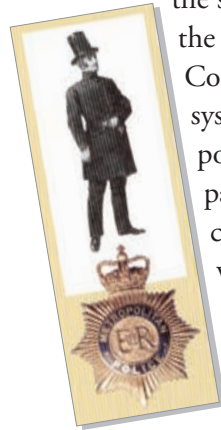
The policing context

“The origins and growth of the Police Service is a striking illustration of the ability of the English nation to adapt itself to the circumstances and to make the best of its old institutions.”

C C H Moriarty

Organised policing is not a modern concept; the Anglo-Saxons had their tythingmen and in the 18th century there were the parish constables and watchmen. Throughout this period, law and order relied increasingly on responsible citizens undertaking public service through the two core offices of magistrate and constable. In Norman times, constables were the most important locally elected officials, but as time progressed they became subordinate to magistrates, carrying out the executive function on their behalf to maintain the peace.

It was as late as the 19th century before police forces appeared in anything like the form we would recognise today. Following Sir Robert Peel’s Metropolitan Police Act of 1829, the concept of the ‘new police’ was introduced on the streets of London, and by the time of the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835, this system of full-time, professional police officers (as opposed to the part-time amateur parish constables of the ‘old police’) was extended to the 178 boroughs of England and Wales.¹



Although the main purposes of the 1835 Act were to enfranchise more of the borough ratepayers and to form politically elected town councils, it also empowered these new town councils to form subcommittees called watch committees, which were required to form a ‘new police’ force for the borough. There was, however, no enforcing surveillance by

central government and, therefore, some boroughs only partially implemented the police provisions of the Act, while others (mainly the poorest and smallest) ignored them completely.

By 1836, the ‘new police’ were at work in London, and supposedly also in all the provincial cities and towns. On the insistence of Edwin Chadwick, then Secretary to the Poor Law Commission, central government considered extending the ‘new police’ into rural areas, without waiting to examine the results of the 1835 Act in urban boroughs. The Home Secretary of the time, Lord John Russell, established the Royal Commission in 1836 “for the purpose of enquiring as to the best means of establishing an efficient constabulary force in the counties of England and Wales”.²

Chadwick headed the Commission, which took three years to present a report based on evidence from a broad spectrum of sources, including police officers and criminals. The report was published in March 1839, and painted an appalling picture. It found that crime was rampant throughout rural England, and the means of preventing, detecting and dealing with it were virtually non-existent. In short, the Commission urged the introduction of a rural constabulary, and, in doing so, made two very controversial recommendations.

First, the Commission recommended that there should be a single, national police force directed by the Metropolitan Police commissioners. Second, it recommended that local magistrates should not be connected with any future county constabulary because it was considered unsuitable for them to have control over local government and the judicial function as well as over the proposed police force. However, in the month before publication of the report, Russell conducted a survey among county magistrates. Not surprisingly, he found that the two controversial recommendations would meet

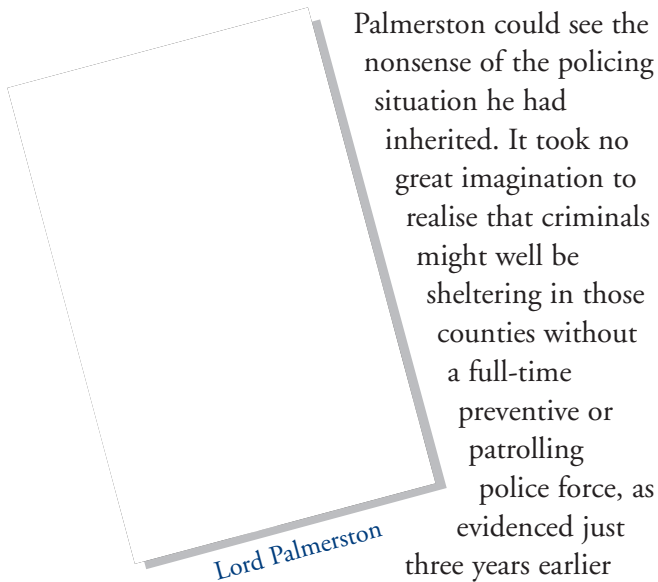
immense opposition if introduced as a Bill into Parliament, and would never get to the statute book.

In fact, in the summer of 1839 revolution was in the air, and not just within the magistracy. The Chartist Movement, started in 1838, was now threatening violent extremism, and nationwide reports suggested that their activities could erupt into turbulent social disorder. Consequently, Russell needed a workable rural constabulary very quickly indeed, as the only other means of dealing with civil rioting was the military. He introduced the County Police Bill into Parliament in July 1839 and, to rush the Bill through quickly, he decided to reject the two controversial recommendations.

After a stormy passage, the Bill was eventually passed on 27 August 1839, but, due to political pressure, it was made ‘permissive’ – the Act gave the county magistrates powers to establish a rural constabulary for their county if they so wished, but there was no compulsion to do so. The reaction of the counties mirrored that of the boroughs after the 1835 Act. Some acted immediately, some implemented it only for parts of their county, and some ignored it totally. Fortunately the Chartist threat receded, but with it also went the immediate focus on the establishment and operation of police forces. It took the arrival of a politician described by one police historian as an “ebullient genius” to rekindle interest in the police.

Lord Palmerston became Home Secretary in December 1852 and took over responsibility for a Police Service still fragmented and rudimentary, thanks to the non-enforcement of the 1835 Act and the ‘permissive’ 1839 Act. Palmerston’s attention was drawn to the police question by a letter from Lord Fortescue, a Devon magistrate, dated January 1853.³ After investigation, he found that the first enthusiastic flush of the 1839 Act had soon worn off. In the

years between 1839 and 1853, only 28 county forces had been established in a total of 56 counties, and during that time Parliament had passed no significant police legislation whatsoever.



by a brutal murder at Frimley, which was carried out by a notorious gang using unpoliced Surrey as a haven between the efficiently policed Hampshire and London.⁴

The Select Committee on Police was appointed by Palmerston in 1853, with Chadwick as Secretary. Chadwick thus had the chance to review progress since his involvement in the Royal Commission of 1836, and the picture was not encouraging. Of the 178 boroughs of England and Wales, 13 had never formed any sort of police force – even though the 1835 Municipal Corporations Act had required them to do so – and many of the existing borough forces were totally inadequate in terms of manpower in relation to the size of the population. Nor were the counties any better; only about half of the total of 56 had bothered to form forces, and of these there were many with inadequate manpower.

As expected, the Select Committee's report⁵ compared those counties and boroughs with

forces with those that were unpoliced, the latter emerging unfavourably from the comparison. Although the question of a national police force again reared its head, by this time Chadwick had changed his opinion, saying that he now considered it undesirable. However, he appears to have left his options open. The sixth recommendation of the report suggested that the smaller borough forces be amalgamated with their surrounding counties, and that the larger boroughs share some kind of management system with their counties, even to the extent of having the same Chief Constable. Had this recommendation been carried through (in the event, it was not), it would have been very much easier subsequently to form a national force if it were considered necessary, or had Chadwick changed his mind again.

Recommendations seven and eight of the report are the most important. The Committee advocated that police forces should now become compulsory in every county and borough of England and Wales, and that central government should provide financial aid to those forces without interfering with their local management. Armed with the Select Committee's report, Palmerston drafted a proposed Police Bill during the late winter of 1854. However, his new-found enthusiasm seemed to take over, and his proposed Bill made far greater changes than the recommendations of the Select Committee.

Palmerston's proposals included the following:

- Boroughs with a population of less than 20,000 would lose their independent police forces and be policed by their surrounding counties.
- The remaining boroughs (only 60 out of 178) would come under greater Home Office control.

- The five smallest counties would be forcibly amalgamated with their larger neighbours for policing purposes.
- There would be no financial aid from the government.

Not surprisingly, these proposals met with storms of opposition from the boroughs, and Palmerston was soon forced to water them down. Even his second attempt failed, however, because his original ideas were not toned down enough. No doubt he would have tried again, but fate took a hand – in February 1855, Parliament was prorogued and Palmerston became Prime Minister after the ensuing general election. His replacement at the Home Office, Sir George Grey, continued with the police question, and early in 1856 introduced the third Police Bill into Parliament.

The birth of the Inspectorate

As it was much closer to the Select Committee's report, now three years old, Grey's Police Bill stood a far better chance from the very outset than had Palmerston's two efforts. Grey proposed that police forces should become compulsory, with each one maintained in an efficient manner. And in order to achieve this efficiency, Grey adapted one of Chadwick's Benthamite⁶ ideals: an Inspectorate of Constabulary would be appointed to inspect every force annually, and efficient forces would receive an incentive of a government grant of one-quarter of the force's annual costs. Grey left the borough forces alone, except to say that boroughs with a population of less than 5,000 would not be entitled to receive the government grant. In this way, of course, he put pressure on small borough forces to amalgamate with their counties.

But even Grey's Bill met with opposition. From its first introduction in the House on Tuesday 5 February 1856, the Bill was continually

barraged with criticism and objection, mainly by the municipal corporations of the 64 small boroughs that stood to receive no government grant. However, whatever the corporations might have thought, the MPs obviously thought differently. The Borough of Banbury, for instance, had presented their MP, Henry Tancred, with a petition opposing the Bill, but in the event Tancred voted against his constituents' wishes and supported the Whig government.⁷

Tancred, a Liberal, was not alone. The Bill was passed on Monday 10 March and received Royal Assent on Monday 21 July 1856, becoming known as the County and Borough Police Act 1856. In short, the 1856 Act had four main points:

- Every county and borough must maintain a police force.
- This police force must be "efficient".
- To ensure this efficiency, every force will be inspected annually by a newly created Inspectorate of Constabulary.
- If found efficient by the inspectors, central government will pay one-quarter of the annual cost of the force, the other three-quarters coming from the local rates.

The 1856 Act did not apply to the Metropolitan Police or to the City of London Police, nor did it apply to Scotland, which had its own specific Act of Parliament to cover the establishment of an Inspectorate of Constabulary there. The establishment of the Inspectorate in England and Wales was described within section 15 of the Act:

"XV. It shall be lawful for Her Majesty, by Warrant under Her Royal Sign Manual, to appoint during Her Majesty's Pleasure Three Persons as Inspectors under this Act, to visit and

inquire into the State and the Efficiency of the Police appointed for every County and Borough, and whether the Provisions of the Acts under which such Police are appointed are duly observed and carried into effect, and also into the State of the Police Stations, Charge Rooms, Cells, or Lock-ups, or other Premises occupied for the Use of such Police..."

And so the 1856 Act introduced the concepts of 'efficiency' of policing, annual inspection and the watchdog role of the Inspectorate – all elements that were to be central to the operation of the Inspectorate over the next 150 years.

The first inspectors

The implementation of the 1856 Act, and the choice of the inspectors of constabulary, was left to Grey as Home Secretary. His choice for the first inspector to be appointed, William Cartwright, was seemingly unorthodox, as Cartwright had never been a police officer and had never held the office of Chief Constable. But Grey was astute in his choice.

Cartwright was from a county land-owning family from Aynho in Northamptonshire, and was steeped in the ways of local government. After army service – he had fought in the Peninsular war and at Waterloo – he had been Chairman of Brackley Board of Guardians since 1833, Deputy Lieutenant of Northamptonshire since 1846, and Chairman of Northamptonshire quarter sessions since 1851.

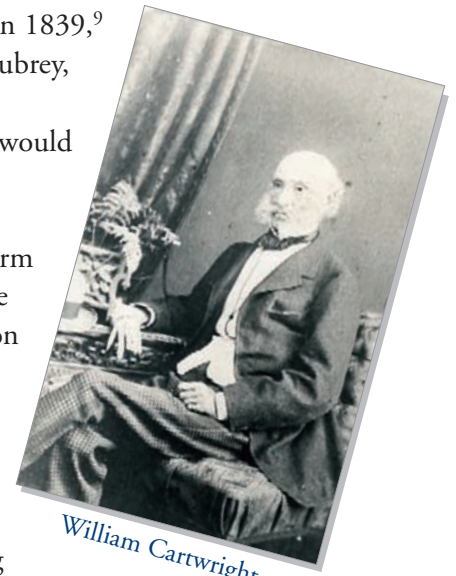
Allied to this, the Cartwright family as a whole had a reputation for being 'pro-police'. William's father, William Ralph Cartwright, at that time a Tory MP, had been the magistrate who had proposed that Northamptonshire adopt the 1839 'permissive' Act and form a county police force in January 1840, subsequently sitting on the committee of magistrates that acted as the county police authority.⁸ William Cartwright himself had unsuccessfully applied to be Chief

Constable of Essex in 1839,⁹ and William's son Aubrey, as MP for South Northamptonshire, would be one of the MPs agitating for police superannuation reform and would sit on the 1875 Superannuation Select Committee.¹⁰

Grey was certainly aware of the Cartwright family's reputation regarding the 'new police'. He was also aware of Cartwright's experience and skill in local government, a quality that was absolutely essential because Grey and his contemporaries believed that the governance of the police lay firmly in the province of local rather than central government. The 1853 Select Committee's report¹¹ had stressed this, and even Palmerston was firmly attached to the principle of local self-government.

Indeed, the 1856 Act actually strengthened the powers of the magistrates by defining existing petty-sessional divisions as police units, thereby placing magistrates 'firmly at the apex' of local policing. However, this local structure led to police officers being used for local civil administrative functions such as weights and measures inspectors and common lodging house inspectors. And it was Grey himself who would write to his first inspectors that they must "secure the goodwill and the cooperation of the local authorities".¹²

It was clear that the Home Office considered policing a local government function from 1856 to the early 1870s, as demonstrated by their objective of consolidating the smaller borough forces with their surrounding counties. As pointed out by Steedman,¹³ the refusal of the



William Cartwright

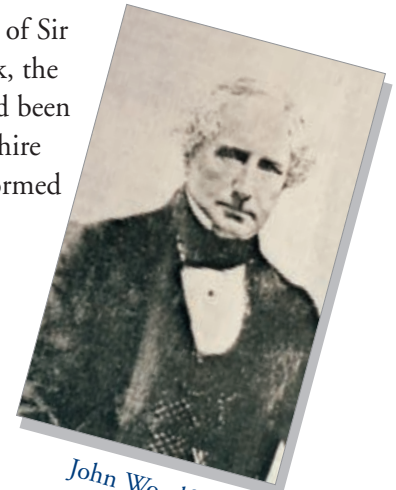
Home Office to get involved with consolidation questions was not an “abnegation of responsibility but a clear refusal to interfere in the financial and legal structure of local government. In any case, this feeling was further reinforced by most parliamentary private secretaries having already been in local government themselves as deputy lieutenants, chairmen of quarter sessions and magistrates.”¹⁴

It was this clear refusal by the Home Office to provide any coherent police policy from central government that was to be the hallmark of the period 1856 to 1874, and which was to present the inspectors with the opportunity to formulate their own policies based on local government structures. Cartwright, therefore, with his unique mix of local government experience and police interests, must have seemed to Grey like a godsend. Within nine days of the passing of the Act, Cartwright had been snapped up at an annual salary of £700.¹⁵ Grey’s trust was not misplaced. Cartwright was the most influential of the first inspectors,¹⁶ and arguably of all time. So much so that in his obituary in 1873 he would be described as “the policeman’s friend”.¹⁷

Section 15 of the 1856 Act stipulated that

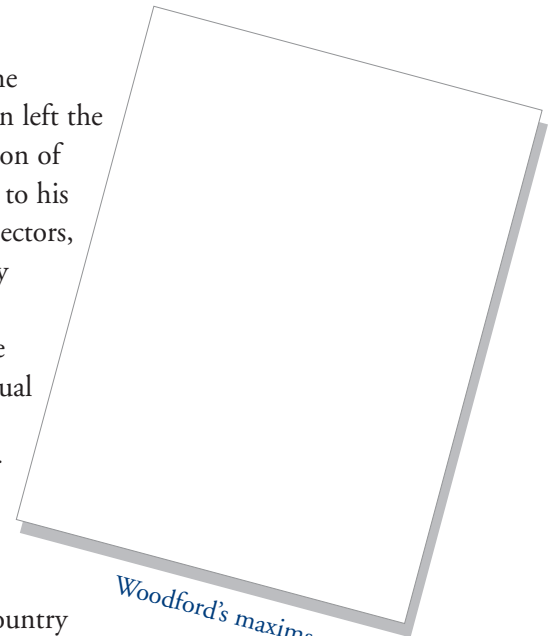
a maximum of three inspectors could be appointed. Grey, however, initially appointed only two. Cartwright’s appointment warrant is dated Friday 1 August and is preserved at the Northamptonshire Record Office.¹⁸ Grey’s second choice was more conventional.

John Woodford, a nephew of Sir John Woodford of Keswick, the Peninsular war general, had been Chief Constable of Lancashire since the force had been formed in 1839.¹⁹ The success he had had in establishing and maintaining the administration, discipline and strength of purpose necessary to control a body of men to act as a coherent constabulary, which at that time was the second largest force in the country after the Metropolitan Police, led Woodford to be regarded as the country’s ‘top policeman’.²⁰



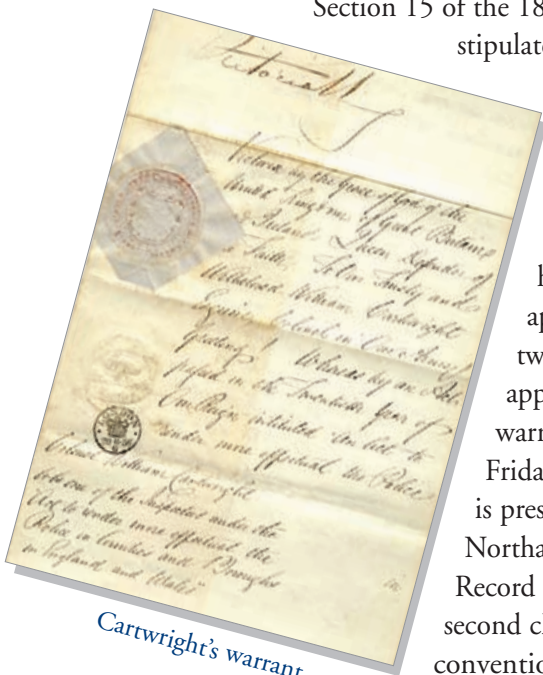
John Woodford

Grey, as Home Secretary, then left the implementation of the 1856 Act to his two new inspectors, as reported by Cartwright himself in the very first annual report of the inspectors for 1856/57. Originally it was decided to split the country into two regions, with Woodford and Cartwright inspecting half each, but they decided that such large areas would be impossible to cover, and that, inevitably, a third inspector would have to be appointed. This idea was communicated to Grey, who agreed to the request.



Woodford’s maxims

Again, Grey’s choice for the third inspector was conventional. Edward Willis was Chief Constable of Manchester City, and had been since 1842; previous to that he had been



Cartwright’s warrant

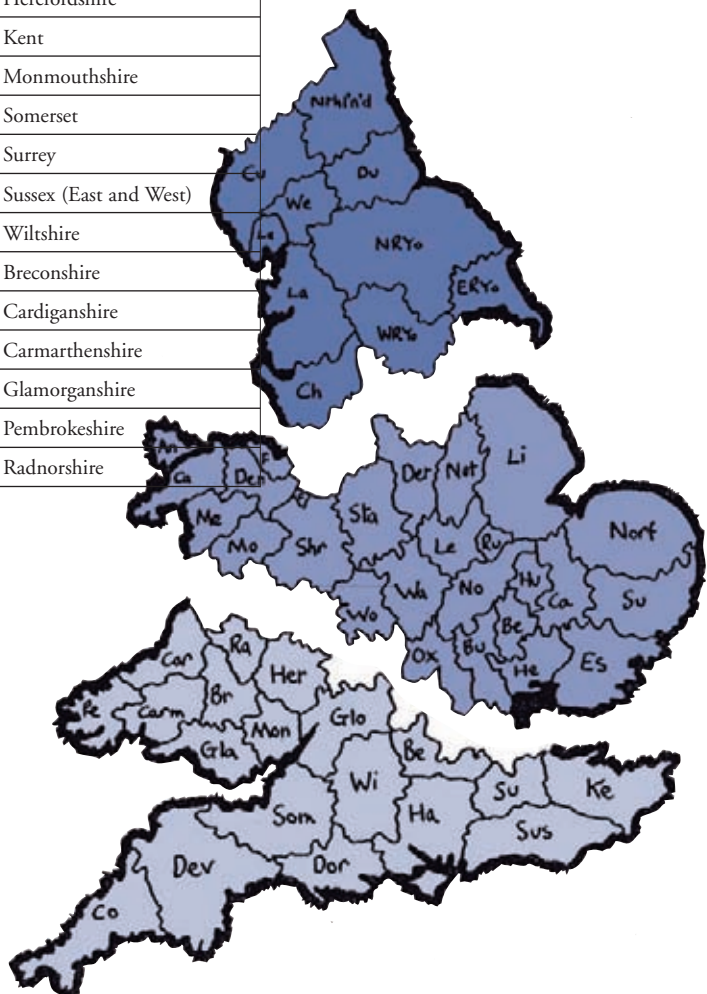
Woodford’s deputy at Lancashire.²¹ Woodford was therefore well aware of Willis’ capabilities and doubtless influenced Grey over the new appointment, which took place on Tuesday 20 January 1857.²²

The forces of England and Wales were divided by the inspectors themselves into three districts.

And so the basic structure was in place to implement the concept of an Inspectorate of Constabulary: three carefully selected inspectors; the legislative basis for the establishment of police forces; an allocation of responsibilities between the inspectors; and support from the Home Secretary. The inspections could commence.

Inspection districts 1856–67

<i>Northern (Woodford)</i>	<i>Midlands (Cartwright)</i>	<i>Southern (Willis)</i>
Cheshire	Bedfordshire	Berkshire
Cumberland	Buckinghamshire	Cornwall
Durham	Cambridgeshire	Devonshire
Lancashire	Derbyshire	Dorset
Northumberland	Essex	Gloucestershire
Westmorland	Hertfordshire	Hampshire
East Riding (Yorkshire)	Huntingdonshire	Herefordshire
North Riding (Yorkshire)	Leicestershire	Kent
West Riding (Yorkshire)	Lincolnshire	Monmouthshire
	Norfolk	Somerset
	Northamptonshire	Surrey
	Nottinghamshire	Sussex (East and West)
	Oxfordshire	Wiltshire
	Rutland	Breconshire
	Shropshire	Cardiganshire
	Staffordshire	Carmarthenshire
	Suffolk (East and West)	Glamorganshire
	Warwickshire	Pembrokeshire
	Worcestershire	Radnorshire
	Anglesey	
	Caernarfonshire	
	Denbighshire	
	Flintshire	
	Merionethshire	
	Montgomeryshire	



CHAPTER TWO

1857: THE WORK BEGINS IN EARNEST

In his first report, Cartwright stated how he approached his task. Journeying round his district in the first months of 1857, he made a preliminary study of the existing forces and offered advice to those new forces being established under the 1856 Act. In this cursory survey, he found that only 15 of his 25 counties already had forces in existence – and of those 15, he considered only 9 to be efficient. Returning to his home at Flore House near Northampton, he employed clerks (for which he was given expenses²³) to maintain correspondence with the county quarter sessions and with the borough watch committees. The ‘official’ inspection was then made in the summer months of 1857, when he and the other two inspectors visited and considered the efficiency of every police force in England and Wales.

The 1856 Act did not fully define ‘efficiency’, but sections 15 and 16 gave inspectors a good place to start. Section 15 set out powers to inspect the state of police stations, charge rooms, cells and lock-ups, or other premises occupied for the use of the police. The adequacy of police buildings had been noticeably lacking in previous years, so this gave the inspectors a tangible starting point and something that they were to pursue with tenacity for the next ten years. Section 16 set out conditions for issuing the certificate of efficiency to every force found to be in a “state of efficiency in point of numbers and discipline”.

So, while inspectors were left considerable latitude to decide what constituted efficiency, they decided to focus on the areas identified in

the Act, and asked four standard questions of every individual police force:

- What is the absolute strength of the force?
- What is the ratio of police officers to population?
- What is the quality of supervision exercised over the officers?
- What degree of cooperation is given to neighbouring forces?²⁴

The ratio of officers to population was an issue of some contention. The 1839 ‘permissive’ Act (unlike the 1856 Act) had stipulated a ratio of at least one police officer per 1,000 population in the counties. This was at least a starting point and so was taken as the norm by the inspectors. But what should the ratio be in towns? Woodford approached Grey for a decision. Grey replied in a letter dated Tuesday 21 October 1856:

“The Home Secretary could not give any sanction to the rule that a police force is to be considered sufficient in point of numbers if it is in the proportion of one man to a thousand, and he thinks that although it is possible that in some places that might be a sufficient number, experience has shown that in towns with a large and dense population a larger proportion is requisite.”²⁵

Grey stopped short of stipulating a specific ratio and placed the onus fairly and squarely back with the inspectors.

The first annual inspections

The inspection year started on the first day of October and ended on 29 September (the Michaelmas quarter day), which meant that the inspectors' reports overlapped two calendar years. This practice persisted until 1959, after which reports covered calendar years. So, in the latter months of 1857, the inspections began. All three inspectors worked very hard initially, visiting almost every station and lock-up, taking many days over even small forces. The length of inspections varied, however. Woodford, for instance, took 13 days to inspect Lancashire, even though he had been Chief Constable just a few months earlier.

It was relatively easy for the inspectors to address their four questions. The ratio of police officers to population could easily be calculated using the 1851 Census figures. If in the inspector's opinion the ratio was not correct, he could bring influence to bear upon the police authority by threatening the loss of the exchequer grant. This seemed to work well – for example, Devonshire County increased its manpower to an efficient state in 1856/57 after a direct recommendation from Willis,²⁶ as did Shrewsbury Borough in 1856/57 after a comment from Cartwright;²⁷ and Sunderland Borough in 1861/62 after intervention by Woodford.²⁸



19th century police officers

When assessing the discipline aspect of efficiency, the inspectors looked to ensure that forces “should have enough superior officers to supervise the constables on duty continuously and regularly”.²⁹ The lack of supervision, especially in the boroughs, was frequently mentioned by the inspectors in their reports, but again there is ample evidence that they addressed this problem successfully. In 1857, Radnorshire appointed a second superintendent because Cartwright had said that it was impossible for the existing superintendent to supervise the constables of the whole county in an efficient manner. At a salary of £80 per year plus £40 horse allowance, the financial strain on a tiny county with limited resources must have been tremendous. Nevertheless, Cartwright's recommendation was carried through.³⁰

Northamptonshire County introduced another tier of supervision in 1857 by creating six police sergeants, a rank hitherto unknown in the force. This was a result of Cartwright's direct influence, both as a resident of the county and as a great believer in the rank, considering that “there is no rank more valuable to the well-working of a force”.³¹

An important element of interforce cooperation was the ‘conference point’ system, where constables from neighbouring forces met for the mutually beneficial exchange of information. This could not work if numbers and discipline were lacking in either force. Overall, the inspectors were flexible and did not apply rigid, unswerving rules. Each force was judged by considering: the needs of the locality in ordinary conditions, not in exceptional periods of unrest; the adequacy of the police to combat crime, not to eradicate it completely; and the average level of cooperation between forces, not the extreme cases of non-cooperation.³² This flexibility avoided jealousies between police authorities, and the fact that a great deal was achieved by persuasion testifies to the good sense and tact of the first three inspectors.

Whether as a conscious sign of seniority or simply coincidental, in the first joint report Cartwright made a substantial general report in addition to his reports on individual forces. His general report was well over six pages long, compared with less than two pages by Willis, and Woodford made no general report at all. Whatever its intended status, Cartwright's report became a substantial statement of the policy of the Inspectorate after the first inspection, and before they launched themselves into their second year.

As well as the obvious work to be done in elevating and maintaining the unsatisfactory boroughs to a point of efficiency in numbers and discipline, in line with the four questions, other unforeseen subjects had surfaced that were equally in need of comment, if not outright reform. In all, Cartwright made 12 points, six of which were substantial and six minor, although they still needed attention.

In his six minor comments, Cartwright drew attention to:

- the difficulties in policing remote parts of counties;
- the unsuitability of forming separate autonomous police districts within the same county;
- the benefits of police officers transferring between forces being able to take their superannuation contributions with them, which up until that time had been impossible;
- the benefits of appointing police surgeons;
- the need for more detective officers; and
- the need to keep the *Police Gazette* (a newspaper containing criminals' names and habits, etc) secret within the police force, which it had not been.



The first two points were clarified in the Police Acts of 1857, 1858 and 1859, which modified the 1856 Act, the third would be attended to by the 1875 Select Committee on Superannuation (see page 35), and the remaining three would be rectified in the course of a few years.³⁵

However, Cartwright's six major points, identified as they were right from the very birth of the Inspectorate, would provide the main tasks for inspectors in the years to come in achieving their aim of an efficient Police Service.

The core Inspectorate policies

The six major tasks identified within Cartwright's general report were:

- the achievement and maintenance of efficiency in unsatisfactory boroughs;
- the eradication of tiny borough police forces;
- the provision of a sensible, settled pension scheme given as a right, rather than being discretionary;
- uniform national pay scales;

- the provision of decent police stations, accommodation, cells and lock-ups; and
- the extension of the use of police officers in civil and social legislation, for example as relieving officers under the poor laws or as weights and measures inspectors.

Each of these tasks provided a core element of the Inspectorate's focus in 1856, and also for many years to come. Indeed, while progress was made in respect of each one during the 19th century, the drive to increase force sizes, achieve equitable conditions of service for officers and ensure accommodation and equipment that was fit for purpose remained core Inspectorate objectives throughout the ensuing century and a half.

Efficiency of the borough police forces

Of the 208 boroughs in England and Wales with police powers, 65 had populations under 5,000 (the small boroughs), 57 had more than 20,000 (the large boroughs), leaving 86 (the medium boroughs) with populations between the two.³⁶ All 57 large boroughs had existing police forces at the time of the first inspection, and the great majority of them were deemed to be efficient within two years. There were, however, four notable problem areas – Ashton-under-Lyne, Oldham, Stockport and Macclesfield – that were all still inefficient by 1870, while Sheffield slipped out of efficiency between 1862 and 1865.

The proportion of inefficient medium borough police forces was higher than that for the large boroughs. However, there was one avenue that the medium boroughs could take which would effectively guarantee efficiency, and that was consolidation. A consolidated borough was one that could legally organise its own force but agreed to be policed by the surrounding county. After 1858/59, all counties (except Rutland) were deemed efficient and so consolidation was

a way of achieving efficiency with no extra rate burden to pay in order to maintain an independent force. Cartwright always advocated the advantages of consolidation, and, in his report for 1857/58,³⁷ reproduced in full letters from the magistrates of 14 boroughs all singing the praises of their own consolidation agreements. The number of consolidated boroughs rose to 58 (out of 223 with and without powers) by the inspection year 1869/70.³⁸

However, not all medium boroughs wanted to consolidate. There could be many reasons for this, such as local pride or the 'family feeling' within the borough for its very own police force, which was often extremely strong and sometimes manifested itself in wonderfully extravagant chrome-badged helmets (as in Rochdale and Guildford). In the case of Sunderland, civic pride and resentment of outside interference was so acute that the watch committee wrote to the Home Secretary saying that it did not want the exchequer grant for 1856/57. The Home Secretary replied that this would not excuse them from inspection, which subsequently found them efficient. When faced with hard cash, however, the watch committee finally accepted the grant of £996/15s/6d, although some of its members still viewed the grant "with some suspicion".³⁹

Other reasons for refusal to consolidate could be a genuine need for fewer police or that a newly created borough did not want to take a seemingly retrograde step and pass their policing back to the county from which they had just 'escaped'. Equally pertinent was the fact that the local watch committee, consisting as it could of local licensing and brewing interests, might wish to protect their power over police administration rather than cede it to a county Chief Constable.

Although consolidation had been identified as a clear priority in the search for greater efficiency,

neither the inspectors nor indeed the Home Secretary had statutory powers to enforce it. Borough police forces were local government institutions over which central government had no control, apart from the threat of withholding the exchequer grant. Inspectors deserve credit for achieving what they did despite the absence of powers. Their independent status enabled them to act on their own initiative, to report with considerable candour, and to urge their views with vigour. Although the reduction in the number of inefficient large and medium boroughs was less marked than in the counties, “nevertheless, reduction was significant, 63 in 1857 to 18 in 1870”.⁴⁰

The eradication of tiny borough police forces

Police forces in the small boroughs (ie those with a population below 5,000) were the despair of the inspectors after 1856. Cartwright, in his policy statement in the first report, articulated their objections.

“It is impossible to over-rate the difficulties these small boroughs have in keeping up an independent force, as in a force of two or three men no sort of discipline or classification can be maintained, and it being impracticable to establish any superannuation fund, the men in the force are generally old, and unfit for their work from physical infirmity, and represent more the old style of watchmen than police officers of the present day. In like manner, by non-consolidation, the county force is seriously weakened, as the superintendent or inspector of the division is not generally allocated in these boroughs, most of which are head-quarters of county petty-sessional divisions, and consequently the centre of the divisional force, besides being the most advantageous spot for the public for placing the standard weights and measures for the division of the county.”

It took no great imagination to realise that these virtually unpoliced enclaves were havens for

criminals. Surprisingly, under section 8 of the ‘permissive’ County Police Act 1839, a county police officer did not have jurisdiction within any boroughs within his county’s borders, unlike the borough constable who had jurisdiction in the surrounding county.⁴¹ Criminals were therefore able to escape to the safety of the borough boundaries and ‘cock a snook’ at the pursuing forces of law and order, and, as long as they committed no crime within the borough itself, the one or possibly two borough constables were unable, unwilling or too frightened to touch them. It was exactly the same situation, although on a lesser scale, that had necessitated the 1853 Select Committee and the 1856 Act in the first place.

At the time of the first report, there were 24 small boroughs in Cartwright’s district, 25 in Willis’, and Woodford was lucky in having only two (Richmond and Hendon). Of course, not all small boroughs were so bloody-minded, and some eagerly consolidated with their counties, eg Beccles (with a population of 4,398), Godmanchester (2,337) and Retford (2,943), as the advantages became obvious.

The inspectors obviously realised that they had no powers, either coercive or persuasive, over the small boroughs that refused to consolidate – as small boroughs had populations under 5,000, they stood to receive no exchequer grant anyway. However, right at the outset, the inspectors “were optimistic enough to think that such folly could not last and that the smaller boroughs would amalgamate voluntarily with the surrounding forces”.⁴²

The provision of a sensible, settled pension scheme

This was considered so important by Cartwright that he devoted one whole page of his report (out of six) to this question. His report speaks for itself:

“One of the most important points I have to bring under your notice is that of the superannuation fund in boroughs. The question has been brought forward in almost all of the principal boroughs in my district, and as their authorities are most anxious to establish such a fund, I have been frequently urged to lay this subject before you in my annual report. The advantages of a superannuation fund are so obvious, that I need not dwell upon them, more than to state that by its establishment the police officers in the force are given a security that not only will they receive their due when active and in health, but when worn out in the service they will have a fund to support them in their latter days. They also look upon it as a sort of friendly society, to which they have contributed, which gives it a greater value than having a mere gratuity to receive. Without such fund, men are constantly shifting from one force to the other, much to the detriment of the forces; but when they have paid for a certain period towards the superannuation fund, they have a deep interest in the funds of the force, which binds them to remain in it for the mutual advantage of both boroughs and themselves.

“The great difficulty arises in those boroughs that have not formed a superannuation fund, and have men who have served in them upwards of 15 years, or approaching to that period; this renders it impossible to form a fund under the second section of the 11th & 12th Vict. c.14 [the relevant legislation], as under that section sums are to be deducted from every constable, and after 15 years’ service each constable, if 50 years of age, is entitled to retire, receiving half the amount of his full pay; thus, when there are constables of that age in such boroughs, they become entitled at once to the advantage of a retiring pension, without perhaps having paid towards it for any time; and in such forces there are constables approaching 50 years of age, whose pensions would soon break a newly established fund. The question is of so much importance that I have brought it under your

notice, and I venture to enquire whether, in the formation of new superannuation funds, the same rule which governs county superannuation funds might not be equally applicable to boroughs...”

Cartwright was concerned about the lack of borough superannuation funds. The county constabularies, under section 11 of the Police Act 1840, were obliged to create funds, which were secured from insolvency by being tied in with the county police rate under section 11 of the 1856 Act. Town councils were enabled, but not compelled, to form superannuation funds for their employees (which included the police), but only a handful ever did.⁴³ So, in 1857, the vast majority of boroughs had no pension funds whatsoever. Cartwright wanted a uniform pension scheme for both borough and county forces.

The creation of a uniform, decent pension as a right was seen by the inspectors as a major element in the provision of a settled, contented and efficient Police Service.

Uniform national pay scales

Cartwright wrote in his report:

“It has been my endeavour to recommend an assimilation of pay in the grades in different counties, so that there should be no encouragement to good men to leave their force for higher pay in another, after they have been drilled and made useful officers in a county or borough in which they have served for any lengthened period.”

The thinking behind this was self-explanatory, as the difference in wages between forces, counties and boroughs was marked. Steedman quotes a weekly net wage of 14s/1d for new recruits in Buckinghamshire County in 1868, compared with anywhere between 17s/1d and 18s/7d for Staffordshire, and in 1867 a staggering 9s/- difference between Hereford City at 10s/- per week and a medium-sized borough at 19s/-.⁴⁴

The provision of decent police stations, accommodation, cells and lock-ups

Cartwright knew of the importance of providing humane prison cells and lock-ups, as well as the boost to morale of decently built and designed police stations. He had found in his district that the lock-ups “require considerable attention; a great many being at present totally unfit to receive any human being”. This commitment to building new lock-ups was one that the inspectors were to pursue with tenacity for the next ten years, and which central government actively assisted from the very outset. In his report for 1858/59, Willis, exulting in the fact that more purpose-built police stations were appearing, referred to “a new book of plans for police stations formally supplied by the Home Office”.



Police station

This enhanced interest by central government may have been encouraged by the contemporary thinking of the sanitary movement. The Public Health Act was only eight years old, and the Commissioner of the General Board of Health, up until 1854, was none other than Edwin Chadwick, one of the architects of the 1856 County and Borough Police Act. Although Chadwick was dismissed in 1854, his successor as Medical Officer to the General Board of Health, John Simon, “followed up the work of Chadwick... and began his assiduous efforts to create a healthy Britain”.⁴⁵

The extension of the use of police officers in civil and social legislation

From the very start, all three inspectors supported policemen having administrative functions.⁴⁶ They, like the local authorities, had seen the ‘new police’ as the most convenient and cheap executive force to hand, and local bylaws would place more and more duties on their shoulders. Indeed, the 1856 Act (under section 6) had empowered local magistrates to give policemen these duties, and so in the early months of 1857 there was a rush to appoint police officers as weights and measures inspectors, common lodging house inspectors⁴⁷ and relieving officers under the poor laws, the job nearest and dearest to Cartwright’s heart.

Foundations for progress

Therefore, by the end of the first inspection year in September 1857, the inspectors had clearly identified the areas where reform, encouragement and pressure were needed in the drive towards an efficient Police Service. Five of the six core aims were to remain consistent over time, but the remaining one – that of civil administrative duties – was to be tempered somewhat over the years as the Police Service gradually sought to move away from being an inexpensive executive arm of local authority administration to concentrate on ‘real police work’.

But that would be in the future. In the autumn of 1857, the inspectors had a good idea of the path they wanted to take and were undoubtedly optimistic about their chances of success. They would soon also realise that central government either could not or would not provide a guiding hand, which presented both an opportunity and a threat. Inspectors would have to tread a largely uncharted path alone and would need to display resilience and initiative to achieve the desired degree of reform and efficiency.

CHAPTER THREE

1857–1890: EFFICIENCY AND REFORM

The first 30 years of the Inspectorate's work was to be a continual struggle to achieve greater efficiency within policing through the six major issues set out in Cartwright's report of 1857. Undoubtedly, the potential for achieving these objectives would rely heavily on the individual skills and persistence of the inspectors, but equally, or perhaps even more, on the degree of support from successive Home Secretaries. It was also during this important period that a further influence became more apparent – the Civil Service, and in particular the permanent undersecretaries, who increasingly became a filter between inspectors and the Home Secretary.

The influence of the Home Office

Although the Home Secretaries of the period were guided by accepted principles regarding the police in society (for example, the police should not be armed), there is no evidence that any Home Secretary had a specified policy as to the way the police should develop.⁴⁸ Indeed, for some of this period the Home Secretaries appeared indifferent to police matters altogether, as evidenced by the repeated recommendations of the inspectors in trying to eradicate the tiny borough forces, which it is believed were not even considered at ministerial level. Even approaches by local police authorities, rather than by the inspectors, did not alter this attitude. When Gloucester City, Flint Borough and Caernarfonshire County all sought advice from the Home Office over various matters, their queries were dismissed arbitrarily without even referral to the appropriate district inspector.⁴⁹

Perhaps had Grey remained Home Secretary, things would have been different – after all, it was Grey who provided the driving force for the 1856 Act. But Grey was replaced at the Home Office in February 1858 by Spencer Walpole, only four months after publication of the first report of the inspectors of constabulary. In addition to issues of personal interest, there was also an issue of ministerial and departmental capacity to concentrate on such issues. Until 1865, the domestic department dealt with police matters; thereafter, the criminal department was responsible. All papers from the inspectors came into the Home Office and were minuted as to action by a clerk, who sent them to a permanent undersecretary, a civil servant. Thus, the inspectors were responsible “not merely to the Home Secretary himself, but to his office”⁵⁰ and there is ample evidence to suggest that most decisions were made by the permanent undersecretaries, with only a tiny proportion of detailed police business ever reaching the Home Secretary.

Because of the organisation of the Home Office at this time, coupled with the widely held conviction that policing was really a local government issue, the Home Secretary and his undersecretaries rarely attempted to coordinate the inspectors' activities or policies, nor did they show any inclination to do so, because during this period the “idea of dispassionate central officials comparing and coordinating the work of the field workers was still embryonic”.⁵¹

The inspectors of constabulary, therefore, in the absence of any lead from central government,

were left to decide their own actions – which is exactly what happened with the publication of the first report in October 1857. The evidence on which future policy was to be formulated was derived by the inspectors themselves after the first inspection, and it was on this evidence that Cartwright identified the Inspectorate policy for the foreseeable future, which in turn was to determine the shape of the later Victorian Police Service.

The Inspectorate from 1857 to 1874

From the outset, Cartwright was the *primus inter pares* of the inspectors. His general comments in the inspectors' report for 1857/58 emphasised all the six main policy points, thereby dominating the minor reports of Woodford and Willis. In his report, Cartwright's prose displayed his enthusiasm and optimism, believing that all six points would be attended to in a comparatively short timescale.

1857/58: the first full report

Although he made no specific comments on the inspectors' first task (the elevation to efficiency of all forces), Cartwright reported a tremendous example of interforce cooperation. He described the royal visit to Birmingham during that year, for which 1,125 police constables were assembled from other forces at short notice, including 200 from the Metropolitan Police. Cartwright's satisfaction was so obvious in his description of this demonstration of cooperation between neighbouring forces – an answer to the fourth of the efficiency questions asked of every force – that it was almost superfluous of him to add at the end "all went well".

In stressing the inefficiency of small boroughs and urging them to consolidate, Cartwright referred to "the immense advantage of consolidation without which it is impossible to make the system as perfect as it should be".

To back up his argument, he quoted letters from the magistrates of 14 consolidated boroughs, all expressing delight at the advantages of consolidation. However, Cartwright was still naive enough in his expectations at this early stage in the life of the Inspectorate to think that this question would be settled by the boroughs themselves.

In his comments on the pensions question, Cartwright expressed his concern over the lack of pension schemes in the boroughs. "I am strengthened in my suggestion," he wrote, "that a new Act of Parliament is necessary for the purposes of enabling boroughs to establish superannuation funds." Additionally, although not directly referring to the pay scales issue, Cartwright brought attention to the matter of allowances. He recommended the rationalisation of allowances for serving summons and warrants and of travelling allowances for police officers attending at courts outside their divisions or forces.

Purpose-built police stations and the improvement needed in cells and lock-ups came next. "When the great advantages of station houses are more practically demonstrated," wrote Cartwright, "everything will be done under this head which can reasonably be expected." As with the other topics, Cartwright thought it sufficient only for him to bring the Home Secretary's attention to the matter and not to go into any great descriptive lengths. Similarly, in respect of the last policy point (that of civil administrative duties for the police), Cartwright merely reiterated the advantages of using policemen as relieving officers under the poor laws, weights and measures inspectors and inspectors of common lodging houses.

In the 1857/58 report, unlike in the earlier preliminary report, Woodford allowed himself to make a small general report. He drew attention to the absence of superannuation schemes in the

majority of his boroughs. He also commented on the numerous and complex systems of paperwork employed, each force differing completely from its neighbour. He mused on the inefficiency and unsuitability of this, especially when papers were sent from one force to another, which hardly eased cooperation between forces, the last of the four areas of efficiency to be examined by the inspectors. Woodford advocated, therefore, a universal system of paperwork for all forces in the United Kingdom. However, the creation of a universal system would have required an ‘umbrella’ administrative power, almost tantamount to a national police ministry, which at a time of minimal police interest from central government was highly unlikely. Woodford perhaps realised this after publication, and would never refer to it again.

In his report, Willis stressed his recommendation for boroughs with populations under 5,000 to consolidate – and brought attention to the difficulties of the smaller boroughs in maintaining a pension scheme. Thus, in his comments, Willis supported Cartwright’s main report (as indeed did Woodford) by emphasising some of the main policy points.

At the end of the second inspection year, in the autumn of 1858, the Inspectorate policy was clearly set out, and the spirit of optimism discernible. The inspectors had no reason to be disillusioned. And, as if further to support their encouraging prognosis, in 1859 the County and Borough Police Act was passed, which was a modifying Act of Parliament addressing some of Cartwright’s six minor points, and which, under section 9, made borough police superannuation funds compulsory. Section 9 was arguably a direct result of Cartwright’s petition for such an Act in the 1857/58 report. The optimism for achieving real change grew still further.

1858–62: progress is consolidated

The inspectors’ reports for 1858/59 and 1859/60 continued in the same vein. Again, it was Cartwright who wrote the longest report, with Woodford and Willis keeping in the background, although the comments they did make were obviously supportive of Cartwright. But, in Cartwright’s general report of 1859/60, perhaps we see it first dawning on him that things would not be so easy:

“Of the... inefficient small boroughs there is nothing satisfactory to report, and I completely relinquish all hope of seeing them placed upon a proper and efficient system without the assistance of the legislature.”

From this statement, it seems to be clear at last to Cartwright that leaving consolidation or efficiency upgrades to the small boroughs themselves was plainly just not working. Therefore, what was needed, if persuasion was useless, was coercion – an Act of Parliament forcing inefficient boroughs into efficiency or consolidation. However, Cartwright did not develop his idea further in the 1859/60 report, but left it at that, no doubt hoping that the Home Secretary would be goaded into action.

But there was no action from the Home Office. Since February 1859, only 18 months before the publication of the 1859/60 report, there had been two Home Secretaries. T M S Sotherton-Estcourt had taken over after Walpole’s year-long stay in February 1859, only to be replaced by Sir George Lewis just four months later. With such a turnaround of Home Secretaries, it was little wonder that policing issues were so often ignored. And in July 1861 the Home Secretary changed again. Lewis was relieved of office, to be replaced by none other than Sir George Grey, the architect of the 1856 County and Borough Police Act.

With Grey back in the Home Office by July, Cartwright had three months before the inspectors' report was due. In the report for 1860/61, Cartwright obviously felt at ease enough in his relations with Grey to recommend publicly that a coercive Act of Parliament should be passed, to make the inefficient boroughs either consolidate or upgrade themselves into efficiency. He wrote:

“Each inspection adds to my conviction that the small boroughs will neither voluntarily make their forces efficient, or consolidate with the counties. If it were the only object, to give these small boroughs the protection and security they require, it might be thought a question entirely for themselves to decide; but there is a deeper interest in their being made efficient as to the general working of the police force throughout the country, as these small boroughs, with inefficient forces, not only affect the network which should be effectively established from sea to sea, but are often the haunts of those who commit their depredations in adjoining districts, and are more difficult to be detected than those persons who are under the immediate supervision of communicating forces.”

This question was also emphasised by Willis in his report. Willis' general reports were increasing in length every year and were becoming more apposite as his confidence gradually increased. No doubt he had thought himself the junior of the first three inspectors, being the last to be appointed, and being the Chief Constable of only a city police force rather than a large county constabulary, as Woodford had been. Nevertheless, it is clear by the 1860/61 report that Willis was equal in confidence to Woodford, and would within a few years surpass him to become the 'unofficial' second most influential inspector. In contrast, Woodford's reports are laconic, terse and seem almost bland when placed alongside the lengthy directness of Cartwright or Willis' increasing pungency. It was Willis in the 1860/61 report who supported

Cartwright's plea for coercive legislation over the small boroughs, as well as for another problem that was beginning to be recognised by the inspectors.

Although the 1859 County and Borough Police Act had made borough superannuation schemes mandatory, the inspectors were finding that some borough watch committees were simply ignoring their legal obligations. Willis commented:

“There appears to be no desire on the part of the Authorities to comply with the Act, or indeed to place the forces which are also otherwise in an inefficient state, in a more efficient condition. With the exception of Faversham, no attempt has been made by any borough in the southern district hitherto reported as inefficient, to place the police establishments in a more satisfactory condition.”

Willis concluded from this, in direct support of Cartwright, that only coercive legislation would provide the answer to the small boroughs' inefficiency problems. All in all, the 1860/61 report showed a total of 64 inefficient forces in England and Wales – including the only inefficient county, Rutland, but this was to be its last year of inefficiency – and 32 boroughs without superannuation funds. After the optimistic prognosis of the late 1850s, by the early 1860s the inspectors were realising that it was not to be as easy as they had thought. And in the 1861/62 inspection they met a hitherto unforeseen headache which further exacerbated their main policy aims.

The National Census had been taken in 1861, with the subsequent adjustment of population figures. This meant that the ratio of police officers per 1,000 population had to be reassessed, with a resulting increase in police officer numbers needed to keep the exchequer grant. This, however, appears not to have created too many problems, as the efficient

forces readily complied and the inefficient forces ignored it, as they had nothing to lose.

But in some instances the 1861 Census created anomalies. Cartwright singled out the case of Grantham Borough. The 1851 Census figures, on which all the ratio figures had been calculated until then, gave the population as being over 5,000. But the 1861 figures counted 4,946, just 54 short of 5,000 – the cut-off point for the exchequer grant. So, from being an efficient borough receiving the exchequer grant one day to a borough failing to qualify for the grant the next, through no fault of its own, Grantham found itself in a quandary. Cartwright could only offer sympathy and two possible alternatives: either soldier on without the exchequer grant or consolidate with Lincolnshire. “Consolidation,” wrote Cartwright in the 1861/62 report, would “if tried, give satisfaction, but which I always find unpalatable to the authorities in the first place”. In the event, Grantham chose not to consolidate and continued regardless (until 1947, in fact (see Annex 4: Lincolnshire Police)).

1863–67: enthusiasm wanes

By the 1863/64 report, it was clear that the inspectors’ early flush of enthusiasm had dissipated. Gone were Cartwright’s comments on each of the six main aims. Instead, he gave a terse general report that, for the first time, was of equal length to those of Woodford and Willis. The main contents of the three inspectors’ reports were the listing of the still inefficient police forces in their areas, which, apart from Deal Borough becoming efficient, Flint Borough being consolidated and one new force being created (Reigate), was exactly the same as in the previous year’s (1862/63’s) report. Thus, in Cartwright’s now succinctly crisp prose, “little happened over the year”. This total of 59 inefficient forces (out of 225) was still an incredible number, especially after eight years’

work by the Inspectorate. It reflected the lack of interest shown in police matters by central government and by Parliament in general, and the fact that, by being only an advisory body, the Inspectorate’s efficacy was limited without the backing of compulsive legislation.

In the period 1859 to 1874, only one minor Act of Parliament was passed that affected the county and borough police forces of England and Wales (the 1865 Police Superannuation Act mentioned overleaf). Additionally, in the period 1856 to 1880, only ten questions about the rural police were asked in Parliament, and only one reference to provincial policemen was made during this time.⁵² It is therefore little wonder that the inspectors became dispirited, as they realised that central government was giving them no support. To add to this sense of disillusionment, so clear in the 1863/64 report, Cartwright also brought attention to the state of the county pension funds.

Although all counties had funds (under the Police Act 1840, section 11), the inadequacy of some of those funds was worrying to Cartwright. He suggested that the fees for summons and warrants be used to augment the pension fund rather than being deposited for use in the general police fund. To have to report that all was not well with the county pension funds, as well as still having some backsliders among the boroughs on this question, must have added to Cartwright’s feeling of frustrated impotence.

The reports for the years 1864/65, 1865/66 and 1866/67 were similarly unenthusiastic. The regular topics were referred to, with the usual comments: consolidation of the small boroughs, either voluntarily or by compulsive legislation; the (now urgent) need for an examination of the superannuation scheme for all forces, both county and borough; and the need for higher pay scales to stop the drift away from the Police

Service. The Police Superannuation Act had been passed in 1865, but this concerned the pension rights of only borough Chief Constables, and also gave the authorities power to award a lump sum in lieu of pension for constables under 60 in certain medical circumstances. This Act had no influence over the real question of superannuation, and was so minor that none of the inspectors made any more than a passing reference to it in any of their reports.

However, in the midst of the gloom there was a ray of light over the pay question. In March 1866, the Home Office implemented new rates of pay, and this was commented on favourably by both Cartwright and Willis in the 1865/66 report. In the event, the police probably received a wage rise as much because of the increasing economic prosperity of the period as in response to any agitation by the inspectors. Nevertheless, all good news was welcomed at this juncture.

The sixth policy point also got a favourable mention. Cartwright expressed satisfaction (in the 1864/65 report) over the extra duties of police officers. He especially singled out a poor law relief system adopted in the Wicknam Market Union in Suffolk, with the local constables being appointed as assistant relieving officers. The success of this sixth policy aim was probably due to the authorities' appreciation of the local constabulary as a convenient agency, already in existence – which meant they did not have to go to the expense of specifically appointing other people as legislative inspectors – rather than to any concerted effort by the inspectors of constabulary.

Despite these two glimpses of sunshine, the three reports for the years 1864 to 1867 were dismal and uninspiring. And, as if to bring home the feeling that the inspectors had lost heart, in 1867 Woodford retired. As with his first report, his last one contained no general

comments, only specific notes on individual forces. Woodford was a disappointment. After his undoubted success in Lancashire, great things had been expected of him by Grey, who had appointed him. His potential, judging by his reports (or lack of them), was never reached, and his retirement was not even commented on by Cartwright or Willis, or indeed by his successor William Elgee.

The only thing that happened on Woodford's retirement was that the counties of Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire, together with all their boroughs (Chesterfield, Derby, Glossop, Newark, Nottingham and Retford), were transferred from the Midlands to the Northern district. It is understood that Woodford had resisted this when he was in charge of the Northern district, but now the opportunity arose to relieve Cartwright of some of his burden. After all, he had 25 counties and Woodford only 9, which appears a highly unfair sharing of the workload.

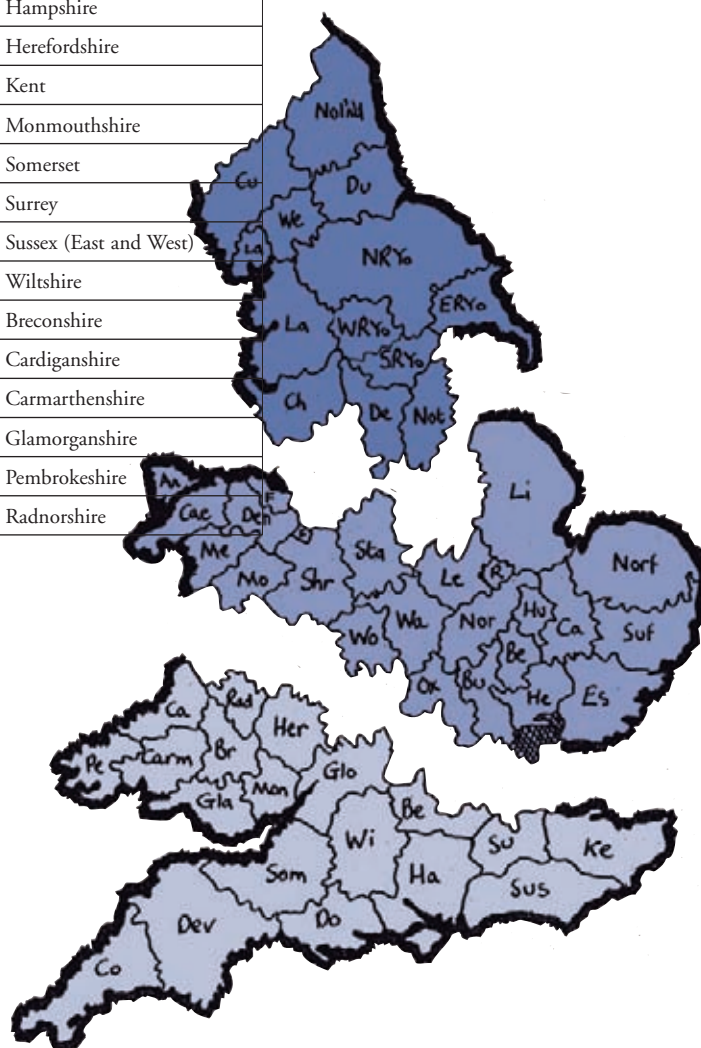
Cartwright, however, when he retired the following year, could not leave without comment. He was undoubtedly the most influential of the first three inspectors, not least because he showed a clear commitment to the idea of a locally controlled county government. He was also tireless in attempting to remove local inefficiencies. Of the inefficient small boroughs, he wrote in his parting comments:

“... they are still in their inefficient state, and, as far as I can see, are likely so to remain till the Legislature interferes. It is a serious drawback to the general well-working of the force, and I do not hesitate again to state that the general efficiency of the constabulary never can be confirmed until these small boroughs are forced into consolidation.”

The superannuation question of both counties and boroughs was also in the “same unsatisfactory state”, and he urged urgent

Inspection districts 1867–1907

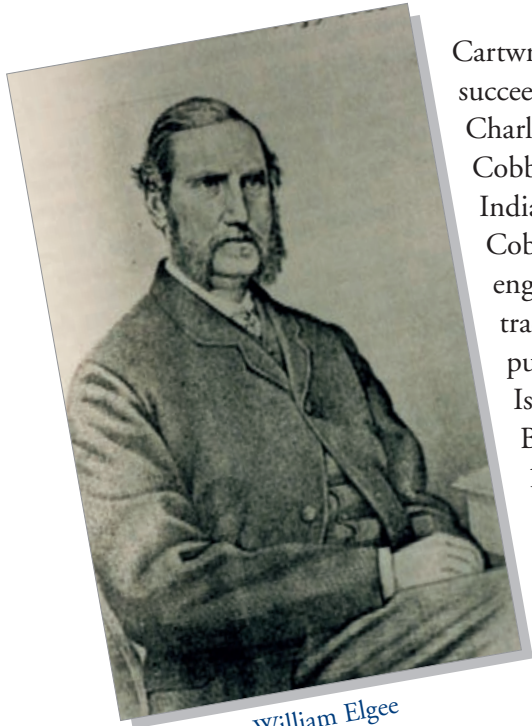
<i>Northern (Elgee)</i>	<i>Midlands (Cobbe)</i>	<i>Southern (Willis)</i>
Cheshire	Bedfordshire	Berkshire
Cumberland	Buckinghamshire	Cornwall
Derbyshire	Cambridgeshire	Devonshire
Durham	Essex	Dorset
Lancashire	Hertfordshire	Gloucestershire
Northumberland	Huntingdonshire	Hampshire
Nottinghamshire	Leicestershire	Herefordshire
Westmorland	Lincolnshire	Kent
East Riding (Yorkshire)	Norfolk	Monmouthshire
North Riding (Yorkshire)	Northamptonshire	Somerset
West Riding (Yorkshire)	Oxfordshire	Surrey
	Rutland	Sussex (East and West)
	Shropshire	Wiltshire
	Staffordshire	Breconshire
	Suffolk (East and West)	Cardiganshire
	Warwickshire	Carmarthenshire
	Worcestershire	Glamorganshire
	Anglesey	Pembrokeshire
	Caernarfonshire	Radnorshire
	Denbighshire	
	Flintshire	
	Merionethshire	
	Montgomeryshire	



consideration of this question. On the subject of police officers being used as assistant relieving officers under the poor laws, his favourite subject from the six main policy points, he went into great detail about the working of a relief system and even gave a plan for a definitive workhouse.

1868–74: new blood in the Inspectorate

So, in the inspection year of 1868/69, Willis, the old war horse, was joined by two brand-new inspectors. William Elgee had taken over from Woodford the previous year. Elgee was Chief Constable of Lancashire Police, having previously been Adjutant of the 3rd Royal Militia based at Preston.



William Elgee

Cartwright was succeeded by Charles Augustus Cobbe. Born in India in 1817, Cobbe was a civil engineer by trade and a pupil of Isambard Brunel. In 1838 he joined the army, fighting with the Ceylon Rifles, the

95th Regiment and

then the 3rd Regiment. In 1856 he became Chief Constable of West Riding Police, leaving to join the Inspectorate in 1869.

With both of the new recruits having been Chief Constables, for the first time all the inspectors had previous police experience. Willis now took over the role of senior inspector for the 1868/69 report. Unsurprisingly, he returned to the Inspectorate's thoughts on the inefficient small boroughs:

"Many of the boroughs, both with populations exceeding 5,000 persons as well as those with less, have extensive areas surrounding them which are never patrolled or watched, and indeed cannot be patrolled with such forces as are at present maintained; and as all counties have been compelled by Act of Parliament to provide for the proper protection of the whole of their respective districts, it would, I consider, be just that all such boroughs shall be similarly required to maintain forces sufficient in number to provide for the proper protection of the districts under their charge, or that, for police purposes, they should be placed compulsorily under the charge of the constabulary

of the counties in which they are respectively situated."

On the superannuation question, Willis urged action, and in order to back up his argument cited the malpractice of Cardiff City Watch Committee, which used some of their superannuation fund to pay part of the Chief Constable's salary and now owed the fund £84. This practice, he stated, was "highly reprehensible". Cobbe and Elgee, understandably, started off by making no alarming policy changes or statements. They seemed content to support Willis in calling for action over the superannuation question, and for coercive legislation for the inefficient small boroughs.

It would have been hoped that two new inspectors would have revitalised the Inspectorate. This did not seem to be the case – in fact, it was quite the reverse. Cobbe, in the report for 1869/70, finished his general report with the comment: "The men generally are very healthy, well conducted, respectable, and intelligent. They appear to be well supervised, and their duties seem well arranged, and well attended to." This in itself is not noteworthy, until one realises that this was reproduced, word for word, comma for comma, in the next three of his annual reports. This seems to suggest a certain lack of original thought or interest.

Elgee, and even Willis, had reverted to formulaic reports by this time. The reports from 1869/70 to 1872/73 are virtually identical, merely giving police responses to licensed premises, pedlars, vagrants, ticket of leave men and tables of crime figures. The complacency and apathy of these reports is noticeable and has been taken to reflect the dispirited state of the three demoralised inspectors at this time.

Progress against the Inspectorate's objectives between 1857 and 1874

The period 1857 to 1874 was not the best for the inspectors of constabulary. Starting off with the high ideals of the six main aims to be achieved (which never varied despite changes of inspectors), over the period it was realised that accomplishing **all** these aims would be impossible. The Inspectorate was an advisory body and, without legal powers of coercion, was toothless against police authorities who would not yield to persuasion. By 1874, therefore, four of the six aims were still unfulfilled.

The efficiency of the unsatisfactory borough police forces

By 1870, there were still 52 inefficient borough forces out of a total of 223. Of this 52, 31 were boroughs with populations of less than 5,000. Nineteen of the large and medium-sized boroughs were considered to be “chronically inefficient”, having been deemed inefficient for three or more consecutive years.⁵³ Because of the constitution of borough police forces, elected watch committees were not as accountable to the Home Secretary as regards regulations, pay, allowances, minimum standards for recruits and choice of Chief Constable as were the county constabularies. The inspectors were “cynical about borough control of police forces”⁵⁴ as the watch committees were managed by men with local interests and connections, especially in the licensing trade.

The eradication of tiny borough police forces

In the 1870/71 report, Cobbe listed eight of his boroughs in the Midlands district with populations of less than 5,000 and inefficient police forces. Willis listed 15 in his district, while Elgee did not quote exact figures. This total of over 23 inefficient small boroughs was a good indication of the failure to accomplish fully the second policy aim. Despite repeated

exhortations to the Home Secretary in their annual reports, legislation to compel consolidation or efficiency was not forthcoming.

The provision of a sensible, settled pension scheme

Only slight progress was made on this point during the period 1856 to 1874. When Cartwright commented that “a new Act of Parliament was necessary” in 1857/58, within a year he had achieved just that. What he did not achieve, however, was the government backing to ensure that miscreant boroughs performed their legal obligations. So it was left to the Inspectorate to persuade rather than force, and to report to the Home Secretary those boroughs who could not be persuaded. The Home Secretaries were uninterested; no compelling legislation to address the real problem was introduced during the period.

The situation in the counties was little better. Although every county had a fund under the 1840 and 1856 Police Acts, the state of these funds had been a cause for concern for some time. First raised by Cartwright in 1863/64, the situation had got progressively worse – so much so that Willis, in the 1873/74 report, in his beautifully understated way, ventured “to urge the question as deserving of early consideration”.

Uniform national pay scales

There was one pay rise during the period, in March 1866, but this did not lead to a uniform national pay scale. The boroughs were the main bugbear, as the watch committees had full command of their police forces, including holding the purse strings. The Home Secretary had little power over the boroughs, even though the Exchequer was reimbursing local police authorities one quarter of their expenditure on pay.

The provision of decent police stations, accommodation, cells and lock-ups



19th century cells

By the mid 1860s, the state of police accommodation, cells and lock-ups had ceased to be a cause of major concern. Any second-rate accommodation was dealt with only in the individual force reports, and, if referred to at all in the general reports, was mentioned only in passing. The conclusion was that police and prisoner accommodation was generally of a decent standard, with any specific problems being dealt with locally.

The extension of the use of police officers in civil and social legislation

As with the previous policy point, once the Inspectorate had provided the lead, police authorities were quick to follow as it was obviously advantageous for them to do so. The police provided a convenient agency, already in existence and available 24 hours a day, to undertake duties for which extra staff would otherwise have had to be employed.

So 'successful' was this that in some boroughs the police seemed to become the major social agency. For instance, by 1880 in Godalming Borough, the Chief Constable, as well as being Billet Master and Chief of the Borough Fire Brigade, was also Inspector of Nuisances,

Common Lodging Houses, Explosives, the Petroleum Acts, the Dairy and Cowsheds Act and the Food and Drugs Act.⁵⁵ And in Guildford Borough, by 1909 the Chief Constable was Inspector of the Contagious Diseases Act, the 1907 Butter and Margarine Act, the Hackney Carriages Act, the Food and Drugs Act, Explosives, the Petroleum Acts and Common Lodging Houses.⁵⁶

Thus, by 1874, the Police Service of England and Wales was still in a highly disconnected state. Eighteen years of work by the Inspectorate of Constabulary had achieved only partial success, and the optimism of the 1850s had given way to disillusionment and disenchantment by the early 1870s. Lack of action and support by central government had heightened the Inspectorate's sense of isolation. Nine Home Secretaries in 18 years had provided no stable, continuous police policy during the period. Judging by their reports, the inspectors, seeing no end to the gloom, viewed the second half of the 1870s with pessimism. However, things were about to change.

The Inspectorate from 1874 to 1890

The period from 1874 to 1890 represented a roller-coaster ride for the inspectors. Changes in Home Secretary and varying levels of Civil Service support led inspectors to fluctuate between almost equal degrees of depression and elation.

A new champion

*"He was entirely without that sparkle which attracts attention in debate: and it was therefore as Disraeli himself said, an 'almost unexampled mark of confidence' when Cross was in 1874 put at the head of the Home Office without undergoing a probation in some minor post."*⁵⁷



Benjamin Disraeli

Richard Asheton Cross was appointed as Home Secretary by Benjamin Disraeli on Saturday 21 February 1874, following the general election that gave the Conservative Party its first unhindered taste of power (after its brief skirmish in 1868). Cross had never held office before but possessed an extensive knowledge of local government, and he turned out to be a great Home Secretary. When Disraeli entered office in 1874, “he was quite content to leave colonial policy to Carnarvon, just as he left social reform to Cross”,⁵⁸ as shown in Cross’ autobiography, when he recalls his first Cabinet meeting with Disraeli:

*“From all his speeches I had quite expected that his mind was full of legislative schemes, but such did not prove to be the case; on the contrary he had to entirely rely on the suggestions of his colleagues, and, as they themselves had only just come into office, and that suddenly, there was some difficulty in framing the Queen’s speech.”*⁵⁹

It is likely, therefore, that Cross was not merely responsible for the details but played a large part in shaping the principles of the social reforms that are arguably the greatest achievement of the

Home Office between 1874 and 1880. One of the first pieces of legislation of the Disraeli government was the Police (Expenses) Act 1874, which received Royal Assent on Friday 7 August 1874. This Act increased the exchequer grant from 25% to 50%, and was included in the legislation of the Cross era that “marks the definite introduction of collectivist principles into legislation”.⁶⁰

‘Collectivism’ was a phase of extensive state intervention that replaced utilitarianism from the late 1860s onwards and became accepted as the working creed of English politics. Whereas the individualist assumed that each person was the best judge of his own affairs, the collectivist assumed the state to be. The state, therefore, moved from ‘reactive protection’ to ‘proactive assistance’.

This change was reflected in a Home Office memorandum sent to the Home Secretary, Cross, dated Monday 27 April 1874:

*“The very considerable addition about to be made to the contribution from Imperial funds in aid of local police expenditure affords the government an opportunity, of which it may be well to take advantage, of endeavouring to secure for the Secretary of State a greater amount of supervision and control over the police forces of Great Britain than he now possesses.”*⁶¹

The memorandum goes on to comment on the very limited authority possessed by the Home Secretary over the county forces, and, as regards the borough police:

“... he has no power whatever beyond that of withholding a certificate of efficiency; and it is therefore clear that the supervision exercised by him, in counties as well as in boroughs, is very limited both in character and amount. As now constituted, the police force is a fragmental body, acting within, and subject to the control of,

separate jurisdictions and having no general cohesion. The time has not perhaps arrived for making an attempt to place it entirely under a central authority, however desirable that might be as regards its efficiency and utility: but the conferring of additional powers of supervision upon the Secretary of State would be a step in that direction, and entirely warranted, if not absolutely called for, by the appropriation of so large a sum of public money towards its maintenance.”

1874–79: progress and optimism

The inspectors of constabulary were quick to take advantage of a climate of opinion in the Home Office so favourably inclined to reform, and so in the 1873/74 report they re-emphasised their policy aims. The parliamentary undersecretary at the Home Office was Sir Henry Ibbetson, who turned out to be supportive. It is not known why Ibbetson should have been favourably inclined towards the police when his predecessors had not been, nor what prompted him to think about police matters.

Certainly, some police matters clearly needed reforming. In the 1873/74 report, as well as pursuing their main aims, the inspectors included “a summary of proposals which had long been maturing”, which included a proposal for greater control over the administration of the borough forces by the Home Secretary.

The 1873/74 report had such an impact on Ibbetson that in January 1875 he wrote to the Home Secretary:

“If a Bill of this kind is necessary, and I imagine it will be if the present grant to Counties and Boroughs is to be altered in accordance with the promise of last year, I feel very strongly that there are several points in the administration of the force which could not be omitted without rendering the Bill open to grave attack. I entirely agree with the reports which have long been in the office from the Chief Inspectors of Constabulary, that one most

important point which should be made a condition of any further Imperial Grant is that the appointment and disposal of Chief Constables in Counties and Head Constables in Boroughs should be made subject to the approval of the Secretary of State, as the appointments of Chief Constables in Counties now are under the 2 & 3 Vic., c.93, s.4. And I think the Sec. of State should also have power to make rules for the government of Borough forces similar to those he now possesses in Sec. 3 of the same Act with regard to Counties.

“In my opinion, one of the cardinal points however of police reform, and which if possible should also form part of any fresh legislation, is subject to grave political considerations, but which I do not think outweigh the value of the change. It is that the grant for a separate force should not be given to any Borough having a separate police force under 10,000 population instead of 5,000 as now. The Chief Constables go further and would suggest 15,000...

“I am aware of the opposition some towns might make but after all the number affected are only thirty. And it is in these small Boroughs, where the forces and especially the staff are ridiculously out of proportion to the want, and when great advantage might be secured both in economy and efficiency by their being merged in the Counties for police purposes, that real practical reform is wanted.

“I think the power also suggested by the Chief Constables, that the police should be empowered to act in any jurisdiction when their services may become necessary on the requisition of the Authority of the jurisdiction, would be a valuable amendment. But no Bill should omit I think dealing with the question of superannuation. At present there is no doubt the superannuation funds, generally, are either at present or are on the verge of being insolvent. They are supplied now by certain fines payable to the funds and by contributions from the forces, but natural objection is made by the men who feel they are contributing

to funds which from their condition are hardly ever likely to be of benefit to them. On these funds becoming insolvent pensions must fall upon the rates, as unless some system of pension is adopted in the present state of the question of labour, you will fail to keep a force together at all..."

This call for change was not immediately effective across all areas. However, there was some movement on the superannuation question, through the establishment in March 1875 of a Select Committee "to inquire into the Police Superannuation Funds in the Counties and Boroughs of England and Wales". Ibbetson was appointed as chairman, which gave breathing space for Cross to take stock while progressing other, more pressing reforms.

The Select Committee included a certain Fairfax Cartwright, MP for South Northamptonshire and none other than the son of William Cartwright, the very first inspector of constabulary. Fairfax Cartwright, who had been agitating for police superannuation reform for some time, had obviously been influenced by his father, who no doubt saw that Fairfax, as an MP, had far greater opportunities to badger the Home Secretary in the House than he had, as a non-member.

The three inspectors – Willis, Cobbe and Elgee – were called to give evidence before the Committee, all appearing on one day, Friday 30 April 1875. Needless to say, all three were in favour of settled pension rights for all policemen, county or borough – as they had been saying for years in their reports. Numerous other witnesses also gave evidence: Chief Constables of counties and boroughs, constables, doctors, financial experts and local politicians. The Committee took two years to publish its report, which it did in April 1877 as the *Select Committee on Police Superannuation Funds*.⁶²

There were several suggestions in the report, but the outstanding one was that policemen should have the legal right to a pension if they fulfilled certain conditions, instead of pensions being at the discretion of police authorities, as had previously been the case. The report also called for the right to legal appeal if a pension was withheld. This, the main suggestion of the 1877 report, was exactly what the inspectors had been campaigning for since 1856, 21 long years before.

With the ammunition of the superannuation report, no doubt the inspectors were looking forward to a Bill being introduced in Parliament as soon as possible. And Willis, in the inspectors' report for 1876/77, said exactly that. The inspectors were hopeful. They were equally hopeful when, in the same year as the superannuation report was published, the Municipal Corporations (New Charters) Act was passed. This was the first Act to lay down powers over police matters that were compulsory rather than advisory, as had been the case previously.

The 1877 Act dictated that no newly created borough would have police powers unless it had a population of over 20,000. So although it stopped short of actually banning any existing forces in smaller boroughs, it at least stopped the creation of any more. Although, technically, the Act did not facilitate the achievement of the second policy aim, it was a step in the right direction, and possibly would lead to further change – perhaps the legislation over consolidation that the inspectors had been asking for. Elgee, in the report for 1877/78, commented favourably on the Municipal Corporations Act and followed this up by opining once again that the only way to defeat police inefficiency in the small boroughs was forcible amalgamation with their counties.

Meanwhile, the inspectors were making progress towards the fulfilment of all their aims. By 1875, the number of inefficient forces had been reduced to 38 from 52 in 1870, and 80 boroughs had consolidated by 1876. But in 1880 came a setback. Two events in quick succession would serve to check the work of the inspectors.

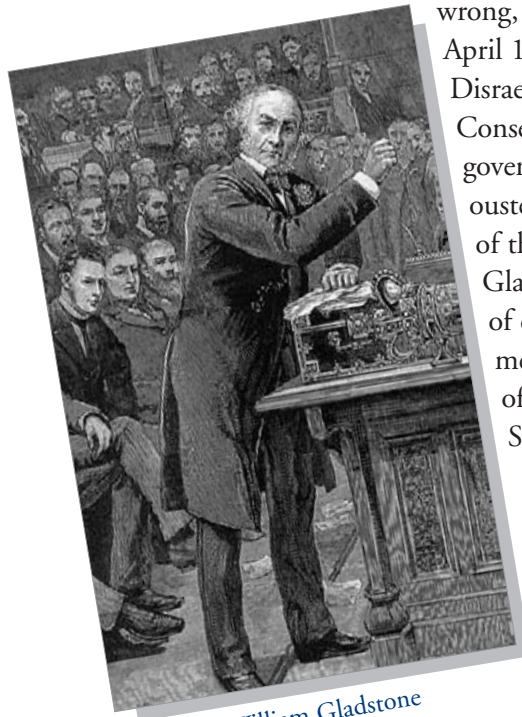
The first of these should have been easily surmountable. It had happened before and the Inspectorate had survived, so there was no reason to think it would not survive again. The retirement of one of the original inspectors should have caused few ripples, as all Willis' replacement, Charles Legge, had to do was continue following Inspectorate policy.



Charles Legge

Willis retired in 1879. He was 74 years old and the last of the three original inspectors appointed in 1856. He could look back over his period of office, no doubt, with some disappointment. Cartwright's early optimism in thinking that the country would have an efficient Police Service in just a few years had not been fulfilled. On the brink of retirement after 23 years of work, Willis could see that there were still over 30 inefficient forces and that the

pensions question was still not settled. But things had improved, although not as quickly as he would have liked, and he left office hoping that the contemporary political set-up at the Home Office would favour his successor. But he was



William Gladstone

wrong, because in April 1880 Disraeli's Conservative government was ousted in favour of the Liberal Gladstone, and, of course, this meant a change of Home Secretary.

1880–87: a return to despair

Cross was replaced by Sir William Harcourt, who was entirely different. The autocratic Harcourt set back police reform by a good ten years and returned the inspectors to their pre-1874 days of dispirited lethargy. And, naturally, the pro-police Ibbetson had gone too, being replaced by Sir Matthew Ridley as parliamentary undersecretary. It was Ridley who ordered that any paperwork that left the Home Office sent "to police authorities should be absolutely free from any taint of dictation or direction: the Inspectors may approach the local authorities, and lead them in the right direction – but it must be done with discretion".⁶³ This was a direct reversal of the spirit of collectivism and of the opinions of Cross and Ibbetson, but it echoed the opinions of Harcourt himself, who delighted in pouring scorn on any suggestion

that Whitehall knew best. He wrote on the subject:

*“I cannot consent to accept the Procrustean rules of the Inspectors who are quite ignorant of the needs of the localities... against the local authorities, who know their own affairs much better.”*⁶⁴

Harcourt made little attempt to conceal his disdain of the Inspectorate of Constabulary, and of their work. He was particularly disparaging of the long-standing efficiency ratio of police to population:

*“Nothing can be more ridiculous. It is time that a little practical common sense should be brought to bear on these matters. To make these people keep more police than they want is like the old story of compelling the Brahmins to develop butchers’ shops because beef is thought to be good for them.”*⁶⁵

Harcourt would never lose his scorn for the Inspectorate, or indeed for the Home Office itself. As a backbencher during the debate over the Local Government Act in 1888, he described the inspectors of constabulary as “absolutely useless for the purposes for which they at present exist”. And the staff of the Home Office, he added, “was most imperfect and the duties were not satisfactorily performed”.⁶⁶

This change of attitude at the Home Office could have been assimilated, given time, but to come at the same time as a change of inspector was a body blow. With such antagonism at the Home Office, there is little wonder that the inspectors became dispirited; they considered themselves unwanted, and their work vilified instead of receiving support. The inspectors’ reports from 1880 onwards reflected this feeling all too well. They were lacklustre, stilted and repetitive, with each year’s report being virtually the same as the previous one. For example, Cobbe invariably finished his general report with the sentence: “The officers and men of the

constabulary generally are healthy, intelligent, and wishful to discharge their duties efficiently, and these duties are as well arranged as circumstances permit.”

It is ironic, therefore, that the scornful Harcourt was a member of the Liberal party, as, within a few years, the Liberals would support the legislation needed to fulfil the Inspectorate’s outstanding policy aims.

The 14 months between June 1885 and August 1886 was an unsettled time for Britain. A general election in June 1885 ousted Gladstone’s Liberals (and Harcourt from the Home Office) and replaced them with the Conservatives under Lord Salisbury. Cross came back to the Home Office, but the Conservative government was shortlived, and by February 1886 Gladstone was back as Prime Minister. This time, the Home Secretary was Hugh Culling Eardley Childers. Just seven months later, however, Gladstone was ejected from office again, and in early August 1886 Lord Salisbury’s Conservative government was returned with such a majority that it would last the full six years. Henry Matthews (later Viscount Llandaff) was appointed as Home Secretary on Tuesday 3 August 1886.

1888–90: light at the end of the tunnel

The Local Government Act was passed in 1888, bringing about fundamental change to local government, and with it reform of policing that would be the answer to the last 30 years of recommendations by the inspectors of constabulary. In effect, the 1888 Act kept the judicial powers with the magistrates of the counties, but placed county administration in the hands of politically elected, newly formed county councils.

Therefore, the reform of local government was the primary concern of this Act. But the police were controlled by local government and so the police question had to be included in debates,

as Parliament was then faced with the question of who would control the police. Was control to remain with the local gentry – the bench of magistrates in quarter sessions? Or was it to be in the hands of the new county councils, with their (inexperienced) elected politicians of all social classes?

Tempers were heated in Parliament when this question was decided. It became obvious that both sides were entrenched: on the one hand were those who saw the management of the police as a judicial matter (for the magistrates); and on the other were those who saw it as an administrative affair (for the county councils). Compromise had to be reached. The proposal that control of the police should be divided equally between the magistrates and the county council was met with hostility from both sides. But the proposal was adopted – there was no other solution. The control of county police forces, therefore, passed into the hands of a committee consisting of equal numbers of magistrates and local politicians, henceforth known as the standing joint committee.

The heated debate seemed to concern only the counties and obviously provided a smokescreen, as the boroughs hardly rated a mention and their watch committees remained untouched. So the provision in the Act to abolish police forces in boroughs with populations of less than 10,000 was accepted by Parliament, largely unchallenged. The inspectors must have looked at this Act with incredulity, as it achieved in one short pen stroke what they had failed to do in 30 years. As a result of this Act, virtually overnight in 1889, all the inefficient police forces would be swept away, and the total number of police forces in England and Wales reduced by 40 to 183.

Unsurprisingly, the inspectors' report of 1888/89 was a complete contrast to those of the previous years. Gone were the lists of inefficient small

boroughs, as each inspector (Cobbe for the Midlands, Elgee for the Northern, and Legge for the Southern district) commented favourably on the effects of the 1888 Local Government Act.

Every police force in the land, except one, was now efficient. The 'wooden spoon' prize for the very last police force in England and Wales to remain inefficient went to Congleton Borough. But, by the 1889/90 report, even this "chronically inefficient" borough was deemed acceptable.

It must have been with sighs of relief that the inspectors finally achieved their first two policy aims. But there was still a large problem left – the pension question. In the 1888/89 report, all the inspectors expressed concern, with Elgee adding that "the subject is a source of much anxiety to the Service generally". Fortunately, the Conservative government seemed to be supportive of the police. A Bill concerning police superannuation was introduced in Parliament, and this would eventually be passed as the Police Act of 1890. When this Bill was published, it was thought necessary to accompany it with a *Memorandum in explanation of the Police Bill 1890*,⁶⁷ which succinctly summed up the convoluted history of the fight for police pensions.

"The Police Bill now before the House of Commons is the outcome of a long series of efforts... In 1817, a Committee of the House of Commons reported on the subject of Superannuation in the Provincial and Metropolitan Forces. Following on this Report, Bills were introduced into the House of Commons in 1882, 1883 and 1884 by Mr Hibbert, and in 1885 by Mr H H Fowler, while Sir W V Harcourt was Home Secretary, dealing with the whole subject. These Bills were framed after communication with the Commissioner of Metropolitan Police and with the local authorities of boroughs and counties. They none of them made much progress, being resisted by the advocates of relief to local taxation, who desired to receive a contribution to the cost of

Superannuation from Imperial Funds. The present Government have long had a Superannuation Bill in preparation. Its introduction has been delayed by the passing of the Local Government Act 1888, which created a new Financial Authority and a new Police Authority for the counties. It was thought desirable that these new authorities should have time to consider the subject, to become familiar with the financial condition of their localities, before an improved Superannuation Scheme was presented.

“The time has now come when the question should be dealt with. The present Bill is largely founded on Mr Fowler’s Bill of 1885. Its general effect may be concisely stated. It alters the superannuation system now existing in one fundamental respect. At present all pensions, both in the Metropolitan and Provincial Forces, are entirely at the discretion of the police authorities, who can grant or withhold a pension at pleasure, and who, in the provinces, have not in general bound themselves to any fixed rate of pension. The Bill gives to constables a legal right to pensions under certain defined conditions, and it gives them an appeal to a legal tribunal against the withholding or the forfeiture of their pensions for alleged misconduct.”

Only one major dissenting voice was heard in the debates (Samuel Storey, MP for Sunderland), and so the Bill was passed on Tuesday 5 August 1890, becoming known as the Police Act 1890. The supreme achievement of this Act was that it gave a decent pension as a right to a policeman retiring after 25 years who fulfilled certain conditions. And Cobbe, in the 1889/90 report, would express complete satisfaction with the working of the Act.

1890: a year of fulfilment

The 1890 Police Act was the culmination of 34 years of work by the inspectors of constabulary. At the outset, in 1856, Cartwright had identified six main areas that needed reform. Over 34 years, these aims had never varied and now, in 1890, all had been achieved.

- No police force, either borough or county, was now considered inefficient, and although one or two would have their knuckles rapped severely (for example Colchester Borough over its police station in 1892/93, and Boston Borough over its management in 1899/1900), between 1890 and 1919 no exchequer grant was ever withheld from any police authority.
- In 1890, while several small forces remained, serving populations of 10,000 to 20,000 (there were 29 in 1901, and 27 forces with fewer than 20 men, including one county, Rutland), they were all run efficiently and problems caused by the size (or lack of it) of these small forces would not resurface for a few years.
- The pensions question was now adequately settled as well. The 1890 Police Act proved to be so good that generally it would be left alone until well into the 20th century.
- Although a standard scale of national police pay was not fully achieved in the 19th century, the variation in the pay rates of different forces was looked upon with tolerance. The lowest starting wage in 1901 appears to be 18s/10d per week for constables in Oxfordshire and Wiltshire,⁶⁸ and the highest starting wage for constables was 26s/10d per week in Barrow-in-Furness: a median average of 23s/4d. After 25 years, constables in Wiltshire (the lowest payers of all) got 23s/8d and those in the highest-paid boroughs, Blackburn and Leicester, received 34s/0d per week: a median of 28s/9d.
- Apart from one or two minor infractions that were rectified locally, police stations, cells and accommodation were acceptable by 1890. In the 1889/90 report, Cobbe wrote that police cells, stations and offices were “generally clean and in good order, and well maintained”.

- The sixth aim, the appointing of police officers to civil administrative positions, had been the first to be achieved fully. So 'successful' was it that by the late 19th century the police themselves were baulking at the extra workload. Cobbe reflected in the 1889/90 report that "the police in the counties cannot give the necessary time to discharge the [civil administrative] duties without interference with their regular duties". Gradually, the police came to do less and less of this work, non-police officers being appointed instead. But it was not until publication of the report of the committee on police extraneous duties, as late as 1953, that the performing of civil administrative duties by police officers was abolished altogether.

The year 1890 was therefore the Inspectorate's *annus mirabilis*, although it is doubtful whether anyone outside the Inspectorate noticed. Even the inspectors appeared to shy away from overt recognition of their success – there was nothing specific to mark their achievements in the 1889/90 report. But be that as it may, 1890 marked the culmination of the work started by Cartwright, Woodford and Willis 34 years earlier. Of the original three, only Willis was still alive to see it, but, ironically, having survived to hear of the Inspectorate's success, he died only five months later, in February 1891.

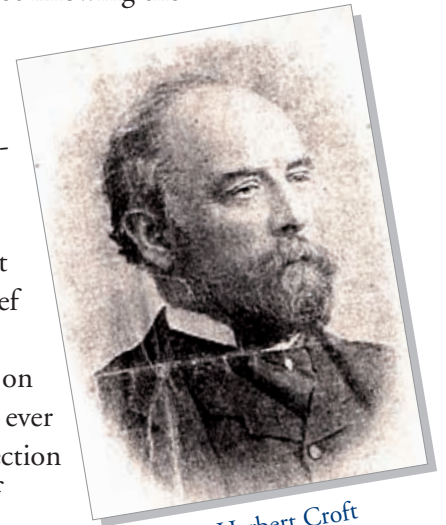
CHAPTER FOUR

1890–1945: THE WILDERNESS YEARS

If 1856 to 1890 represented a period of progress culminating in glorious achievement for the Inspectorate, the following two decades were a real anticlimax. After all the policy aims had been achieved by 1890, the role and focus of the Inspectorate underwent a subtle change. Different approaches were unconsciously adopted when conservation rather than reform was needed and the Inspectorate slipped into a caretaking role. By this late in the century, with settled county civil administration, and consequently settled police administration through the standing joint committees, all counties maintained their efficiency without the interference of an outside body. The Inspectorate therefore did not need to do a lot, and the issuing of certificates of efficiency became a matter of routine.

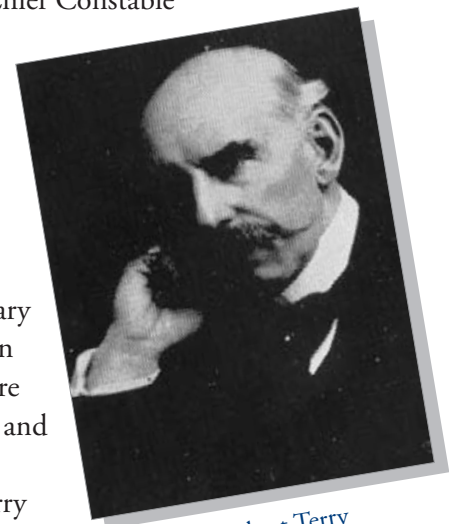
The boroughs were much the same. Although administration of the borough forces had not been altered, more responsible watch committees acted as equivalents to the counties' standing joint committees, and borough forces did not need outside help. The Inspectorate obviously slipped into complacency. And, as if to emphasise that it was the end of an era, in 1891 two inspectors retired. Cobbe was the second of the Midlands district inspectors, having taken over from the great Cartwright in 1869. He was 74 years old and had spent 35 years working for the police. Elgee had 32 years' police service, and, although his exact age is unknown, was credibly of the same age as Cobbe, both having previously served in the army. Elgee had taken over when Woodford left in 1868, and so both he and Cobbe had lived through, and weathered, all the troubles of the Inspectorate.

Their successors were very different. They came to the Inspectorate not knowing the great pioneers of the 1850s, and not having first-hand experience of the pre-1890 struggles. To cap it all, Cobbe's successor, Sir Herbert Croft, was not a Chief Constable and had never been one, nor, on the face of it, had he ever had any direct connection with the subtleties of police administration or personnel management.



Sir Herbert Croft

His colleague, Francis Joseph Parry, Elgee's successor, had been Chief Constable of Derbyshire since 1873, but apart from that not much about his history or achievements has survived. Croft continued as an inspector until February 1902, when he died in office. His reports were dull and complacent, and so say little about his approach or aims. Parry made little impact on the Inspectorate either. He was to retire in 1899, being replaced by Herbert Durrell Terry, Chief Constable of Northumberland.



Herbert Terry

From the start of a new century to the end of the Great War

Having no urgent task of reform to undertake, and having solved all the basic problems of the Police Service already, the inspectors at the turn of the 20th century seemed to concentrate on trivia and minutiae to justify their existence. In Hove Borough in 1905, for example, an early attempt to enhance the status of the patrol officer was firmly stamped on by the inspector (Terry). The offending practice was the wearing of white collars by sergeants and constables under their high-necked tunics. They were ordered to revert to their collarless shirts immediately.⁶⁹

Individual force inspection reports of this period were unimaginative, bland and monotonous, as evidenced by the report for Berkshire County Constabulary, which had been inspected by Parry in 1895/96.⁷⁰ Each force report consisted of standard statistical tables followed by a few general comments.

The statistics covered:

- the strength of the force;
- the area covered in acres;
- the number of acres per constable;
- the population according to the latest Census figures;
- the population per constable;
- yearly pay scales and numbers of officers in each rank;
- the date of inspection;
- the number of police officers (the 'establishment'), which appears to duplicate the information in the pay scales table; and
- extra duties, including who performed them and the pay for each.

The full text of the general comments for Berkshire County Constabulary for 1895/96 was:

"a) A constabulary station and two cells required at Bracknell. A suitable site for the same at the time of my inspection could have been obtained, and no doubt could still be available.

b) The apprehensions in proportion to crimes committed in the Clewer district still compare unfavourably with the rest of the county. This may be accounted for by that portion of the district adjoining New Windsor, which is also reported upon.

c) The Boroughs of Maidenhead and Newbury are policed by the county constabulary.

d) The clothing and appointments were complete and in good order.

e) The station houses and cells were clean and in good order, and the books and returns well and carefully kept.

f) The management, numbers and discipline of the force have been efficiently maintained."

Borough of
STRENGTH OF FORCE 1895/96
 Area in Acres, 7,555
 Population in 1891, 100,970
 Acres to each Constable, 65
 Population to 1000, 1308
 Inspected on 21 August 1896
 Approved in addition to the Appointment Force by the Assistant Secretary to the Home Office, 1308

Station	Approved Establishments				Total	Approved in addition to the Appointment Force by the Assistant Secretary to the Home Office
	Chief Officer	Sergeant-Major	Inspector	Sergeant-Constable		
Present ...	1	1	3	13	18	1000
On Duty ...				1	1	7
Sick ...				1	1	1
On Leave ...						2
Wanting to Complete ...						116
Total ...	1	1	3	17	22	1107

Rank	Variations in the Force since last inspection, on 20/1/96			Total	Approved
	Budget	Standard	Present		
Chief Officer					1
Superintendent			1	1	0
Inspector			2	2	0
Sergeant			1	1	0
Constable			13	13	0
Total			17	17	0

Item	No. of days lost through sickness of Officers and Men during twelve months ended 25th February last		Total	Approved
	1. From natural causes	2. Hurt on duty		
Chief Officer				0
Superintendent				0
Inspector				0
Sergeant				0
Constable				0
Total				0

Item	PRICE of Constable's Clothing (Price of latest issue with date of issuing to be given for any articles not supplied for current year.)		Total	Approved
	1895/96	1894/95		
Home Coat or Tunic	17/6	17/6	35/2	35/2
Trousers	4/6	4/6	9/2	9/2
Great Coat	10/6	10/6	21/2	21/2
Belts	2/6	2/6	5/2	5/2
Cap	1/6	1/6	3/2	3/2
Boots	10/6	10/6	21/2	21/2
Shoes	10/6	10/6	21/2	21/2
Total	57/0	57/0	114/0	114/0

No. of POLICE STATIONS with CELLS attached.

Record of inspection, 1898

Thus, an entire county constabulary was reported on in just a few tables and a few lines of text. No doubt fuelled by these listless reports, rumblings about the work (or lack of it) of the Inspectorate were beginning to be heard at the Home Office. When a Home Office junior clerk, M L Waller, minuted the Home Secretary, Herbert Gladstone, on Tuesday 15 October 1907 that the Inspectorate of Constabulary offered the “softest jobs in a hardworking department”, things had come to a head.⁷¹ The sudden death of Legge in 1907, while still holding office, gave Gladstone the excuse he needed. He did not appoint a successor to Legge, and so cut the Inspectorate from three to two inspectors.

The case for this had first been mooted 20 years earlier by Edward Troup, a Home Office official. He calculated that the inspectors “were only away from home 100 days per year and only inspected in the warmer months and received on average only one or two letters from the Home Office every two weeks”.⁷² This had come to nothing at the time, but in 1907 the opportunity to save an inspector’s salary proved too attractive for Gladstone.

Only two of the Home Office inspectorates were ever reduced in number, Constabulary and Anatomy. In contrast, during the period 1876 to 1914 the Reformatory Inspectorate grew by 400%. Perhaps the decision to reduce the Inspectorate of Constabulary is better understood in the light of the social context of the time, the government’s concept of the police after nearly 20 years of ‘trouble-free’ policing, and the attitude towards the police of the upper and middle classes, the classes to which the majority of politicians in government belonged.

“There was no direction from the centre, no special department existed in the Home Office, and, as though to emphasise its lack of concern about standards of local policing, the department in 1907 reduced the number of inspectors of constabulary

*from three to two. Apart from the stereotyped reports these inspectors sent in annually, little information was available about what was happening outside London. Policing was still a local function, as it had been for hundreds of years, and no one wanted things different. Upper- and middle-class England would welcome the sound of known feet in times of trouble; otherwise they were still able to relax over the comical figure of the rural constable of stage and fiction, with the uneducated jargon he brought from the Victorian working classes, for to the favoured minority the policeman was still far from being a figure of authority...”*⁷³

The 1907/08 annual report set out the new inspectors’ districts. The old Midlands district was split, with Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Huntingdonshire, Isle of Ely, Norfolk, Northamptonshire, Oxfordshire, Liberty of Peterborough and East and West Suffolk, plus all their boroughs, now coming under the Southern district of Terry. The Northern district was now in the charge of John Henry Eden, previously the Chief Constable of Durham County Constabulary, who had succeeded Croft when he died in 1902.

Inspection districts 1907–19

(See list overleaf.)



Inspection districts 1907–19

Northern (Eden)	Southern (Terry)
Cheshire	Bedfordshire
Cumberland	Berkshire
Derbyshire	Buckinghamshire
Durham	Cambridgeshire
Lancashire	Cornwall
Leicestershire	Devonshire
Lincolnshire	Dorset
Northumberland	Essex
Nottinghamshire	Gloucestershire
Rutland	Hampshire
Shropshire	Herefordshire
Staffordshire	Hertfordshire
Warwickshire	Huntingdonshire
Westmorland	Kent
Worcestershire	Monmouthshire
East Riding (Yorkshire)	Norfolk
North Riding (Yorkshire)	Northamptonshire
West Riding (Yorkshire)	Oxfordshire
Anglesey	Somerset
Caernarfonshire	Suffolk (East and West)
Denbighshire	Surrey
Flintshire	Sussex (East and West)
Merionethshire	Wiltshire
Montgomeryshire	Breconshire
	Cardiganshire
	Carmarthenshire
	Glamorganshire
	Pembrokeshire
	Radnorshire

So low had the fortunes of the Inspectorate fallen by 1907, and so little was thought of them, that the inspectors’ opinion was not even sought for the most important piece of police legislation of that period. It was entirely through the agitation of John Kempster, a journalist, that police officers gained the right to take one day off per week. During 1906 and 1907, the Order Paper of the House of Commons contained repeated questions urging the need for

policemen to be allowed one day’s leave in seven, a campaign that eventually led to a Select Committee on the matter in 1908 and the passing of the Police (Weekly Rest Day) Act two years later.⁷⁴ Kempster, who had founded the *Police Review* magazine in 1892, was the major witness before the Select Committee. Neither of the two inspectors of constabulary was even called. Kempster told the Committee:

“I thought it my duty as editor of the Police Review, as directly as possible to ascertain the feelings of the men on the subject of your Inquiry, and I therefore inserted in one week’s issue some printed questions, with the result that I received replies from 2,583 constables of various ranks, in addition to numerous letters separately addressed to the editor.”

The fact that Kempster, a private journalist, needed to do this is indicative of the fact that the opinions of the men were not getting through to the Home Secretary. The only machinery available at that time for communicating the feelings of rank-and-file police officers to the Home Secretary was the Inspectorate. But the Inspectorate had been curtailed, greatly reducing any interaction there could have been. The Home Office, and more especially the inspectors themselves, were ignorant of any such rank-and-file feeling. The Inspectorate thus failed both the Home Office and the policeman on the beat. Before 1919, therefore, because of this failure there was no mechanism for raising concerns to the Home Secretary regarding police pay and conditions.



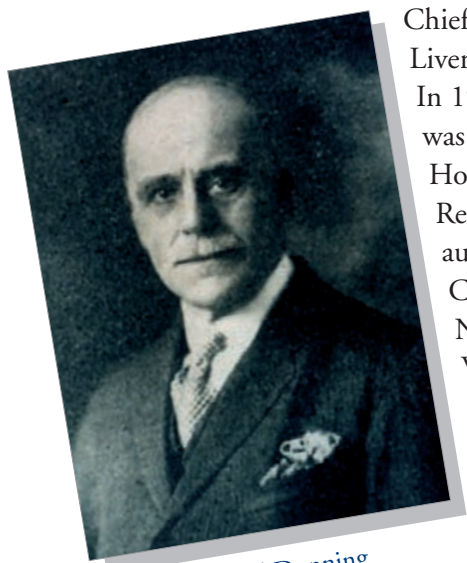
There was not even representative machinery within individual forces for raising questions with their own police authority – individually or collectively. The absence of any such channels of communication was to be a critical omission.

“... for those matters which were wholly at the discretion of the local police authority – eg pay in borough forces – it may be thought that there would have been little purpose in any such machinery, but if the central government had been more aware than it was of the grievances of many policemen, it might have brought pressure to bear on those police authorities where pay and conditions of service were at their worst, thus perhaps averting some of the troubles of the years 1918–1919.”⁷⁵

The absence of a ‘right to confer’ became a major complaint of policemen on the eve of the Great War. The Inspectorate was unaware of this and consequently so was the Home Office. Not one Inspectorate report before the Great War ever referred to the state of morale among rank-and-file police constables.

Also, by the time of the Great War, the Inspectorate was even more stretched than had been the case at the turn of the century. Terry died in 1911 while still in office, and his successor was Leonard Dunning, previously

Chief Constable of Liverpool City Police. In 1913, some respite was afforded when the Home Secretary, Reginald McKenna, authorised the Chief Constable of Nottinghamshire, William Tomasson, to assist Dunning and Eden.

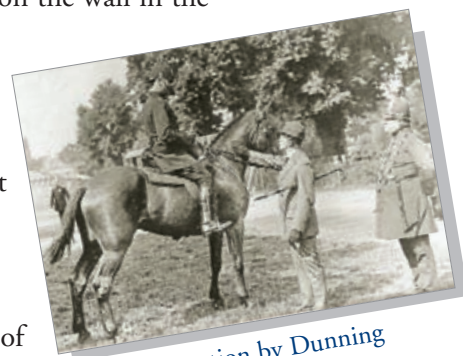


Leonard Dunning

However, the respite was short-lived because Eden retired in 1916 and his place was not filled. This left only Dunning as a full-time inspector, with Tomasson assisting him while still running Nottinghamshire County Constabulary as well.

Between 1910 and 1920, there were over 180 separate police forces in England and Wales, so the workload, the sheer physical act of visiting every single force, for two inspectors, one of whom was part-time, was colossal. It is little wonder that the overworked inspectors should have failed to detect any stirrings of trouble under wartime conditions when they had not seen the writing on the wall in the relative ease of peacetime.

The report for 1916/17, the first by Dunning alone, gives no indication of the personal feelings of policemen, despite



Inspection by Dunning

their feelings being near breaking point. During the war, the Police (Weekly Rest Day) Act had been placed in abeyance, so police officers returned to working seven days a week, with no paid overtime. Police officers were forbidden from resigning during the war, forbidden from demonstrating or organising into a ‘union’, and forbidden from doing other part-time jobs. The pay of the police was terrible. By 1918, a constable was receiving less than an unskilled labourer and a third of the wage of a munitions worker. Policemen were undernourished, and some were even “dropping of malnutrition in the streets”.⁷⁶ Of this, not a word was written in the inspectors’ reports. By 1918, therefore, low pay and the ‘right to confer’ were two major grievances of the Police Service and the causes of the discontent that was to fuel two police strikes.

The police strikes of 1918 and 1919



Officers on strike

The police strikes of 1918 and 1919 came as a total shock to both the Inspectorate and the government. The first, in August 1918, was mainly by the Metropolitan Police. But the second, in July

1919, also involved

officers from Birmingham City and the Merseyside police forces. The implications for the government were truly great – there was a significant threat to public safety, the outbreak of disorder and, at the height of the troubles, the deployment of Royal Marines to quell rioting and prevent constant looting of the bonded warehouses in Liverpool docks.

After the first strike, the government hastily convened a committee under Lord Desborough, on Saturday 1 March 1919, to review the pay and conditions of service of the police. It was while the Desborough Committee was still sitting that the illegal police ‘union’, NUPPO (the National Union of Police and Prison Officers), called the second strike in July 1919. This poorly considered strike was not so much a protest at the conditions of service as an attempt to save the ailing union. It failed, because by that time the main recommendations of the Desborough Committee (higher pay, standardisation of forces and representative machinery) were common knowledge. Of the 2,364 police officers who went on strike (from the Metropolitan, City of London, Birmingham City, Liverpool City, Birkenhead Borough, Bootle Borough and Wallasey Borough forces), all were sacked and none were ever reinstated.⁷⁷

The Desborough Committee’s terms of reference were:

“To consider and report whether any and what changes should be made in the method of recruiting for, the conditions of service of, and the rates of pay, pensions and allowances of the police forces of England, Wales and Scotland.”

Witnesses were heard from across the whole spectrum, including Sir Leonard Dunning (he had been knighted in 1917), Major-General Llewellyn William Atcherley (who was appointed as an inspector of constabulary in 1918 to replace Eden) and Tomasson, the assistant inspector of constabulary. Two reports were issued, the first in July 1919 and the second in January 1920, together with the full minutes of evidence. The Desborough Committee’s main recommendations were:

- the creation of a police department in the Home Office;
- an increase in the number of inspectors of constabulary from two to the original three to enable the Inspectorate to cope with its new responsibilities;
- the development of cooperative arrangements between police forces, for example ‘clearing houses’ for information about crime and criminals;
- improved and more systematic arrangements for training;
- the abolition of police forces in non-county boroughs with populations under 50,000;
- a standardised discipline code;
- the transfer of powers of appointment, promotion and discipline in borough forces from the watch committee to the Chief Constable;

- a new right of appeal against disciplinary awards;
- standard arrangements for annual leave; and
- various changes in the pension arrangements.

The government, faced with a discontented Police Service, had no real choice but to accept all these proposals without question, and the Police Act of 1919, directly based on the Desborough Committee's recommendations, was passed on Friday 15 August 1919. This Act stopped discontent at a stroke and was described as 'the Policemen's Charter'.⁷⁸

The whole Police Service benefited from the 1919 Police Act. The Police Federation was established to represent the views of all officers, up to the rank of chief inspector, and was deliberately called a 'federation' rather than a 'union' because the right to strike was removed. A Police Council was established as a central consultative body for future legislation, and power was given to the Home Secretary to regulate police pay and conditions of service.

The conditions for the exchequer grant were also changed. In the 1918/19 report, Dunning explained that in future the exchequer grant would be given to cover 50% of all expenditure rather than just pay and clothing, as had previously been the case. This caused police expenditure by central government to rise from £7 million in 1914 to £18 million in 1920. "Because of that," wrote Dunning, "it may be anticipated that for some years to come the issue of the certificates of efficiency will not be so much a matter of routine as they perhaps have been."

The new spirit of the Police Service fostered by Desborough is almost tangible in the 1918/19 inspectors' report. There was a completely fresh approach. From just 7 pages in 1915, the report

grew to 30 pages in 1919. Gone were the separate reports for individual forces. Instead, Dunning and Atcherley each gave a general report for their area. All in all, the Inspectorate, as much as the Police Service in general, looked forward to a new era in police administration and service.

It is perhaps ironic to reflect that had the Inspectorate identified the state of police morale more effectively before the war, reform would undoubtedly have been less comprehensive. But, because the Inspectorate failed in this regard, it then necessitated Desborough's total clean sweep, which rectified things so completely that the Police Service would not be scrutinised again in such detail until 1962. "A great improvement is evident already," wrote Atcherley in the 1918/19 report, only two months after the passing of the Police Act, "due partly no doubt... to the excellent influence of the Desborough Committee's report."

The corporate body of the Inspectorate of Constabulary had been described by Desborough as "one of the most important in connection with the Police Service, and particularly so at the present time". It was time to forget its traumatic recent history and look forward to more exciting and influential times ahead. While the original six policy aims had long been fulfilled, new, more subtle aims were now facing the Inspectorate as the Police Service shook off the Victorian era and faced the 20th century.

The post-war years

The Desborough Committee was a watershed. Lord Desborough's complete understanding not only of the police function but also of the police system in this country brought policing out of the dark ages into the light of modernism. His report covered everything, even the old chestnut of a national police force. He had considered

that option again but had rejected it, saying that “the preservation of law and order in this country is primarily the function of the proper local authorities”. However, he emphasised that, in his view, under the existing system a lack of uniformity had developed to an undesirable degree.

His proposed solution was to introduce a greater measure of centralisation and standardisation of conditions of service. Desborough's careful comparison of the duties of police officers from large city forces and rural forces shows his remarkable understanding at work. His conclusion, therefore, was that:

*“... the duties of policemen are fundamentally the same in character throughout the forces within our terms of reference... and do not justify the wide differences in pay, pensions and housing conditions.”*⁷⁹

His view was that the Police Service would be far better served by a greater degree of uniformity and standardisation and that the Inspectorate of Constabulary was the proper corporate body to oversee this standardisation process. Therefore he recommended “that the number of inspectors should be increased to three at least... in order to enable them to carry out the requisite inspection work, and to have time to consult with and advise the Home Office on current questions of police administration.” However, the County and Borough Police Act of 1856 had stipulated that there would be three inspectors, so any increase in their number would require a new Act of Parliament, which, in the event, was not forthcoming. Despite this, the inspectors' reports of 1919/20 and 1920/21 displayed optimism for a new ‘golden age’. And as if to emphasise this regeneration, the 1920/21 report appeared in a new format, quarto, instead of the foolscap of the previous 64 years.

The 1919/20 report marked the end of an era, as it was the last to mention individual forces by name. Banbury Borough was criticised for not maintaining discipline; Colchester Borough, Gravesend Borough, Maidstone Borough, Swansea Borough and Ramsgate Borough were all ‘warned’ over lack of manpower; and Truro City was censured over not paying rent allowance and paying only 50% of the new Desborough pay scales. Dunning added that the Truro City Watch Committee had fully expected to be amalgamated with Cornwall County, hence their parsimony. So, for the year 1919/20, Truro City was the only force to be found inefficient and to have its exchequer grant withheld – the very first force to be reported inefficient since Congleton Borough in 1890. Truro City amalgamated with Cornwall County the following year. After the 1919/20 report, although cases of concern were referred to, no force was mentioned by name, and separate reports on each force went directly to the Home Secretary via the new Home Office police department without appearing in the inspectors' reports.

The 1919/20 report also set out the new functions of the Inspectorate, as perceived by Dunning. The new pay scales of the 1919 Police Act and pensions questions were now to be dealt with by the new Home Office police department, and so the responsibility for these areas had been taken out of the hands of the inspectors. Dunning therefore gave the new criteria for force inspections as being to ensure:

- sufficient manpower;
- maintenance of discipline;
- efficient management of the force; and
- full and proper administration of the Police Service as a whole.

In addition, Dunning welcomed the new representative machinery – the Police Federation and the Police Council – and announced that the City of London Police was now to be inspected every year and, if found efficient within the terms of reference, would also receive the exchequer grant for the first time.



City of London officers

Dunning also referred to the new police regulations. The Police Council had met for the first time on 6 July 1920 with the Home Secretary in the chair. Consisting of police officers of all ranks and representatives from local authorities, the Police Council met for four days, at the end of which the police regulations had been born. These came into effect on 1 October 1920. “These regulations,” said Dunning in the 1919/20 report, “introduce nothing new – but seek to make it uniform.” They sought to adopt the uniformity recommended by Desborough rather than police nationalisation, which Desborough had rejected.

All in all, the 1919/20 report was upbeat and optimistic. Atcherley, the second inspector, who was assisted by Tomasson during his inspection year, confirmed Dunning’s opinion that the new police regulations were “working towards uniformity of the Service”.

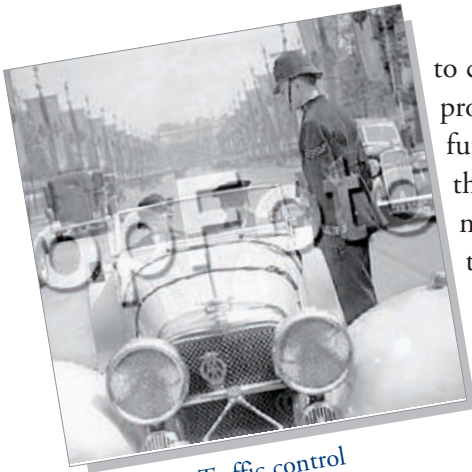
This momentum was carried through to the 1920/21 report, which covered a mix of old and new subject areas. The question of manpower

was a focus for Dunning, who suggested that the old 1:1,000 ratio was long outdated and refuted any direct relevance of population numbers, concentrating rather more on what the population did and what it expected the police to do. He also returned to the old problem of small borough forces. Desborough had recommended that all non-county boroughs should have their police forces amalgamated with the surrounding county, and that no future forces should be formed in boroughs with less than 100,000 population. In the report, Dunning agreed:

“There can be no doubt that wherever there is a border line, there is loss of efficiency, and it is no reflection on two forces, or on one or other of them, to say that if joined together, they would give more efficient service.”

However, things were not that simple. The affected cities and boroughs were not taking Desborough’s recommendations lying down. Protest meetings had been held by those local authorities whose forces were affected, and these resulted in a deputation to the Home Secretary led by Neville Chamberlain, at that time the MP for a Birmingham constituency but later to become Prime Minister during the Munich crisis of September 1938. This deputation probably had some effect, as the Desborough Committee recommendations were not carried through, although it was also the case that the government had other things on its mind. Therefore the question of the smaller borough forces lay dormant, and it was to be another ten years before it was looked at seriously again. In the meantime, however, the inspectors constantly drew attention to the idiocy of the small forces, thus echoing one of the old policy aims of the days before the Local Government Act of 1888.

But the 1920/21 report recognised something new in the policing landscape, an issue that was



Traffic control

to cause immense problems in future years – the arrival of motorised travel. The rise of the motor car was inexorable. The number of motor vehicles in 1904

was 17,810, but by 1946 this had multiplied to a staggering 2,386,500 – a rise of 13,400% over 42 years.⁸⁰ This traffic needed regulating, and the police was the obvious, indeed the only, body available to take on this role. Dunning summed up the issue:

“Traffic regulation hits the smaller force hardest: the little town which happens to be on a main road, especially if its streets, as they often are, are unsuitable for constant and fast traffic, has to assign its men to traffic duty in greater proportion to its total strength than is the case with the larger [forces].”

Dunning could see that the deployment of policemen to look after traffic regulation would take officers away from street patrol, and thus away from the prevention of crime, which he viewed as “the first duty of a police force”.

Despite this caution, however, Dunning’s 13-page contribution to the 1920/21 report remained optimistic, and Atcherley, whose report was only two and a half pages long, did not contradict this impression. But a storm was on its way. Funding post-war Britain, nearly bankrupted by the Great War, was proving a strain, and the Prime Minister, David Lloyd-George, established the Committee on National Expenditure in August 1921, under the chairmanship of Sir Eric Geddes, to look at

national economics. Recommendations for cuts across the whole spectrum of public expenditure soon caused the Geddes Committee to be nicknamed the ‘Geddes Axe’.⁸¹

The police recommendations of the ‘Geddes Axe’ were drastic – a 5% cut in manpower, with immediate effect. The usually avuncular tone of Dunning’s report was totally absent in the 1921/22 report, and a more acerbic note was detectable. The Geddes Committee had put forward a formula for determining the manpower needed for every police force, based on three factors: acreage, population and rateable value. Dunning examined each of these factors and summarily dismissed the formula as having no relationship to the manpower needed in any police force. His stated view was that:

“The real measure of the adequacy of a police force can only be found by examination of its daily work and the demands made upon it, and it is upon the experience gained day by day and year by year that the local police authorities, to whom our laws entrust the preservation of the peace and the enforcement of the criminal law, have brought the police establishments up to their present figures with the approval, in the case of the county police forces, of the Home Office – an approval, which, since the 20th August 1920, has been necessary in the case of the cities and boroughs also. The sufficiency or otherwise of a local police force and the reasons for which a police authority has sought a variation of its force, either by way of increase or decrease, have always been among the questions to which HM Inspectors of Constabulary have addressed themselves for the information of the Secretary of State, with the result that the investigation called for by the Committee on National Expenditure has always been in progress, and their only new suggestion is that of a formula. If that formula can be found, its application should present no difficulty; personally, I have sought it for many years without success.”

We can therefore surmise that Dunning was not impressed by the cuts in manpower recommended by the ‘Geddes Axe’, meaning as they did the complete opposite of what the Inspectorate had been working towards for several years.

Dunning then touched on another issue that had its roots in the old six major policy aims – the issue of extraneous duties. This aim had encouraged the use of police officers because there was no other official body to carry out the extra duties. However, the realisation that the performance of local government administrative functions detracted from policemen’s proper duties had been voiced since long before the Great War. Dunning believed it was now time to rid the Police Service of them.

Marshalling his arguments in support of this new policy aim, Dunning evidenced the increased workload of officers by comparing the crime statistics of 1881 with those of 1921 – 33,866 crimes were known to the police in 1881, while by 1921 this number had risen to 85,173. He also highlighted the constant growth in the number of extraneous roles. While he found it impossible to give a complete list of the miscellaneous duties that had been assigned to the provincial police, he gave an extract from the annual report of “a large city force” (which, no doubt, was Liverpool City, of which he had been Chief Constable from 1902 to 1912) which detailed the extraneous duties performed “by the man on the beat... who is placed there to exercise that vigilance which will go some way towards the prevention of crime”. He calculated that, in performing these extraneous duties, “the time lost to police duty proper was equal to the year’s work of some 15 men”. These factors all added up, he implied. Extraneous duties and the extra calls on police time for traffic regulation all contributed to the increase in crime. And to have to reduce manpower by a further 5% under the ‘Geddes Axe’ was obviously going to produce problems in the future.

In fact, the Inspectorate itself unexpectedly encountered problems of reduced resources when Tomasson, who had been an acting inspector since 1913, died at the age of 65, undoubtedly affected by overwork. Tomasson’s death reduced the number of inspectors to two (Dunning and Atcherley). This was below the number recommended by the Desborough Committee, but any hopes of recruiting another inspector were not to be realised. In fact, it would be another five years before a third inspector would be appointed – Charles Parry in 1927.

The Inspectorate’s core priorities

It is hard to escape the feeling that by 1922 the inspectors were realising that problems lay ahead. The envisaged ‘golden age’ was not appearing as quickly as they thought it should – indeed, if at all. Their function had undergone subtle changes after the Police Act of 1919. Because of the establishment of the police department at the Home Office, the questions of pay, allowances and pensions had been taken out of their hands. The establishment of the Police Federation, which represented all ranks up to chief inspector, had meant that any grievances went straight to the Home Office, bypassing the Inspectorate. Similarly, the Police Council, representing as it did all facets of police administration and chaired by the Home Secretary himself, made the possibility of the Inspectorate acting as a conduit of opinion from grass roots to central government increasingly unrealistic.

However, by 1922, the main issues that would occupy the Inspectorate for the next few years were clearly apparent, namely:

- the eradication of the smaller borough forces;
- the lack of sufficient manpower;
- increasing traffic responsibilities; and
- the impact of extraneous duties.

The eradication of the smaller borough forces

Desborough recommended the amalgamation of the non-county boroughs with their surrounding counties, with no new forces being established in boroughs with populations below 100,000. In the 1920/21 report, Dunning announced the voluntary amalgamation of Durham City (which had a total strength of 24), Louth Borough (9), Weymouth (35) and Truro City (13). However, these were voluntary mergers. No legislation was forthcoming to compel amalgamation because of the opposition of the smaller boroughs.

All the inspectors could do was to draw repeated attention to the idiocy of the remaining small forces. For instance, in the 1927/28 report, Dunning gave the example of Tiverton Borough (with a total strength of 11 – 1 Chief Constable, 2 sergeants and 8 constables – and a population of 9,172):

“The County of Devon and the Borough of Tiverton discussed the merger of the latter with the County Police District, but failed to come to terms. This was unfortunate; little island police districts like Tiverton are anachronisms in these days of modern facilities of travel, fenced in as they are by boundaries of which nobody but the police take notice.”

Similarly, the 1928/29 report mentioned a lost opportunity for consolidation on the retirements of two Chief Constables. These two boroughs could be construed as Stalybridge Borough (total strength 28 – 1 Chief Constable, 2 inspectors, 6 sergeants and 19 constables – population 25,216) and Saint Albans City (total strength 35 – 1 Chief Constable, 1 inspector, 6 sergeants and 27 constables – population 25,593). In the 1930/31 report, Reigate Borough was given as an example (total strength 40 – 1 Chief Constable, 2 inspectors, 7 sergeants, 30 constables – population 28,914), and in the

1932/33 report the small forces mentioned were Congleton Borough (total strength 13 – 1 Chief Constable, 2 sergeants, 10 constables – population 11,762), Newark Borough (total strength 20 – 1 Chief Constable, 3 sergeants, 16 constables – population 16,958) and Saint Albans City again (numbers unchanged).

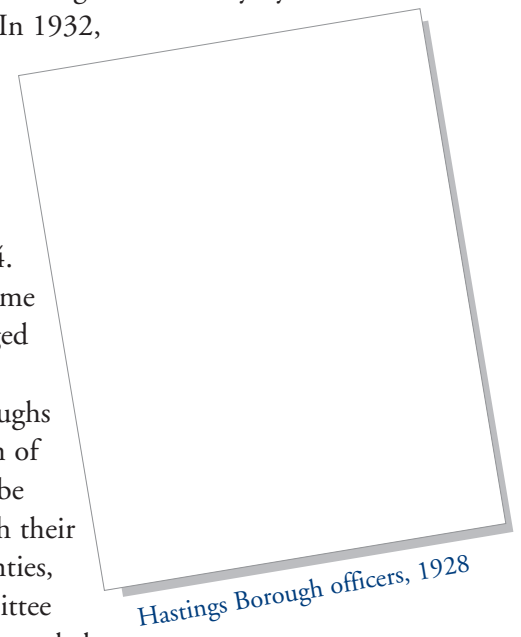
This question was not ignored entirely by the Home Secretary. In 1932,

the Select Committee on Police Forces (Amalgamation) was established, reporting in 1934. Although the Home Secretary had urged that all forces in non-county boroughs with a population of less than 75,000 be amalgamated with their surrounding counties, the Select Committee eventually recommended

a population figure of 30,000. As this was not really what he had wanted, the Home Secretary did nothing. Therefore, the question of the small borough forces lingered on, and by the time the Second World War arrived, there were 121 borough police forces still functioning. In the period 1919 to 1939, only eight small boroughs voluntarily amalgamated with their surrounding counties.

The lack of sufficient manpower

The ‘Geddes Axe’ achieved its desired 5% cut in manpower not by making officers redundant but by not filling the natural vacancies that occurred. However, it was always the inspectors’ aim to reduce vacancies and match the actual number of officers with the authorised establishment – ie the number catered for in



annual budgets. The number of vacancies was published every year, showing that, after the initial response to Geddes had worn off, the number of vacancies decreased, although parity was never achieved. Thus the British police force entered the Second World War 3% under strength, with 181 separate, autonomous police forces, crime rising steadily, and numerous calls on the time of the police officers who remained.

Increasing traffic responsibilities

Constant reference was made to traffic regulation between the wars, from the 1920/21 report, in which Dunning called traffic control an “expensive duty”, to the 1938/39 report, when Frank Brook (who had joined the

Inspectorate in 1935, having been Chief Constable of the West Riding of Yorkshire) said that traffic patrols “have added considerably to the responsibility and work of the Chief Constables and other officers involved in this particular duty”. Mention was also made of ways to deal with traffic problems,

from traffic-light systems to specialised motor patrol officers. The first Highway Code, introduced by the Road Traffic Act of 1930, was greeted with enthusiasm. It is perhaps fair to say that the regulation of traffic became one of the most important and time-consuming jobs that the police had to do between the wars.

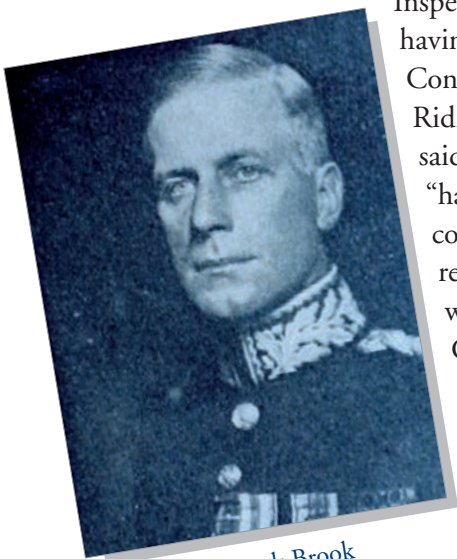
The impact of extraneous duties

The question of local government duties seemed to be one of Atcherley’s particular bugbears – he constantly referred to it, bemoaning the fact that

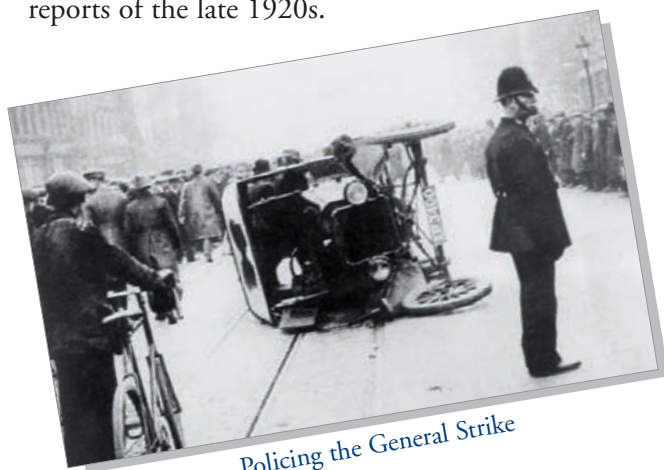
extra duties took officers away from the streets, which should have first claim on their attention. In the 1922/23 report, he stated quite clearly that “police expenditure is by no means limited to duties of preserving the King’s Peace, and local government is being indirectly relieved by the police establishments”. Generally, the use of police staff to deal with such extraneous duties was not given as much priority as the removal of officers to attend to traffic regulation, and so, perhaps unsurprisingly, no substantial removal of extraneous duties took place until 1953.

Progress from 1925 to 1939

Obviously, these four core issues were not the only concerns voiced by the inspectors during the interwar years; references were periodically made to the number of women in the police, police housing and police training. However, progress in respect of all subjects was interminably slow. The Inspectorate remained reliant on powers of persuasion rather than having any statutory ‘teeth’, and so it was not surprising if a trace of frustration or apathy could be detected in some of the inspectors’ reports of the late 1920s.



Frank Brook



Policing the General Strike

However, the inspectors’ apathy was partly overcome on a few occasions. While the positive public reaction to the way the police handled the General Strike in 1926 largely passed the Inspectorate by, Dunning did comment, in the

1925/26 report, on how well the mutual aid scheme worked. He also highlighted that, of the few complaints of police misconduct that had appeared before the courts, not one had been upheld. Similarly, both Dunning and Atcherley gave evidence to the Royal Commission on Police Powers and Procedure in 1928/29. This Royal Commission was sparked by an incident between a young lady and a well-known knighted financier, caught in Hyde Park after dark. It had more to do with the handling (or alleged mishandling) of the case than with profound questions of police structural organisation, and the inspectors reported that the Commission “produced few recommendations of permanent value”.

Despite the inspectors' apparent apathy during this period, they visited every force every year, and so the lack of criticism of the underlying structure and management of police forces suggested that things were generally being dealt with efficiently and

that the Service was in reasonable shape. Certainly policing methods were advancing and technology began to be important in both the operational areas and in support areas, such as control and communications rooms.

The lack of criticism from the inspectors, however, could also have been a sign that they were overstretched. The Desborough Committee's recommendation for at least three inspectors was not implemented until 1927, when Charles Parry joined Dunning and Atcherley, although assistance had been given by Tomasson until his death in 1922. Charles de

Courcy Parry CBE was the former Chief Constable of Cumberland and Westmorland.

In the event, for well over a decade the government paid only lip service to the Desborough Committee's recommendation on the number of inspectors. This probably introduced another frustration that the inspectors could well have done without.

By 1939, of course, everyone, or at least most people, were focused on the impending hostilities. In the report of 1938/39, Brook reported that there were some police authorities that were far from prepared:



Charles Parry

“Almost up to the outbreak of war, there was a lamentable failure on the part of some police authorities to appreciate the extent of the police burden and the need to make adequate provision for it. The view was expressed by prominent members of some police authorities that they did not believe in war, or that war would not or could not come to them. They had in some instances the sole idea of avoiding costs to the local rates, and there were cases where the urgent recommendations of the police authorities in whom was vested the responsibility for the efficiency of the forces were rejected by the finance committees or the local councils. Inspections reveal clearly that in forces of comparable police requirements and problems, one Chief Constable gets everything the force requires while another gets comparatively little, and then only under pressure.”

Although the report officially overlapped with only the first month of actual warfare, its publication was sufficiently delayed to be able to report on the actual state of readiness at the outbreak of war and to reflect on the magnificent efforts that had been

List of inspectors, 1919–39

Year	1	2	3
1919/20	Dunning	Atcherley	Tomasson (assistant)
1920/21	Dunning	Atcherley	Tomasson (assistant)
1921/22	Dunning	Atcherley	Tomasson (assistant)
1922/23	Dunning	Atcherley	
1923/24	Dunning	Atcherley	
1924/25	Dunning	Atcherley	
1925/26	Dunning	Atcherley	
1926/27	Dunning	Atcherley	Parry
1927/28	Dunning	Atcherley	Parry
1928/29	Dunning	Atcherley	Parry
1929/30	Dunning	Atcherley	
1930/31	Atcherley	Parry	
1931/32	Atcherley	Allan ⁽¹⁾	
1932/33	Atcherley	Allan	
1933/34	Atcherley	Allan	
1934/35	Atcherley		
1935/36	Allan	Brook	Stevens ⁽²⁾ (assistant)
1936/37	Allan	Brook	Stevens and Coke ⁽³⁾ (assistants)
1937/38	Brook	Coke	Halland
1938/39	Brook	Coke	Halland

1. Lieutenant-Colonel W D Allan OBE.

2. Lieutenant-Colonel F A D Stevens CBE, Chief Constable of Bedfordshire.

3. Colonel J d'E F Coke CMG, CVO, CBE, Chief Constable of West Suffolk.

undertaken to bring even the slow starters to a state of readiness. His final paragraph stated:

“The immediate future demands on the Police Service cannot be gauged, but on the visits paid to forces, both on formal inspections and on other occasions, there is every justification for confidence that the forces individually, and the Service as a whole, are ready to fulfil the tasks which they may be called upon to undertake.”

The Inspectorate at war

Policing during the First World War had encountered a number of problems, not least the depleted manpower both initially and later, when volunteers were redirected to the military.

Longer shifts, the effective loss of the statutory weekly rest day, insufficient remuneration and a plethora of additional duties had led to major dissatisfaction within the Police Service and contributed to the mood that prompted the 1918 and 1919 police strikes.



Wartime policing

The war in 1939 had been more widely predicted and preparations for policing a new war were started as early as the 1920s. The large number of auxiliary police officers, who replaced regular officers called up for military service, was complemented during the war years by more than 3,000 auxiliary policewomen, of whom around 10% were formally sworn in as full constables.

A number of force amalgamations in 1942 occurred mainly in order to increase efficiency in wartime conditions, and the government's intention was clearly to maintain better control over policing during the Second World War than it had done in the First. Inspectors were presumably part of that oversight and control.

No annual inspectors' reports were produced during the Second World War. However, the first report published after the war, for the year ending 29 September 1945, explained in the preamble that it intended to cover the work of the police during the war years in addition to reviewing the specific year. As well as covering a wider time span, the report is different in another way: there was just one report, signed by all four inspectors – Brook, Colonel Jacynth Coke, Atcherley and Major Michael J Egan – rather than each individual inspector making his own report for his area. This innovation was a

direct result of the Police (His Majesty's Inspectors of Constabulary) Act 1945, which had been passed on 7 March 1945, two months before VE Day and seven months before the inspectors' report for 1944/45 had been written.

So, the 1944/45 report encapsulated the work

of the police during the war, as well as the inspectors' involvement. The Inspectorate's organisation and membership during the war years is complicated. Paragraph three of the report explained the comings and goings of the inspectors:

“On the outbreak of war, the Inspectorate was augmented by the return to the Service of Major General Sir L. Atcherley, C.M.G., C.V.O., formerly H.M. Inspector of Constabulary. In 1943, Colonel G. H. R. Halland, one of H.M. Inspectors of Constabulary, was lent to the Colonial Office for duty as Inspector General of Police, Ceylon, and Major M. J. Egan, Chief Constable of Southport, was appointed as Acting H.M. Inspector of Constabulary in his place. Major Egan has now been appointed one of H.M. Inspectors. In 1944, Colonel Halland relinquished his appointment in Ceylon, and was attached to the Foreign Office as Director of Public Safety with the Control Commission in Germany where he still continues to serve.”



Jacynth Coke

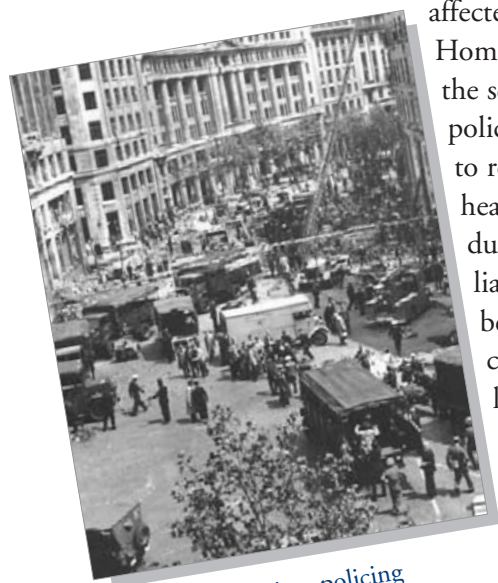


G H R Halland

The report also explained the police and civil organisation that was necessary during the war. With the outbreak of war, provision was made for a measure of decentralised government in

certain eventualities, and civil defence regional commissioners were appointed with wide powers and responsibilities in connection with the civil population. The Police Service had to fit into this scheme while retaining the responsibilities of the statutory police authorities and the police powers of Chief Constables and their officers. This was not easy to accomplish, but it was done successfully with only a few difficulties. This success clearly spoke well for the cooperation between Chief Constables and regional commissioners and their staffs.

In order that regional commissioners should be aware of the situation from the police point of view and that Chief Constables should have full knowledge of regional schemes so far as they



Wartime policing

affected the police, the Home Office arranged the secondment of police officers to regional headquarters. Their duty was to act as liaison officers between regional commissioners and local police forces, and to ensure that inspectors of constabulary were fully conversant with any problems that arose. When the war had been in progress for a short time, it became apparent that the police role within the regional headquarters was of considerable importance, and it was deemed necessary to strengthen the staff there by appointing officers of higher standing. With this end in view, the Secretary of State appointed to each region, excluding London, an officer who was designated an acting inspector of constabulary. The function of these officers was to advise the

regional commissioners on police matters and assist inspectors generally on matters relating to the war. They did not carry out the statutory inspections of forces.

The acting inspectors of constabulary were: Captain Godwin Banwell, Colonel John de Vere Bowles, Sir Charles Chitham, Sir Charles Cunningham, Major George Hearn, Frederick Isemonger, Henry Lenthall, Captain R N G Martin, Francis Parry, Colonel Frederick Peake, Captain Thomas Rawson, Joseph Simpson, Sir Charles Stead and M I Valentine.

An analysis of these names is interesting (see Annex 2). It is clear that the acting inspectors during the Second World War had immense police experience, both UK and colonial, and fully deserved the praise afforded to them in the 1944/45 report. Nor were the substantive inspectors idle – they still managed to maintain their Service oversight and inspection role. There were, for example, two forces (not specified in the 1944/45 report) that received adverse reports and that stood to lose the grant from the Police Vote, as the exchequer grant was now called.

The Inspectorate's contribution to the war effort must have been looked upon favourably, because the Police (His Majesty's Inspectors of Constabulary) Act was passed in 1945. As well as altering the format of the actual reports, this Act had a more substantial impact. In effect, the Act gave the Home Secretary power to have as many inspectors as he thought fit, and not to be tied to the three stipulated by the County and Borough Police Act 1856. Also, under section 1, the Act specified that one of the inspectors could be appointed as His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary, although this provision was not invoked until 1962. The Act emerged following the deliberations of a Police Post-War Committee, but was not apparently linked to that Committee's findings.

As soon as it became apparent that invasion was unlikely, and that the war could be won, on 26 May 1944 Herbert Morrison, the Home Secretary, established the Police Post-War Committee. Its key term of reference was to report on the principles to be followed in the post-war Police Service. Sitting on the Committee were all the inspectors: Atcherley, Brook, Coke, Egan, Colonel G H R Halland and, later, William C Johnson, previously Chief Constable of Birmingham City, who had been appointed as an inspector of constabulary in October 1945. Four reports were issued. The first, in June 1946, dealt with the establishment of a police college for higher training. The second, in November 1946, dealt with the beat system, police women, prosecutions, recruitment and training. The third, in December 1946, dealt with police housing and buildings and welfare concerns. The fourth, in May 1947, dealt with the higher ranks and the Special Constabulary.

Even though all the inspectors sat on the Committee, not one of the reports mentions the Inspectorate, except perfunctorily. So although it proposed important changes for the Police Service as a whole, no changes were envisaged for the Inspectorate. In view of this, the origins of the Police (His Majesty's Inspectors of Constabulary) Act in 1945 were certainly not to be found in the Police Post-War Committee, but, nevertheless, the Act was passed. The two main effects of the Act were to remove the restriction on the number of inspectors and to reduce the annual report to a combined, rather than individual, effort. It would be understandable if the inspectors felt a certain ironic resignation at this point: although there was now no limit to their number, and a new inspector had been appointed (Johnson), both Atcherley and Coke promptly retired, thereby reducing the number of inspectors to three again. However, in March 1945 history was

made with the appointment of the first woman inspector.

Barbara Denis de Vitré was an inspector in Kent County Constabulary in charge of a section of 23 policewomen. 'DeV', as she was known, had joined Sheffield City Police in 1928, and in 1931 was sent to Cairo City Police to organise its policewomen's department. Returning to serve in Leicester City Police in 1931, she was promoted to sergeant in 1936, and was further promoted to inspector in 1944 on



Barbara Denis de Vitré

transfer to Kent. 'DeV' was the first woman on the Inspectorate staff, and was appointed as staff officer with special responsibility for policewomen's issues. She was promoted to assistant inspector in 1948, but was, to all intents and purposes, an inspector in all but name. She would die while holding office in 1960 (see Annex 3 for more details of her career).

The return to peace

As the Inspectorate's work returned to a peacetime footing, issues relating to the impact of the war still featured high on the policing agenda, not least housing and recruitment. Clearly, the dearth of housing was an issue that affected not just the Police Service, but it would be one that featured in numerous annual reports by the Inspectorate. As to recruitment, during the war the strength of the Police Service had been supplemented by three sources of extra

personnel: the Police Reserve, the War Reserve and the Special Constabulary. The Police Reserve had consisted of recently retired police officers who had contracted to return to service, the War Reserve had been made up of men who had contracted to serve as police officers for the duration only, and some of the Special Constabulary had contracted to work full time rather than part time, as was normal for the ‘Specials’. However, with the advent of peace and the return to comparative normality, and with the loss of regular police officers whose retirement had been postponed by the war, the strength of the police force plummeted. “These factors will decrease the strength of the forces considerably,” it was reported, “and it is estimated that 16,000 recruits are required to bring the police strength up to its normal pre-war establishment.”⁸² The recruitment of the right type of men and providing them with adequate training was considered a new imperative.

Returning to a great concern of the pre-war Inspectorate, however, there was more optimism concerning the need to reduce the number of small borough forces. Under emergency powers (the Defence (Amalgamation of Police Forces) Regulations 1942), nine borough forces in Kent (Canterbury, Dover, Folkestone, Gravesend, Ramsgate, Maidstone, Rochester, Tunbridge Wells and Margate) were amalgamated into the county force in 1943; Guildford and Reigate consolidated with Surrey; the Isle of Wight and Winchester merged with Hampshire; Salisbury with Wiltshire; Penzance with Cornwall; and Brighton, Hastings, Hove and Eastbourne consolidated with East Sussex and West Sussex to form one joint force. The

Inspectorate looked forward to more progress on this front and would not be disappointed.

In a final paragraph entitled ‘The post-war Service’, the 1944/45 report, referring to the Police Post-War Committee, said: “Considerable progress has been made... and many of the suggestions have already been put in operation with the consent of the Home Office and local authorities.” This is the general tone of the 1944/45 report, one of quiet optimism and of looking forward, despite acknowledging the difficulties that both the Police Service as a whole and the inspectors of constabulary would face.



Police reservists

CHAPTER FIVE

1945–1962: BACK WITH A VENGEANCE

The amalgamation of forces

Ever since Cartwright had first articulated the problem, it had been one of the Inspectorate's policy aims to eradicate the small borough police forces. Time and time again this had been intimated in the inspectors' reports, but, having no political power, the inspectors were reliant on central government. Sometimes this worked, as in the 1888 Local Government Act; sometimes it did not, as in the interwar period when central government was preoccupied. Nevertheless, central government was aware of the inspectors' feelings on the matter.

In early 1945, the mandatory wartime amalgamation of forces under the 1942 Defence Regulations was still in force, but the amalgamated police forces were unhappy. Throughout the winter and spring of 1944/45, the Association of Municipal Corporations passed resolutions for the Home Secretary, Herbert Morrison, to revoke the Defence Regulations and let everything return to 'normal' at the end of the war – which appeared to be imminent.

Pressure was also applied by questions in Parliament from the MPs of the constituencies concerned. The flurry of questions to the Home Secretary on 17 May 1945,⁸³ just over a week after VE Day, typified their concerns. Captain Leonard Plugge, Member for Chatham, asked: "Now the emergency has passed, will he re-examine the police?" Gordon Touche, Member for Reigate, asked "... whether he will now repeal the Defence Regulations [under] which Reigate Borough Police was amalgamated into

Surrey?" Alfred Bossom, Member for Maidstone, and William Craven-Ellis, Member for Southampton, asked similar questions about the Kent and Hampshire forces.

"I have made it clear," replied Morrison, "that the future of the orders made under the Defence Regulations 1942 has been engaging my attention... and... I hope shortly to be in a position to put forward proposals with regard to general policy relating to the amalgamation of police forces." He added that the continuation of defence schemes would "conduce to police efficiency". There is no doubt that, given time, Morrison would have passed legislation to this effect. Fate, however, intervened, and just two months later he was replaced as Home Secretary. After the 'Labour landslide' of the general election of 26 July 1945, the coalition wartime government was replaced by a Labour government under Clement Attlee, heralding a period of great reforming activity.

The new government set about assembling the 'welfare state' and introducing groundbreaking legislation, which, of course, would include the police. As Home Secretary, James Chuter-Ede realised that he had no powers to compel the merger of police forces – a situation that obviously did not fit well with the new welfare state view of things – and set about rectifying this. A Bill was introduced in Parliament within a few months to abolish all non-county borough forces and to seek powers to compel the amalgamation of any police force if the Home Secretary thought it would be "in the interests of efficiency". However, as a check and balance,

each forcible amalgamation would be preceded by a public inquiry.

Despite opposition from the police forces concerned, the government majority of seats was too great (393 against 230 combined opposition), and the Police Act 1946 received Royal Assent on 15 April 1946. The full title of the Police Act 1946 was ‘An Act to abolish non-county boroughs as separate police areas; to provide for the amalgamation of county and county borough police areas; to provide for the purchase of land for police purposes by compulsory purchase order; to redefine the Metropolitan police district’. It also provided (under section 1(2)) that no Chief Constable of a previous non-county borough force could be the Chief Constable of the new force.

Therefore, on 1 April 1947, 45 non-county borough forces were amalgamated with their surrounding counties. The 1946/47 inspectors’ report reflected that:

“Naturally in the boroughs affected there had for some time been considerable heart-burning amongst the members of the police forces and police authorities at the prospects of losing their own individual identities as separate police forces and many were strongly opposed to the amalgamations. It is therefore with satisfaction that we can report that in spite of this natural feeling of anxiety the amalgamations have been carried out with a maximum amount of efficiency and good will and in a spirit of collaboration which augurs well for the future of the enlarged county forces... We are satisfied that there is no justification for the continued existence of the very small police units of days gone by, and we are confident that the Police Service as a whole is strengthened by the change which took place this year.”

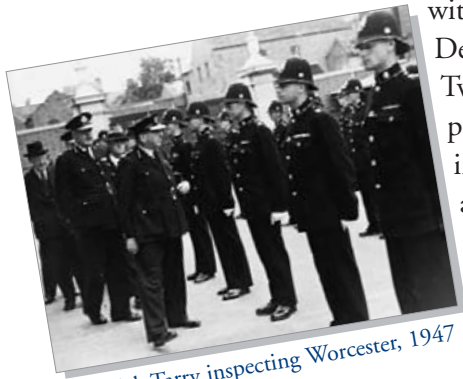
Only two exceptions to the 1946 Act were allowed, namely the forces of Cambridge and Peterborough, which were both larger than

the forces of their surrounding areas (Cambridgeshire County Constabulary had a total strength of 82 and Cambridge City 120; Peterborough City had 56 and the Liberty of Peterborough Police just 10) and so were treated as county boroughs. So, at the end of 1947, the inspectors could report that there were now 56 county forces and 73 borough forces. This achieved one of the two main aims of the interwar inspectors, and they could feel pleased. Never again would the problem of the tiny borough forces be reported in any inspectors’ report, except when they reflected on the 11 compulsory amalgamation schemes implemented under the 1946 Act, which left 122 forces by 1964.

Police pay, conditions and resources

With the question of the small borough forces seemingly settled, the inspectors could concentrate on their next goal, the extraneous duties of police officers. However, a more important topic was rapidly reaching a crisis point – the lack of police manpower. The 1946/47 report articulated the possible reasons, with unsatisfactory housing and higher wages in industry being two of the most important. The report set out the deficiency in manpower of some forces, both county and borough. Derbyshire County, for instance, was 34% below budgeted strength, and Coventry City was 39% below.

Faced with rising discontent in the Police Service, there was only one thing for the government to do: it commissioned a report into the pay and conditions of the police. The committee, appointed on 12 May 1948, was chaired by Sir Geoffrey Lawrence, a well-respected high court judge who had just been ennobled as the first Baron Oaksey. The Oaksey Committee called all the inspectors (Brook, Halland, Johnson and Frederick Tarry CBE (former Chief Constable of Southampton) as



Frederick Tarry inspecting Worcester, 1947

witnesses, as well as Denis de Vitré.

Two reports were presented, the first in April 1949⁸⁴ and the second in November 1949.⁸⁵ The

Oaksey reports, however, were

mainly concerned with

pay and conditions, and never really affected the constitution of the Inspectorate.

However, Brook, the senior inspector, as well as being called as a witness, had further use for the Oaksey Committee. Because of the shortage of manpower, various schemes of policing with reduced manpower had been tried. The most well known of these was the brainchild of James McConnach, the Chief Constable of Aberdeen City.⁸⁶

The 'Aberdeen System' consisted of a group of constables under the control of a sergeant being sent out in a radio-controlled vehicle. They would go to one area of the city and would flood that neighbourhood with policemen, thoroughly checking all property and people, and generally making their presence felt. After a specified period, maybe an hour, they would all return to the vehicle, go to another area and do the same thing there, eventually covering the whole city. They had complete flexibility and could return to an area at random times during a tour of duty, thereby keeping the criminals unsure of where and when they would encounter police officers.

The Aberdeen System was reported to have given good results, and so a working party under Brook's chairmanship was set up by the Oaksey Committee to look at the feasibility of extending the scheme to other police areas. Brook's report was included in the second

Oaksey report, but his conclusions were so non-committal (mainly because of the small amount of time the scheme had been in operation, making long-term assessment difficult) that they provoked no great interest, and, although a similar scheme was tried in the West Yorkshire County Constabulary, the Aberdeen System never really caught on.

The new pay scales recommended by Oaksey were implemented in July 1949, but within a year it was obvious that they were ineffectual and had done nothing to bolster recruiting or stop resignations. All in all, the Oaksey report was a failure as far as pay was concerned and never achieved the same grandeur or gravitas as the Desborough report some 30 years earlier. However, there was one beneficial effect of the Oaksey report for the inspectors. Part 1 of the report made a recommendation that: "A statutory provision should be introduced providing that members of the police forces must not be employed on extraneous duties without the consent of the police authority and the sanction of the Secretary of State." And, in order to achieve this, there "should be a thorough review of the extraneous duties carried out by the police". Home Secretary Chuter-Ede duly complied.

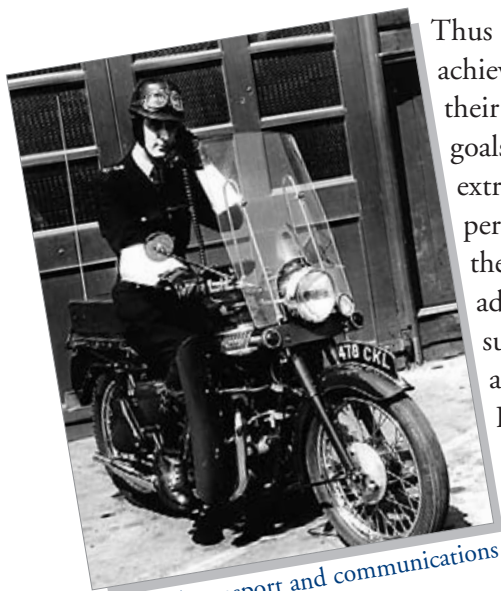
The Committee on Extraneous Police Duties was appointed on 30 August 1950 under the chairmanship of J H Burrell. One inspector, Tarry, sat on the Committee, which also included the then Chief Constable of Birmingham City, Edward Dodd, who would be the Chief Inspector between 1963 and 1966. The Burrell Committee's appointment was favourably commented on in the 1949/50 inspectors' report, but it was another three years before the Committee's report was published.

The report of the Committee on Extraneous Police Duties was published in April 1953, and paragraph 27 stated: "... we recommend that there should be substituted for Police Regulation

39 a Regulation which, subject to the Secretary of State's power to approve exceptions, will preclude the police from undertaking any of the duties in the Appendix." And in the appendix to the report there were listed nearly 40 duties that the police should not perform. These included duties as fishery officer, markets inspector, water bailiff, inspector of fire appliances and inspector of domestic servants registers. The Home Secretary, Sir David Fyffe, accepted the Burrell report completely and implemented its findings immediately.

Thanks to Fyffe's implementation of the report's recommendations, in the 1951/52 inspectors' report (which was not presented to Parliament until July 1953) the inspectors could state that:

"... as a result of the revision of the methods of patrol, improvements in communications, relieving the police of certain extraneous duties, and the replacement of police by persons in appropriate clerical and other grades on various indoor duties, the regular police in many forces are now able to devote more time to their primary duty of preventive supervision than formerly."



Improved transport and communications

Thus the inspectors achieved another of their long-standing goals – the end of extraneous duties performed by the police – to add to their success over amalgamations. But these successes were offset by problems in the rest of the

Police Service, to which, from 1946 onwards, the inspectors had continually drawn attention – lack of

manpower, inadequate housing and rising crime. Although police housing gradually receded in importance as better social conditions led to better housing – and individuals gained the freedom to buy their own houses – the lack of manpower and rising crime continued to be reported on vigorously.

In the 1945/46 report, the national authorised establishment, or number of police officers budgeted for, was given as 43,853, with the actual strength as 35,173, which meant that the Police Service was nearly 20% under strength. According to the 1963/64 report, the authorised establishment was 67,310 and the actual strength 61,294, or 9% under strength – progress had been made, but there was still a huge chasm. The crime situation was equally concerning. In 1948, the total number of indictable crimes was 481,470, with 207,380 (43%) 'cleared up'. In 1964, 422,487 crimes were 'cleared up' out of a total of 1,066,467, a clearance rate of 39.6%.

Changes in the Inspectorate

But what of the Inspectorate during this period? In 1946, there were three inspectors, Brook, Egan and Johnson, as well as Denis de Vitré as an assistant inspector. Coke and Atcherley had retired after their wartime service, and Halland was still seconded to the Control Commission in Germany. Although in 1947 Frederick Tarry was appointed and Halland returned, Johnson was then promptly seconded to the Colonial Office, where he would eventually become the Inspector General of the Colonial Police. However, Kathleen Hill was appointed as a staff officer, and, together with Denis de Vitré, was given responsibility for policewomen in England, Wales and Scotland (as the Scottish Inspectorate had no women members). A further innovation was the secondment of Inspector Arthur Mack of the Metropolitan Police as staff officer (training) in May 1949.

Unfortunately, in 1950 Egan died, reducing the Inspectorate to three active inspectors. The return of Johnson from the Colonial Office in November 1951 relieved the load somewhat by increasing the number of inspectors to four again, with Denis de Vitré as assistant inspector and Hill and Mack as staff officers. Halland retired in July 1953 and was replaced by William John Adlam Willis, and Inspector Frederick Seward was seconded to the Inspectorate and given responsibility for the police aspects of civil defence.



Inspectors in 1953

In 1953, Brook retired and was replaced by Francis Armstrong, while the secondment of Seward ended. So, for the rest of the 1950s, the inspectors were Johnson, Tarry, Willis and Armstrong.

The Inspectorate was strengthened in 1960 by the appointment of Charles Martin. However, in August 1960, the Police Service as a whole, but the Inspectorate in particular, was saddened by the death of Denis de Vitré, at the age of 54. Two years later, Jesse Law joined Kathleen Hill, and both were promoted to the rank of assistant inspector, but still not full inspector, reflecting a continuation of the greatest injustice in the Inspectorate of the time, as both women did exactly the same work as their male colleagues.

The 1958/59 report announced a minor revolution. Since 1856, the inspection year had run from 30 September to 29 September (ie Michaelmas Day, one of the old quarter days). In 1949, as an attempt to ameliorate this anomaly, the date was moved to the end of September, thus making the inspection year 1 October to 30 September. However, quarter days no longer had any relevance, so the 1958/59 report continued to 31 December, and subsequent reports covered calendar years.

100th anniversary of the Inspectorate

The inspectors' report of 1955/56 took time to record the achievement of 100 years of the Inspectorate:

“The end of this inspection year marked the completion of 100 years' work by HM Inspectors of Constabulary. The occasion merits reflection on what has been done in that period, and in particular we pay tribute to the contribution to the Police Service made by 16 former Chief Constables and two magistrates who, in succession, filled these posts before ourselves.”

The report went on to highlight the reduction in the number of police forces (from 235 to 124) and the increase in police officer numbers (from about 10,000 to over 50,000). The Acts of Parliament that accommodated force reductions were listed and the case for further reductions left open. Crime and traffic duties were highlighted as the chief burdens on the police but the inspectors also acknowledged the wide range of challenges the Service faced, from licensing of pedlars to coping with “the Fenian menace of the 1860s”.

This brief history of the Inspectorate concluded by reflecting on the inspectors' contribution to the reputation and public standing of the Police Service:

“Throughout the century, our predecessors aimed always at promoting such qualities of integrity, skill and resourcefulness in police forces as would command the trust of the people and enlist for the police the practical and active cooperation of law-abiding inhabitants. In this we venture to think they succeeded, so that today such confidence is placed in the integrity of individual policemen as to make all ranks proud of their heritage and the office of constable an attractive vocation.”

Despite the watershed of the Inspectorate’s centenary, the last few inspectors’ reports of the 1950s were less than inspiring and largely routine. The report for 1958/59 summarised the year as having “... few major developments for the Police Service...” although it did recognise the importance that the Royal Commission on the Police would have (the Commission was established in 1960). And it took the opportunity to look back over the increases in staffing levels achieved during the decade:

“... the decade 1950–59 ended with the country being served by 10,000 more policemen and 1,000 more policewomen than when it began. Police forces are now supported in their clerical and administrative, maintenance and technical services, by men and women skilled in appropriate civilian trades and gradings, much greater in number than was the case ten years ago.”

PART B

The **MODERN**
Inspectorate



CHAPTER SIX

1962–1990: WIDER REMIT AND INFLUENCE

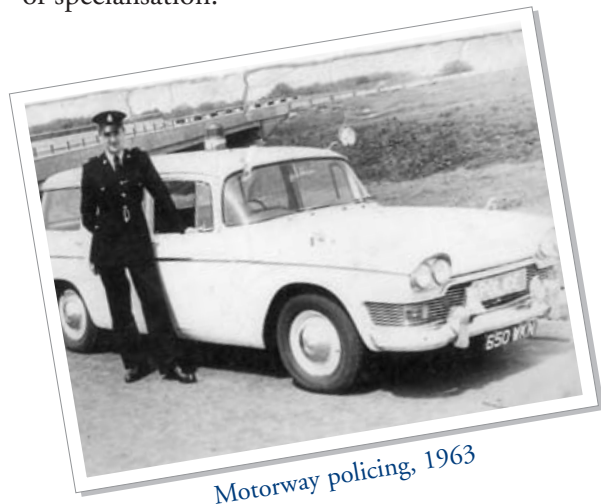
While it has been rightly argued that in its first 100 years the Inspectorate played a significant role as a reforming influence in policing, the depth and breadth of influence increased exponentially during the latter half of the 20th century. Policing itself evolved dramatically during this period and, strengthened by the introduction of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector as the principal adviser to the Home Secretary, the Inspectorate established itself as both a monitor of, and indeed a catalyst for, policing change.

There are many excellent accounts of policing in the 20th century and it is not the intention of this history to cover or even summarise all that has been written elsewhere.⁸⁷ It is, however, worth reflecting briefly on some of the key changes in policing priorities, to provide the context for the specific issues covered later in this and subsequent chapters.

The context of policing

The 1960s was a decade associated with major worldwide changes, both social and cultural. In policing terms, the 1960s also brought significant changes: the greater availability of technology (hand-held and car-based radios and greater availability of vehicles); higher expectations of an immediate response to emergencies; and greater specialisation of officers (for example traffic officers and specialist detective teams). The move of experienced officers away from front-line foot patrol during the 1960s and 1970s transformed the patrolling constable from being the solid, worthy figure of the past, who represented the backbone of the

force, to a much younger breed, often straight out of training and awaiting the opportunity to move away from patrol to the greener pastures of specialisation.



Motorway policing, 1963

The ethos of an immediate response and the increase in specialisation were both calculated to improve the quality of the policing service provided to communities. Both approaches brought with them increased expectations of police officers, and forces were required to spread their resources ever more widely to service a greater range of policing activity. Police officers in cars with personal radios were rapidly deployable and the public soon became used to receiving quick responses to calls. Calls therefore increased, requiring more officers to be in cars, and quite soon the ubiquitous 'bobby on the beat' became a rarity, with foot patrols almost exclusively confined to high-density urban areas.

Meeting the public's expectation of rapid-response policing also introduced the need for performance measurement in areas such as call

answering, resource allocation and scene arrival times. Technology provided the means to measure such performance and police management grasped the opportunity to rely on quantitative data to evidence response times as a proxy measure for the quality of service provided to the public. ‘What gets measured gets done’, and so the use of such measures increased, the measures fed the formulation of targets, and the targets helped drive improved performance – or at least that was the theory. Measures and targets were to become a feature of policing life throughout the ensuing decades.

The 1970s witnessed a decade of unprecedented economic and social problems and technological change. There was sustained and politically motivated terrorism and a startling growth in reported crime, in particular crimes of violence and those involving juvenile offenders. There was also a growing trend of football hooliganism, public disorder, sometimes on a massive scale, and deteriorating police relationships with minority communities.



Football hooliganism

The increased specialisation of police roles in support of front-line patrols (for example detectives, road traffic policing, firearms, air support and a host of other teams and squads) was also seen as very positive by police management. It allowed pooling of knowledge and resources, economies of scale in training and

equipment, and increased professionalism in key areas of business. However, it also produced a major shift in the demographics of police officers, with a largely arbitrary segregation of those with proven skills and experience moving into the specialised roles or desirable postings while the young recruits and less able officers remained in response policing and largely in the inner-city and most difficult policing areas, where relationships with the public were often already strained.

At its worst, specialisation downgraded street patrols and public contact policing to either a stepping stone to something better or a resting place for those felt less capable of specialising. It also helped create ‘elite’ teams who targeted core criminality, within a culture of hard-hitting professional pride and with a heavy emphasis on measurable success. In simplistic terms, the avuncular face of policing epitomised by *Dixon of Dock Green* gave way to the more robust and at times violent approach of *The Sweeney*, resulting in several high-profile corruption cases and miscarriages of justice, to the detriment of relations and trust between the police and the public.



TV drama – *The Sweeney*

In less than ten years, there were at least four separate corruption scandals involving Metropolitan Police officers either covering up serious crime or, even worse, taking part in armed robberies themselves. And the emergence of concerns over so-called 'noble cause corruption' increased doubts over the validity of the convictions of the Birmingham Six, the Guildford Four and the Tottenham Three, among others. Public confidence in the police fell dramatically⁸⁸ and increasing minority community tensions spilled over into riots in Brixton, Toxteth and elsewhere in 1981.

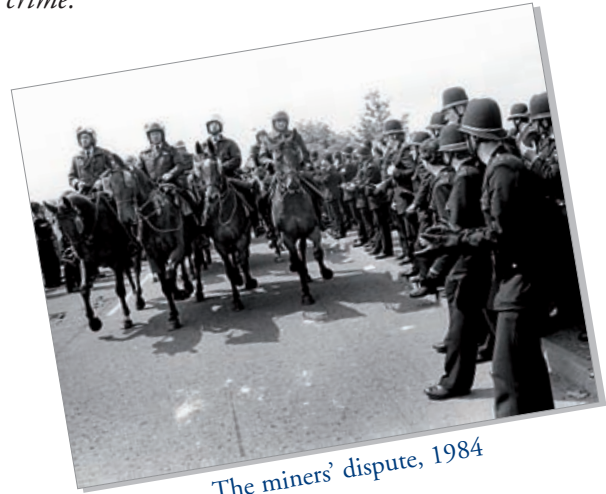
An important element of the government's response was to establish the Royal Commission on Criminal Procedure (in 1981), which scrutinised the unacceptable aspects of policing and heralded the introduction of clear safeguards and constraints on the abuse of police powers, for example the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984. This Act codified police powers and the rights of people in custody or subject to interview, as well as focusing attention on such areas as complaints investigation and strategic community consultation.

1984 also brought the highly divisive miners' strike, which thrust police officers into an uncomfortable position, standing between opposing factions within communities and seen by both sides as an unwelcome arm of central government. With relations between the police and the public at a low point, but crime very much on the increase, the 1980s saw the reinvention of 'community policing', whereby the whole community, not just the police, was encouraged to address the significantly high levels of reported crime. The government was also urged to put greater resources into policing, to help tackle the worsening situation.

The next few years produced a major boost in resources and policing numbers and witnessed numerous pieces of legislation to tackle the

issue, but crime did not decrease substantially. In 1986, the Home Secretary, Douglas Hurd, called on community groups and partner agencies to play their part, because:

"The truth is that, however many laws we change, however much equipment we provide, however many police officers we put on the streets, these measures will not alone turn back the rise in crime."



In fact, although community policing became a defining feature of the 1980s and beyond, the period 1976 to 1997 produced no less than 117 pieces of new criminal legislation or substantial amendments, virtually all of which either increased or amended police powers and/or responsibilities. They covered such diverse areas as public order, dangerous dogs, alcohol at sports grounds, data protection, criminal evidence, road traffic, bail, offensive weapons and police health and safety. Through the combination of community policing and new legislation, together with major advances in technology and forensic science, 'volume crime' rates – for large-scale crime such as burglary and thefts of and from vehicles – were reduced, but, with such a plethora of legislation, training, checks and balances, it is perhaps unsurprising that the legacy passed on to the 1990s was a need for forces to become more involved in introspective change, review, reorganisation and fighting the burgeoning bureaucracy.

The evolution of the Inspectorate

By 1962, the Inspectorate had over 100 years of experience in inspecting police forces and in assessing and reporting on their efficiency. It had settled into long-established routines of working, and this was reflected in the format and content of inspection reports and annual inspectors' summaries of activity and achievements. Just as the 1960s heralded major changes in policing, the period also brought significant change to the Inspectorate, including:

- the enhancement of its national role within policing governance;
- establishing the Chief Inspector as the principal police adviser to the Home Secretary; and
- the expansion of the Inspectorate's core role beyond efficiency inspections.

The Inspectorate's role within police governance

The governance of policing has evolved throughout the Service's history. Prior to the professional police forces of the 18th century, constables had already lost much of their independence, increasingly becoming subordinates of justices of the peace. This subordination was aimed at providing a measure of control over individual officers, who were mainly disorganised, inefficient and not infrequently corrupt.

The changes in governance since 1829 have been aimed at providing an impartiality and independence to the police while protecting the public from irresponsible or abusive exercise of their powers. The watch committees and joint standing committees, with equal numbers of magistrates and elected councillors, provided some element of democratic supervision. There has also been increasing involvement of the

Home Secretary and the Home Departments in influencing budgets and applying control measures, for example through the Inspectorate. The Police Act 1919 further extended this influence by giving powers to the Secretary of State to make regulations on a range of key issues, such as pay, pensions and conditions of service.

Following the 1962 Royal Commission and the subsequent Police Act 1964, the governance of policing in England and Wales was given greater clarity, based on a new definition of the roles of the tripartite partners, namely the Home Secretary, police authorities and Chief Constables. The Act introduced a single system of police authorities to replace the earlier committees, but its main impact was to impose stronger central control. The Act reinforced the powers of the Home Secretary and Chief Constables at the expense of police authorities.⁸⁹ The respective roles that emerged can be summarised as follows:

- **Home Secretary:** To promote the efficiency and effectiveness of the Police Service and to account to Parliament.
- **Police authority:** To secure the maintenance of an efficient and effective police force in its area.
- **Chief Constable:** To direct and control the force.

This structure remained intact until the Police and Magistrates' Courts Act 1994, when greater power was invested in reconstituted police authorities. The tripartite partnership has often been likened to a three-legged stool: the relationship has sometimes produced an uneasy equilibrium, with one of the partners taking prominence and disturbing the balance between the three. This description remains valid.

The Inspectorate has never been a formal partner within the tripartite structure but has played an influential role nonetheless. It was created as part of the governmental controls on policing resources, and its role in assessing efficiency and effectiveness has remained a core function. Another increasingly key role for HMIC, however, has been to sit outside the formal tripartite structure and provide impartial professional advice to all the partners, acting at various times as arbitrator, counsellor, referee or critical friend. Robert Reiner described the Inspectorate within the tripartite relationship as follows:

*“In the operational sphere the Chief Constable is clearly said to reign supreme. However, in the administrative and regulative functions of maintaining, providing and equipping the police, ascertaining their requirements, and monitoring their efficiency, the role of local police authorities is entirely subordinate to, and often determined by, central government. The Inspectorate which is relied upon to supply the neutral expertise for the proper conduct of this function is constituted as one part of one leg of the tripartite structure (the Home Office) and selected by them from the second leg (the Chief Constables). It is hard to see where the third leg, the police authorities, is supposed to figure in this scheme of things.”*⁹⁰

In fact, in spite of the appearance of allegiance to the Home Office, HMIC has jealously prized its independence and, as its advisory role has become more important, the Inspectorate's influence has greatly increased. Arguably, the single most significant advance in this regard was the appointment of a Chief Inspector of Constabulary, with a specific remit as principal policing adviser to the Home Secretary.

The role of the Chief Inspector of Constabulary

There had been a power to appoint a Chief Inspector of Constabulary since 1945,⁹¹ but the first appointment was not made until 1962, following strong recommendations from the Royal Commission:

“We recommend that... this post be filled without delay. The Chief Inspector should be regarded as the senior professional adviser to the Secretary of State on policing matters and he should have a general oversight over other inspectors. In addition, he should be given specific duties.

“We recommend that the Chief Inspector have a recognised role in the strategic planning of the Police Service. At present the Home Departments, the Police Council or a conference of chief officers may take the initiative in proposing a new development in training, organisation and methods or operational techniques; but each of these bodies already has exacting responsibilities. The result is that planning suffers through not being the clear responsibility of any single component of the Service.”

In 1962, the role of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector was indeed filled and has been a permanent feature of the Inspectorate ever since. The Commission went on to recommend the establishment of a central government unit to carry out coordination and research work and proposed that it should work under the general direction of the Chief Inspector. The Home Office Police Research and Planning Branch was duly established in 1963, under the direction of the Chief Inspector, staffed by senior police officers and headed by an assistant chief constable.

Details of individual Chief Inspectors' periods of office and achievements appear later, in Chapters Six and Seven. Suffice to say, since 1963 successive Chief Inspectors have

established, to varying degrees, working relationships with each of the partners within the tripartite structure and with successive Secretaries of State. These relationships have been absolutely key in taking forward the work of the Inspectorate and in using the knowledge and expertise within HMIC to positively influence the development and reform of policing.

The expansion of the Inspectorate's core role

The Royal Commission was also highly influential in broadening the remit of the Inspectorate and making changes to its staffing and structure that have echoes through to the present day. The Commission report proposed a major revision of the purpose of inspection and set out what, in its view, should be the four duties of inspectors:

“The time has gone when the inspection of police forces should be limited to the state and efficiency of each particular force. The inspector should be equally concerned with the efficient collaboration of neighbouring forces, with the promotion of coordinating machinery between them, and with the development of services best handled on the basis of a district rather than within a single force.

“Thus the inspectors of constabulary will have four duties. They will continue, as now, to inspect each separate police force and report to the Secretary of State whether or not it is efficient, and in particular they will indicate any misgivings they may have about the competence of its Chief Constable, including the manner in which he deals with complaints against the police. Secondly, arising from their inspection of the force, they will form an opinion about the adequacy of the provision made by a police authority, and report any shortcomings in this respect to the Secretary of State. Thirdly, they will ensure that the results of central research are made available to the forces

they inspect, and that new knowledge and up-to-date techniques are being applied. Fourthly, they will be responsible for advising upon arrangements for promoting collaboration between forces and the development of ancillary services.”

It is interesting that the Commission recognised the opportunities presented by the Inspectorate's unique role within the policing landscape to keep an eye on the performance of Chief Constables and police authorities, to spread good practice and assist in standardising policing delivery, and to encourage inter-force collaboration. Each of these areas would become a key theme within the Inspectorate's work over the following 40 years.

At a more practical level, and to enable the Inspectorate to take on this wider remit, the Commission made specific recommendations relating to staffing and accommodation, namely that:

- the numbers of inspectors should be increased to eight (from six);
- they should be given assistance from staff officers and clerical support; and
- suitable offices should be located in every police district outside London.

Sections 38 to 40 of the subsequent Police Act made provision to accommodate these proposals and heralded the appointment of assistant inspectors, staff officers and specialist advisers across the Inspectorate, roles that still support the inspectors' work today.

The work of the Inspectorate

1962/63 was a watershed year for the Inspectorate and set the tone for the following three decades. The changes brought about by the Commission's recommendations saw an increase in the number of inspectors and, on

1 December 1962, Sir William Johnson was promoted to become the first Chief Inspector of Constabulary.

The Willink Committee had prompted the reorganisation of police forces into eight geographic districts, and the structure of the Inspectorate followed suit, allocating one inspector to each district and locating their offices accordingly. In 1963, Francis Armstrong and Frederick Tarry retired and were replaced by Sydney Lawrence and John Gaskain respectively. Nicholas Bebbington and Peter Brodie were appointed in April 1963 to fill additional

authorised inspector posts, while Alan Scroggie filled the vacancy left by the promotion of Johnson. Also in 1963, William Willis retired after ten years and was replaced by Joseph Manuel, previously a deputy assistant commissioner in the Metropolitan Police.

This meant that, by the end of 1963, six of the eight districts were covered and district offices had been identified: Brodie was in Cambridge, Charles Martin in Liverpool, Scroggie in Newcastle upon Tyne, Manuel in Birmingham, Bebbington in Tunbridge Wells and Gaskain in Cheltenham.



John Gaskain



Nicholas Bebbington



Peter Brodie



Alan Scroggie

The remaining two vacancies were filled the following year, with Stanley Peck in Nottingham and Neil Galbraith in Cardiff.



Stanley Peck



Neil Galbraith

The work of the Inspectorate in the years from 1962 is very well documented in the annual reports of successive Chief Inspectors of Constabulary, commencing in 1963. The earliest reports set the template for most of this period, with sections on:

- a review of the year;
- force establishments, strength and recruitment;
- training and promotion;
- crime, offences and public order;
- traffic, road safety and communications;
- the Home Office Police Research and Planning Branch;
- commendations, complaints and discipline;
- welfare, housing and buildings; and
- the police and the public.

While much of the content represented a factual record of events and performance in these areas of business, including a number of statistical charts and tables, each Chief Inspector brought their own experience and approach to the work of the Inspectorate and some of this came through in their reports.

The Chief Inspectors of Constabulary

Sir William Johnson, CMG, CBE
(December 1962 – September 1963)



The first Chief Inspector was Sir William Johnson. He joined Portsmouth City Police in 1920, where he rose to the rank of Superintendent in charge of the criminal investigation department in just ten years. In 1932 he was appointed as Chief Constable of Plymouth, moving to Birmingham as Assistant Chief Constable in 1936, where he was appointed as Chief Constable five years later. He joined the Inspectorate in 1945 and so, by the time he took up the role of Chief Inspector, he had already served 17 years in HMIC.

Sir William's appointment as Chief Inspector was made in the clear knowledge that he would retire after one year, and so, unusually, his successor was identified and named in his one and only annual report. Sir William was remembered fondly in subsequent Inspectorate reports, not least for his "many valuable innovations to improve police efficiency".⁹² In particular, he was credited with introducing the special course at the Police College, designed "to give suitable training to outstanding young persons in the early stage of their police careers". The first such course, passing out in September 1963, produced 34 successful candidates, qualified for promotion to sergeant, from 36

attendees. The extended interview procedure utilised for this course was “commended to the Service” and subsequently applied to both the special course and the senior staff course.

His contribution to policing also spread beyond the Police Service of England and Wales. Between 1948 and 1951 he was seconded to the Colonial Office as Inspector General of Colonial Police. During this secondment he visited every colonial territory within the Commonwealth, made numerous recommendations to improve police services, and was made Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George in recognition.

Sir William's one report as Chief Inspector was largely unremarkable, with statistical and factual coverage of the usual issues, and it was signed off by all the inspectors, reflecting the practice in previous reports – in subsequent years the Chief Inspector would take far greater personal ownership of the content and conclusions reached.

Sir Edward Dodd, CBE (September 1963 – September 1966)



Sir William retired after just one year as Chief Inspector and was replaced in September 1963 by Sir Edward Dodd. Sir Edward joined the Metropolitan Police in 1931 after a period in the merchant navy. He attended the first course

at the Metropolitan Police College in 1934 and became Assistant Chief Constable in Birmingham in 1941. He succeeded Sir William as Chief Constable in Birmingham and remained in that post until he was appointed as Chief Inspector of Constabulary in 1963.

In his report on Inspectorate activity during 1963, Sir Edward set out the changes in personnel within HMIC, the introduction of staff officers and clerical support, and the new distribution of district-based offices – all elements of change proposed by the Royal Commission. His assessment was that:

“... the provision of office accommodation and adequate staff has greatly added to the effectiveness of the Inspectorate and brought members into much closer touch with Chief Constables and the forces within their inspection areas.”

The retirements of Sir William Johnson and William Willis represented a substantial loss of experience but, with new appointments, by the end of 1963 six of the eight Inspectorate posts were filled, despite Sydney Lawrence leaving in October to take up the post of Commandant of the Police College, Bramshill. Two further additions were Kathleen Hill and Jesse Law, who had been appointed as assistant inspectors in 1962 to advise Chief Constables on the work of policewomen.



Police College, Bramshill

The 1963 report highlighted an increase in crime of 9.1% and a slight reduction in the detection rate, from 43.9% to 43.1%. Of greater concern, however, was the rise in road traffic accidents causing personal injuries, up by 7,499 on the previous year to a new total of 271,531. While stressing the view that forces had performed well, considering the limits of available manpower, Sir Edward stated that:

“It must be admitted that the general traffic patrol coverage throughout the country is inadequate to deal with the problem arising from the rapidly increasing number of vehicles on the roads... Experience has shown that the presence of police on the roads has a material bearing on standards of behaviour by all road users and to this extent there is in our view a strong case for increasing the number of police traffic patrols as soon as the personnel becomes available.”



Patrol car, 1963

The problems of staffing levels were a feature of the 1963 report. A combination of under-recruiting, a reduction in working hours

(resulting from the additional bi-weekly rest day that had emerged from the change to a 44-hour week), an expanding training regime and the growth in traffic enforcement requirements led to numerous forces seeking to increase their authorised establishment and improve their recruitment. Parallel efforts were also made to improve this situation by increasing the employment of First Police Reserve officers (mainly retired officers), civilian staff, cadets and traffic wardens, as illustrated in the table below.

Despite reporting that more men were appointed as constables in 1963 than in any year since 1950, by the end of 1963 the Police Service overall was still 3,302 men short of being at full police officer establishment.

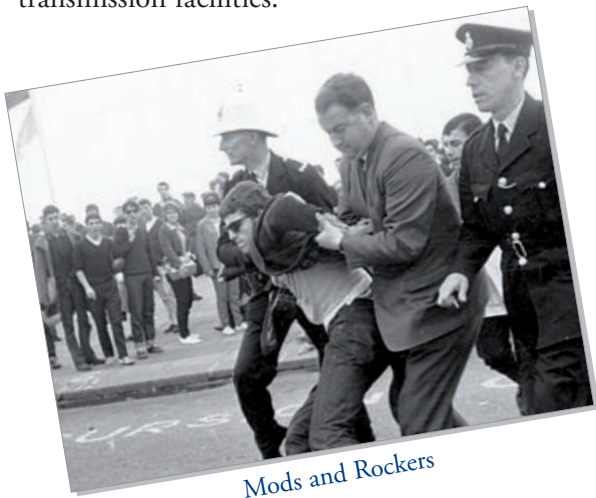
The 1964 report highlighted the passage of the Police Act and in particular pointed to two changes that were to have an impact on the governance of policing: first, the changed role and constitution of police authorities; and second, the formalised, and publicised, annual reporting by Chief Constables to authorities on the policing of their areas. It also reported the appointment of two further inspectors, to bring the Inspectorate up to ‘establishment’, and the opening of offices in Cardiff and Nottingham, to complete its regional coverage. Both aspects were heralded as enhancing the Inspectorate’s relationships with forces, and in particular with Chief Constables.

In addition to these fundamental changes, 1964 saw the introduction of a country-wide network of regional crime squads; the operational use of

Changes in Police Service staff levels, 1961–63

Year	Regular police		First Police Reserve	Civilian staff	Cadets	Traffic wardens
	Establishment	Increase				
1961	60,610	–	163	6,852	2,571	115
1962	62,515	1,905	149	7,456	2,709	191
1963	64,863	2,348	133	8,091	2,858	379
Increase		4,253	–30	1,239	287	264

a large-scale police reserve over the August bank holiday weekend to help seaside towns in addressing disturbances between Mods and Rockers; a national police recruiting campaign; and the experimental use of helicopters, closed-circuit television, personal radio sets, multi-channel wireless equipment and facsimile transmission facilities.



Mods and Rockers

On the debit side, recorded crime topped 1 million offences for the first time in 1964, rising still further to 1,133,882 in 1965. Detection rates slipped in both years and road accidents, and in particular fatalities, rose still further (with a total of 7,952 killed in 1965, an increase of 132 from the 7,820 deaths in 1964, which was itself an increase of 898 on the previous year). On the latter issue, the report pointed out the impact of the apparently unstoppable tide of increased vehicle use, with registered vehicles having more than doubled in ten years (from 6.04 million in 1955 to 12.87 million in 1965). The Chief Inspector's 1965 report highlighted a number of areas to be addressed, including:

- greater uniformity in the approach to prosecuting traffic offences;
- dissemination of advice from the Police Research and Planning Branch on good practice;

- the introduction of additional or amended legislation (regarding drink driving, for example); and
- a greater concentration on vehicle defects, in conjunction with Ministry of Transport vehicle examiners.

Colonel Sir Eric St Johnston,
CBE, QPM, MA
(February 1967 – September 1970)



Sir Edward's tenure as Chief Inspector ended suddenly with his death on 16 September 1966, when he was just 57 years of age. He was succeeded on 1 February 1967 by Colonel Sir Eric St Johnston. Sir Eric had served on the civil staff of the Metropolitan Police before entering the Metropolitan Police College in 1935. At the early age of 29 he was appointed as Chief Constable of Oxfordshire. After distinguished war service, in 1944 he was appointed as Chief Constable of Durham County, and in 1950 he became Chief Constable of Lancashire. He remained in that post until his appointment as Chief Inspector of Constabulary in February 1967.

Perhaps the largest single issue of Sir Eric's tenure was the programme of force amalgamations, enabled by the provisions of the 1964 Police Act. His report of 1966⁹³ explained the issue in the following terms:

“The Police Act 1946 conferred powers on the Secretary of State to amalgamate police areas in the interests of greater efficiency and these were used to combine a small number of police areas. In 1962 the Royal Commission on the Police recommended a more extensive reorganisation of police forces by amalgamation and stronger powers to this end were included in the Police Act 1964. The Act was not followed by an immediate programme of extensive amalgamations because the Local Government Commission was then sitting and it was thought preferable to propose police reorganisation in each locality at the same time as local government boundaries were changed.”

However, the Local Government Commission was closed down and a Royal Commission on Local Government was announced, removing any likelihood of early changes in local government boundaries. At the same time, the levels of crime and the complexity of traffic problems continued to increase, and so the Home Secretary established a review, in conjunction with the Inspectorate, which concluded that reorganisation should go ahead and, in fact, that it should be more far-reaching than even the 1962 Royal Commission had envisaged. The proposal was to reduce the number of forces from 117 to 49, creating forces with strengths ranging from 700 to 7,000, but averaging between 1,000 and 2,500. The target date for completion of this programme was April 1968.

The Inspectorate became centrally involved during 1966/67 in providing support and advice to police authorities and designated Chief Constables to help set up the new amalgamated forces. Taken together with a full programme of force inspections, Sir Eric nominated the year 1967 as “the busiest that the Inspectorate has ever had”.

Sir Eric also highlighted a further impact of force restructuring on the Inspectorate, namely the reorganisation of the inspectors’ responsibilities. In 1966, there were eight inspectors, each covering forces in one of the Chief Constables’ districts. As a result of the reduction in force numbers, it was decided to reduce the number of inspectors with district responsibilities to six, but also to appoint, for the first time, two ‘functional’ inspectors to work from the Home Office, one concentrating on crime prevention and detection and the other on the establishment and efficiency of police traffic patrols.



Frank Williamson

Frank Williamson, the Chief Constable of Cumbria, was appointed as the first HM Inspector (Crime) and Joseph Manuel, previously the inspector for the Midlands district, took on the role of HM Inspector (Traffic). Their roles were described thus:

“... like the regional inspectors, [they] do not have any operational responsibilities but are there to advise police authorities, their fellow inspectors, chief officers of police, Home Office officials and, in the case of HM Inspector (Traffic), the Ministry of Transport, on matters relating to police work within their specialist fields. This is the first time in the history of the police that inspectors with functional responsibilities have been so appointed...”

Interestingly, by 1970 both functional inspectors had also taken on some force inspection responsibilities, sharing one police district between them and thereby allowing the overall number of inspectors to decrease by one. By the report of 1971, both functional responsibilities were led by just one inspector, who also had district responsibilities, but he was provided with an assistant inspector with a specialist crime background. Notwithstanding these changes, however, the precedent in 1966 opened up the area of functional and/or 'thematic' responsibilities that has persisted to the present-day Inspectorate.

Sir John McKay, CBE, QPM (October 1970 – November 1972)



On 1 October 1970, Sir Eric retired and went to Australia to carry out a review of the State of Victoria Police. He was replaced as Chief Inspector by Sir John McKay, who served with the Metropolitan Police from 1935 to 1953 before being appointed as Assistant Chief Constable in Birmingham and, subsequently, in 1958, as Chief Constable in Manchester. He became an inspector of constabulary in 1966.

In his first annual report (1970) Sir John dedicated several pages to one of his favourite topics, namely the involvement of the police within the community they serve. His focus was on the physical environment, the importance of tackling crime and disorder to improve the

quality of life, but also the importance of police interaction in the community's wider social problems.

*"The police officer's duty inevitably involves him with social conditions and activities as they affect the preservation of law and order; social environment and attitudes are important factors in crime. In recent years this involvement has increased and added to the already heavy responsibilities of the police. I am convinced, however, that the work undertaken in the field of crime prevention, visits to schools, road safety, assistance at youth clubs, juvenile liaison schemes, community relations, and the like, is important and will benefit the community now and in the future."*⁹⁴

He offered these thoughts to illustrate the context within which crime was still rising, as were deaths and injury on the roads. It is interesting to note that, perhaps also in the cause of contextualisation, such increases were not just reported factually but were accompanied by additional information and/or trend analysis – or 'spin', some might say.

"For the second year running there has been a slight reduction in the rate of increase of crime (8.5% in 1968; 6.1% in 1969; 5.8% in 1970)..."

"There was an increase of 3% – the largest for five years – in the number of persons killed or injured. This increase must be viewed in the light of the annual growth in traffic of approximately 4%."

1971 saw a further rise in crime (6%) and increased deaths on the roads. In his report of that year, Sir John extolled the public to give greater support to the police in tackling crime, while also playing their part in reducing road deaths through safer driving and greater care.

Sir John retired in November 1972.

Sir John Hill, CBE, DFC, QPM
(December 1972 – December 1975)



Sir John Hill started his career in the Metropolitan Police in 1933, serving there until joining the Royal Air Force in 1942. As a flying officer attached to Bomber Command, he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for operations carried out over Europe. After the war he rejoined the Metropolitan Police, as an Inspector and then a Superintendent, before moving to New Scotland Yard in 1957, attaining the rank of Commander (now re-designated Deputy Assistant Commissioner). In 1965 he joined HMIC as an inspector before returning to the Metropolitan Police in 1966 as Assistant Commissioner. By the time he left again to become Chief Inspector of Constabulary he was the Deputy Commissioner.

Sir John's first annual publication reported on the last full year of his predecessor's period of office. It was a very standard report, covering crime, traffic and other usual subjects. One area of particular note, and concern, was the noticeable increase in violent crime, and there was growing concern over the criminal use of firearms. On the increase in violent crime, the report stated:

“We face the fact that conflict and violence are deeply rooted in human nature, and common to

men and women of all races and walks of life. One only has to study the content of television programmes to confirm the fascination violence has for many of us.

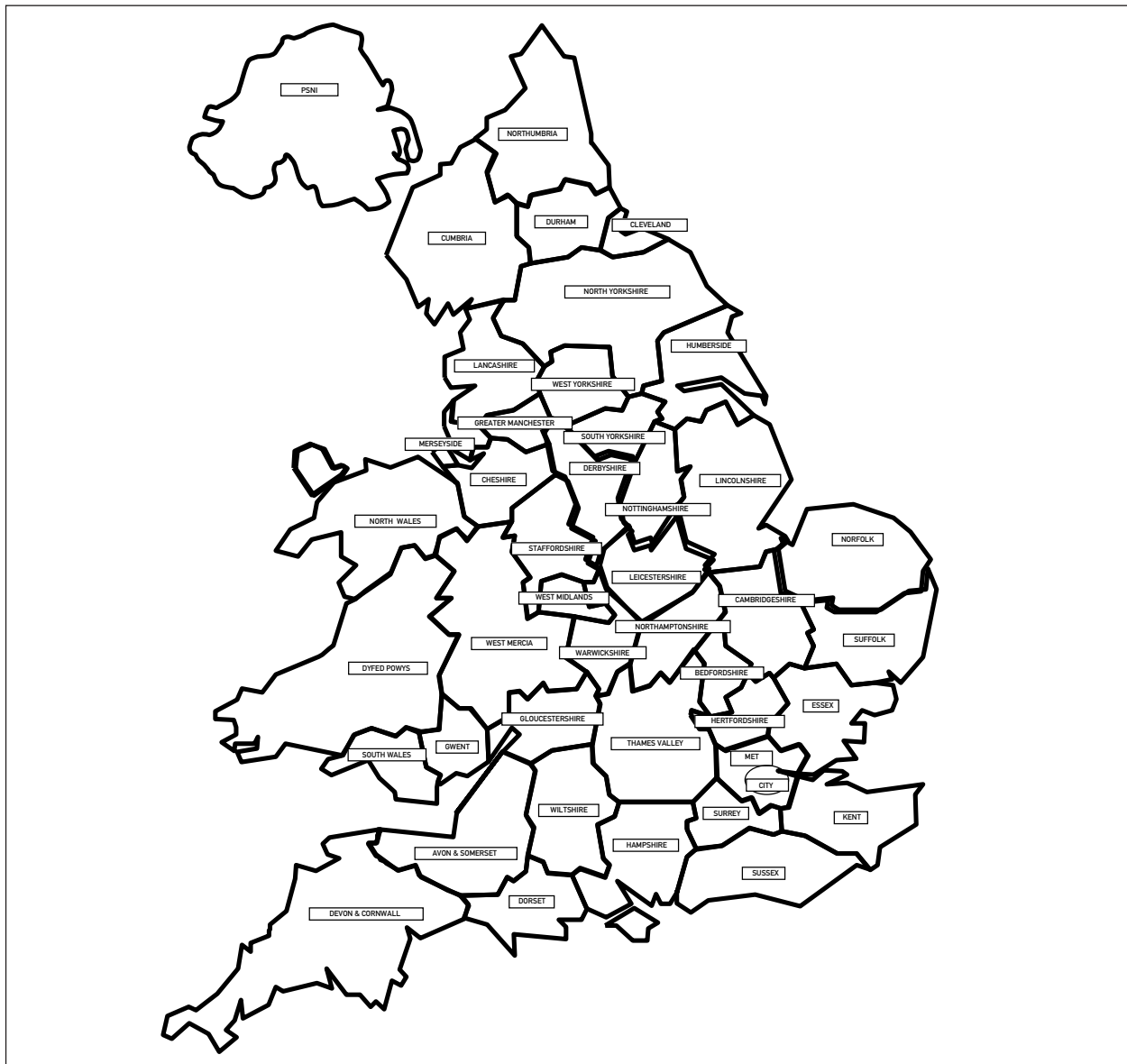
“[Violence] is manifested in a variety of forms – battered babies, hooliganism, assault, vandalism and ‘mugging’... In addition to individual acts, police are concerned with the propensity to communal violence in crowds. An atmosphere of collective hysteria creates its own problems. We see this at football matches with large attendance, which have at times become Saturday afternoon battlefields of rival partisans.”

1973 marked an important year of preparation for the Police Service, with newly structured forces due to come into being on 1 April 1974, supported by such innovations as the Police National Computer (PNC), computerised command and control systems and greater mobility of police patrols. The new force structure resulted in the number of forces outside London being reduced from 45 to 41, producing the geographical police landscape that was to survive largely untouched until 2006.

Between 1973 and 1975, successive reports highlighted issues in respect of relationships between the police and ethnic minorities. The House of Commons Select Committee on Race Relations and Immigration (1972) commented favourably on the growth of police community liaison activity, and a government White Paper the following year urged police chiefs to look still further at improving relations and increasing officer awareness of the issues. Sir John, in his report of 1973, pointed out that:

“All too often it seems that incidents that acquire a racial significance arise from normal policing operations marked by a lack of mutual understanding and consequent hostility.”

Restructured forces, 1974



He also highlighted an increased incidence of terrorist activity, a subject that was to become a significant feature of his report for 1974, the year in which the Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act was passed. Sir John reflected on an accelerating and unprecedented level of indiscriminate bomb attacks in public places, resulting in the murder and maiming of many innocent people, not least in Birmingham where explosions at the Mulberry Bush and Tavern in the Town public houses saw 21 people dead and 168 wounded, many seriously.



The Mulberry Bush, Birmingham

Politically motivated crimes outside the Metropolitan Police district, 1974

Type of device				Casualties	
Time bomb	Incendiary	Postal incendiary	Postal anti-handling	Injured	Dead
40	51	3	4	220	27

The recorded incidents of ‘politically motivated crimes’ in 1974 created considerable concern, with attacks on life and property spreading beyond the Metropolitan Police district. The scale of this activity is demonstrated in the table above.

In addition, following a slight reduction in overall crime in 1973, there was a massive increase of 21% in 1974 and a worrying trend in respect of juvenile offenders “acquiring a professionalism in criminal expertise at a much earlier age”. The deepening concern surrounding the increase in crime was illustrated in the report of 1975, in which Sir John recorded in some detail separate initiatives launched at the annual conferences of the Joint Central Committee of the Police Federation and the Police Superintendents’ Association of England and Wales. Both initiatives sought to give a far greater profile to the need for communities, people with influence and local organisations to reassert good standards and support the police in tackling criminality.

In contrast, the Association of Chief Police Officers’ summer conference of 1974 would appear to have been rather more introspective, concentrating on the role and composition of the new police authorities and the need for good working relationships with local council members.

Sir James Haughton, CBE, QPM (January 1976 – July 1977)



Sir James Haughton joined Birmingham City Police in 1935, entering the criminal investigation department two years later and rising to become Detective Chief Superintendent and head of the department. He served as a member of the directing staff at the Police College from 1963 to 1965 and was Director of the Home Office Police Research and Development Branch,⁹⁵ during which time he contributed greatly to the development of numerous technical aids to policing. He was also influential in the introduction of regional crime squads, policing of motorways and CCTV for traffic control. He was appointed as Chief Constable of Liverpool City Police on 1 August 1965, subsequently leading the amalgamated Liverpool and Bootle Constabulary (1967) and then the (again) restructured Merseyside Police from 1974. He was appointed Chief Inspector on 1 January 1976.

Sir James' first year in the Inspectorate coincided with the publication of the highly influential Police Act 1976. This Act brought into being a number of the remaining recommendations from the Royal Commission of 1962, notably the independent Police Complaints Board, chaired by Lord Plowden. The Act also introduced the statutory office of Deputy Chief Constable.

In his only full-year report from his time in office, Sir James reflected on the importance of public support in the area of crime prevention. In this respect, he was concerned by the adverse effect of further increasing police mobility:

“It is unfortunate that modern technology has, in spite of its many advantages, in some ways lessened the opportunities for contact between police and the public. The greater use of police vehicles has improved police mobility and capacity to respond to incidents, but there are also occasional complaints from the public that they do not see police officers on the beat as much as they did previously.”

He also reported on the tightening of budgets and pressures on recruitment that had further exacerbated the availability of patrol officers. He particularly highlighted the conflict in priorities in deciding whether additional staff should be allocated to largely preventive front-line patrolling or dedicated to the specialist roles targeted at detecting crime. He made little secret of his preference for prevention over cure.

These same financial pressures led Sir James to launch a review of the structure and future resourcing of the Inspectorate, but it was a review that he handed over to his successor on his somewhat early retirement in July 1977.

Sir Colin Woods, KCVO, CBE (August 1977 – August 1979)



Sir Colin Woods joined the Metropolitan Police in 1940 and was seconded six years later, by which time he was a Chief Superintendent, to the Police College at Bramshill. He returned to the Metropolitan Police to fill the post of Deputy Assistant Commissioner in the newly formed management services department before returning to Bramshill as Commandant. He was appointed Assistant Commissioner in 1969 and Deputy Commissioner in 1975. He took over as Chief Inspector of Constabulary in August 1977.

Sir Colin reflected on his predecessor's views on balancing prevention and detection and took the debate further:

“The dilemma is not merely whether or not to accede to the inexorable clamour for reinforcement of the investigative branches at the expense of uniformed foot patrol and other preventive activities, which impossibly high case loads present. It is also to decide whether it is right, for example, to allocate sufficient numbers to ensure that highly professional criminals are brought to justice (because any apparent immunity would be a positive incitement to crime) and thus run the risk of failing to provide an adequate service to many a simple household whose security and peace of mind

have been ruined by the destructiveness of juvenile burglars (who themselves also need to be detected immediately if remedial action is to be taken)."

To tackle this squeeze on police resources and priorities, Sir Colin keenly expounded the merits of wider partnership and collaborative working. In particular, he called on the various organisations working within the policing landscape to combine their efforts and for all the separate organisations that care for and serve the community to work together to develop measures to reduce opportunities for crime and to influence those most prone to anti-social or criminal behaviour.

Having looked externally for his opening thoughts, he then turned his attention to equally important 'internal' issues, centring on the perennial focus on pay and conditions:

"The opening paragraphs would be incomplete if they did not include a reference to the public arguments for improved pay and conditions of service for the police, which inevitably included discussion about the right to strike, and resulted in the Service becoming unusually introspective. So much so that some observers, within as well as outside the Service, were genuinely concerned about the ability of the police to maintain their traditional friendly role as servants of the community. It says much for the good sense of the Service and the reputation of the judiciary that the appointment of Lord Edmund-Davies as head of the committee established to decide on the policeman's worth, and your assurances that the government would accept their recommendations, enabled the police once more to concentrate on getting on with their job, which had become more onerous than ever before."

Sir Colin's report of the following year was able to adopt a far more positive tone as a result of the full acceptance of Lord Edmund-Davies' recommendations. The view was that this award

would stem the resignations of experienced officers, attract higher quality recruits and allow greater alignment of training to the needs of the modern Police Service.

Interestingly, in 1978 Sir Colin returned to another of the traditional concerns of the Inspectorate, namely the poor state of police buildings. On this occasion, however, while accepting the positive impact on morale and performance of appropriate working environments, he supported the case for a transfer of capital funding to increase the prison establishment, at the expense of police building refurbishment.

Sir James Crane, CBE (September 1979 – December 1982)



Sir Colin retired from the Inspectorate in August 1979 to take up post as Commissioner of the newly formed Australian Federal Police. He was replaced by Sir James Crane, who joined the Metropolitan Police in 1946 and rose through the ranks to become Deputy Assistant Commissioner and an acknowledged expert in fraud investigation. He joined the Inspectorate on 1 July 1976 with responsibility for Wales and South West England.

Sir James was in office on the 150th anniversary of the establishment of the 'new police' and understandably allotted space in his 1979 report

to praise the role played by the Metropolitan Police in the development of the unique British system of policing.



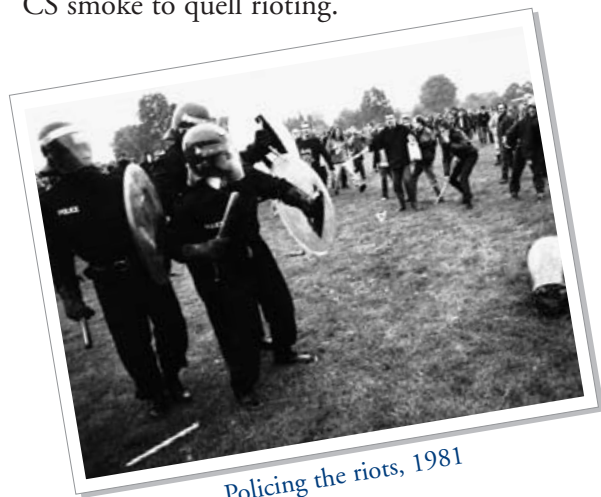
150th anniversary of the Metropolitan Police

Sir James was also positive about the creation of the Police Negotiating Board and the Police Advisory Board, which set the scene for more systematic processes for consultation, both at local and national levels. He praised the advance of ‘civilianisation’ – the use of civilian staff to free police officers from roles that do not require police skills or powers – and the expansion of the graduate entry scheme. He also sounded a note of apprehension, however, at the high levels of crime, deteriorating relationships with minority communities and the rise in juvenile criminality. The introduction of Home Office Circular 211/1978,⁹⁶ building on a conference entitled ‘Juveniles and the Police’, was welcomed.

1980 and 1981 saw public disorder in Bristol and Brixton, the latter leading to the inquiry under Lord Scarman. Even as early as in the 1980 annual report, Sir James highlighted serious concerns about the Police Service’s arrangements for handling major spontaneous disorder. He was at pains, however, to ensure that due acknowledgement was given to the sterling work of the Service in dealing with the multitude of other more mundane, but equally important, aspects of policing.

“Annual reports by successive Chief Inspectors of Constabulary... seldom adequately describe or acknowledge the everyday endeavours and work of the many thousands of police officers engaged in the normal, sometimes humdrum, job of policing – policing usually unspectacular and therefore unreported, 24 hours a day, every day of every year. The individual police officer – the constable on the beat, the traffic patrol officer, the detective, the supervising officer – all discharge weighty responsibilities. We place great reliance on them doing their jobs effectively but at the same time exercising their authority with discretion, understanding and compassion. I am most grateful for their efforts. The year was a busy and difficult one but the observable results achieved reflect the dedicated, skilful and often courageous actions of police generally and the efficiency of the Service as a whole.”

By the publication of his 1981 annual report, the full implications of the Bristol and Brixton disorders were known, and further disturbances in Toxteth, Liverpool, had seen the Chief Constable compelled to sanction the use of CS smoke to quell rioting.



Policing the riots, 1981

Understandably, much of the 1981 report focused on the need to make better protective equipment available, issues concerning police training and the effectiveness of mutual aid

provision between forces. Sir James also referred to the findings and recommendations of the Scarman report. He was particularly keen to stress that some headway had already been made by the police in addressing areas of concern:

“Lord Scarman had, of course, much to say on this topic, and many of his recommendations – on styles of policing, on consultative committees – are, I believe, well calculated to enhance communication between the police and the public and improve the general climate in which the police work. It should be recognised that some of the recommendations were already established in police methods and work.”

He was not, however, blind to the extent of the problems in the relationship between the police and communities:

“Last year I said that I was convinced that the disturbances in Bristol were not caused solely by resentment against the police, but also reflected deep social problems beyond the power of the police to solve... Having said that, it would be foolish and self-defeating to deny that specific problems exist between the police and some ethnic minority communities, and between the police and some young people, white or black. Foolish because the difficulties are plain to see; and self-defeating because unless both the police and the community are prepared to open themselves to honest self-criticism there will be no prospect at all of bridging the gaps which do exist.”

Despite the predominance of the issues surrounding the disturbances, Sir James still found room in his 1981 report to mention publication of the report of the Royal Commission on Criminal Procedure and to reflect on the Royal Wedding, which took place in July 1981 in St Paul’s Cathedral in the City of London – the policing of which represented an altogether more affable example of mutual aid between nine participating police forces.

Sir Lawrence Byford, CBE,
QPM, DL, LLB
(January 1983 – March 1987)



Sir Lawrence joined West Riding Police in 1947. He served on the Wakefield Detective Training School staff between 1959 and 1962 and at the Police Staff College at Bramshill from 1964 to 1966. He joined Lincolnshire Constabulary as Assistant Chief Constable in 1968, becoming Deputy Chief Constable in 1970 and Chief Constable in 1973. He was appointed as an inspector of constabulary in 1977.

As a regional inspector (in 1978/79) Sir Lawrence led a Foreign and Commonwealth Office consultancy team to Turkey, advising the Turkish Prime Minister on problems relating to terrorism and internal disorder. He was also a visiting lecturer on democratic peacekeeping at the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the National Police Foundation in Washington DC, as well as at the Army Staff College at Camberley, the Scottish Police College and the Police Staff College at Bramshill.

In 1981, following the conviction of Peter Sutcliffe in connection with the Yorkshire Ripper series of murders, and having regard to widespread public concern about the limitations of the police investigation, Sir Lawrence was appointed by the Home Secretary to conduct a

formal inquiry into all aspects of the case. In particular, the inquiry was to report the lessons to be learnt from the review of the case and that should be made known to police forces generally. The major findings were reported to Parliament by the Home Secretary in January 1982 and the recommended changes to investigative procedures were adopted throughout the Police Service.

In the final paragraphs of the report, Sir Lawrence identified the importance of the review and its findings:

“My team have been mindful of looking at the Ripper case, sometimes with the benefit of hindsight, so that lessons which might be learned from it can be made known to police forces generally.

“Regretfully, some of these lessons were previously identified at the conclusion of the ‘Black Panther’ case in 1975 but, in light of the Ripper case, quite clearly the Police Service has not learned from them, particularly those relating to the management and control of a multi-force murder investigation.

“Fortunately, there is one tremendous advantage in the aftermath of the Ripper case when compared to the post-trial period of the ‘Black Panther’ case. There is now to hand the findings of an independent professional review team and the lessons for the future have been identified. There is also a clear indication that the Service is anxious to take full note of these lessons for the future.”

Sir Lawrence was able to oversee the implementation of the recommended changes during his subsequent term as Chief Inspector, including the early stages of adoption of the ‘HOLMES’ system in major incident rooms and the training of senior investigating officers at Bramshill.

The annual report for 1983 marked the end of Sir Lawrence’s first year as Chief Inspector. While criminality and crime prevention featured prominently in this report, the ‘new’ element that was to become a recurring theme in Inspectorate reports was the pursuit of the three ‘E’s – efficiency, effectiveness and economy. Home Office Circular 114/83⁹⁷ set the tone and parameters of the drive for economic efficiency and marked the arrival of tough financial challenges to policing – the challenges being to justify expenditure by transparently aligning spending to the delivery of objectives. Inspectors were henceforth:

“... directing their inspections of forces more explicitly towards the identification by chief officers and their senior officers of clearly expressed priorities and realistic objectives with a view to the improved management of manpower and other resources.”

The Home Secretary made it clear that increases in police force establishments would only be granted if he could be satisfied that the existing resources were being used to best advantage. The Inspectorate was asked to provide the evidence of such use and, as part of that scrutiny, to consider the establishment of appropriate performance indicators and associated financial information – this was done. In addition to helping drive efficiency on behalf of the government, however, the Inspectorate also provided a balance by articulating the increased burdens and demands that faced the Police Service:

“As I have indicated, there is much being done within the Service to achieve a better utilisation of resources, but it would be wrong of me not to point to the difficulties which will face Chief Constables arising from the additional responsibilities which have been, or are shortly to be, imposed – the training implications of the new major incident

enquiry system; the additional training requirement following the Scarman report; the implications of the new probationer training package; and, in particular, the need to train all ranks in the wide-ranging provisions of the Police and Criminal Evidence Bill. It is the firm view of the Inspectorate that not only must forces look to the efficiency and effectiveness of their use of resources, but that centrally there must be an acute awareness of the resource implications arising from central initiatives, legislative or otherwise, since there is clearly a point at which, without the provision of additional manpower, it will be impossible both to discharge existing commitments and to develop present strategies.”

In fact, the demands on police forces were to increase substantially and unexpectedly in the following year. The events of 1984 included the miners’ strike, the shooting of Constable Yvonne Fletcher outside the Libyan Peoples’ Bureau in St James’ Square in London and the explosion at the Grand Hotel in Brighton, which resulted in significant loss of life and posed a direct challenge to the security of the government attending the Conservative party conference.

In considering the miners’ dispute, Sir Lawrence outlined the effectiveness of the National Reporting Centre in coordinating the provision of mutual aid between police forces and centrally monitoring and organising the operational response to the policing of the widening dispute. He cited the success of the mutual aid approach in his rejection of renewed consideration of the establishment of a ‘third-tier force’ (like the *Compagnie Républicaine de Sécurité* (CRS) in France) to tackle disorder. He concluded:

“In brief, I believe that the Service met the challenge which confronted it during the miners’ dispute with courage and professionalism. The policing operations clearly indicated the increased effectiveness and efficiency with which forces can now tackle public disorder, whether within their own force areas or in coming to the aid of each other.”

Unfortunately for the Service, their effectiveness was to be tested again almost immediately. As the miners’ dispute subsided, further violent disorder erupted, first in the Handsworth area of Birmingham and subsequently in Brixton and Tottenham in London. The latter disturbances resulted in the death of one police officer, serious injuries to many others, and the first use of firearms against the police in a riot in mainland Britain.

Sir Lawrence became more personally involved in the Police Service response to the Brighton bomb incident when he was appointed by the Home Secretary to head a working group of experts charged with the task of ensuring better security at future political party conferences. The resulting rules of guidance were circulated for the 1985 conference season and were adopted by police forces and by all the main political parties.



Policing disorder

In his last annual report, for 1985, Sir Lawrence took the opportunity to reflect more widely on the underlying causes of the civil disturbances, and in so doing he engaged in a greater degree of social comment than might previously have been the norm for Chief Inspectors' annual reports:

“Often neither the family environment nor the educational system instils any basic sense of discipline into youngsters, who emerge into the adult world already well experienced in challenging authority and defying its rules and conventions... I believe that television in particular is a powerful tool by which attitudes and behaviour are often shaped, whether of criminals, policemen or the population at large.

“I also believe that another important consideration is the so-called ‘liberalisation’ which society has experienced in the past decade and more and, in particular, the growth of pornography, violence and sadism, mainly through the increasing availability of video recordings... In essence, it seems to me that the increasing frequency of serious rape and other gross sexual abuse is stark testimony to the liberalisation which we have allowed to become a feature of our country, and the sooner we get back to standards of behaviour that were a recognised feature of our way of life the better.”

Sir Lawrence's term in office had seen major changes, some for the worse but, in policing terms, most for the better. He retired in March 1987, to be succeeded by Richard (Stanley) Barratt.

Sir Richard (Stanley) Barratt,
CBE, QPM
(April 1987 – March 1990)



Sir Richard served in Birmingham City Police from 1949 to 1965, during which time he also spent periods as Director of the Home Office Crime Prevention Centre at Stafford and was seconded to the Police Research and Development Branch. He joined Cheshire Constabulary as a Superintendent in 1965 and was promoted two years later to Assistant Chief Constable of Manchester City Police, which merged one year later to become the Manchester and Salford Police, in which he served as Assistant Chief Constable and then Deputy Chief Constable. He was appointed as Chief Constable of South Yorkshire Police in 1975 before taking up appointment as an inspector of constabulary in 1978.

As an inspector, Sir Richard chaired a substantial review of regional crime squads and made a number of recommendations which, as he later described it, allowed him to effectively reorganise their structure “more by stealth than confrontation”.

As Chief Inspector, Sir Richard promoted considerable change in the way the Inspectorate went about its business, and re-established the principle of open publication of HMIC reports that set the precedent for subsequent years.

Until the Second World War, reports from the Inspectorate were received by Parliament and then published more widely. During the war and immediately afterwards, this practice ceased and, at the conclusion of a force inspection, the report and the certificate of efficiency would be submitted for the eyes of the Home Secretary and Home Office only. The inspector would also give the Police Committee a verbal briefing and the Chief Constable a debriefing note of the findings.

Sir Richard obtained agreement for ‘open reporting’ and general publication of the inspection results. As Trefor Morris, one of his inspectors, recalled:

“This was a considerable step forward but created some trepidation among Chief Constables and of course a closer scrutiny of the inspection system itself.”

Sir Richard also organised the very first external inspection of the Metropolitan Police since its inauguration in 1829. Such inspection had been recommended by the Royal Commission in 1962 but had not materialised, and even this first inspection was voluntary. It was, however, to set a precedent, and formal statutory inspections commenced a few years later.

Sir Richard’s first annual report covered his predecessor’s last year in office, 1986. It reflected on the welcome reduction in high-profile public disorder, although the new challenge of mass trespass by members of the ‘peace convoy’ taxed the resources and initiative of police forces in the South West. It also registered the importance of the first year of full operation of the provisions of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984:

“... which, together with its accompanying codes of practice, represents one of the most significant pieces of legislation in relation to police procedures since the inception of the modern Police Service.”

It also welcomed the birth of the Crown Prosecution Service, although with a few words of concern:

“I mentioned the advent of the Crown Prosecution Service... Generally, the police welcome the creation of this independent body, which has assumed responsibility for decisions in relation to prosecuting offences in the generality of cases... This development distances the Police Service from the prosecution process and will, hopefully, result in an enhanced public perception of the true police role in judicial proceedings. Nevertheless, it represents a fundamental change which will undoubtedly bring difficulties for police and prosecutor alike but goodwill and understanding on both sides will minimise them.”

The 1987 report continued to reflect the regular issues of crime and disorder but also highlighted issues much closer to home, albeit apparently more mundane: the Inspectorate installed a fully compatible computer system into all regional offices and at Queen Anne’s Gate, its headquarters in London within the Home Office building. While a lay reader might question the importance of this initiative, in fact it promised significant efficiency improvements in the handling of performance data provided by individual forces, a feature of the Inspectorate’s work that was to become increasingly important.

“The Inspectorate is now able, both centrally and regionally, to store, process and present selected but wide-ranging information in ways that are proving helpful in the inspection process. It is also very encouraging that police forces are increasingly using the processed information for their own management purposes.”

This set continuing trends of data handling and performance comparison and the encouragement of local self-assessment that would underpin the inspectors’ work over the next 15 to 20 years. In addition, in 1988 the

Inspectorate appointed a financial adviser to help improve the quality of the financial information available on forces – another trend that has persisted to the present day.

The 1987 report also contained a distinct international flavour, in particular relating to the future development of a common market in Europe from 1992 and the projected opening of the Channel Tunnel in 1993. Sadly, of more pressing relevance was the ferry disaster involving the Herald of Free Enterprise outside Zeebrugge harbour. This incident highlighted in particular the involvement of Kent Constabulary and the impact on casualty bureaux of an estimated 25,000 telephone calls from all over Europe. The Hungerford shootings and the King's Cross fire brought the disaster focus back across the Channel.



King's Cross fire

Public disaster was a theme that spilled over into the last annual report published in Sir Richard's name. The 1988 report followed the previous incidents in Hungerford, Zeebrugge harbour and King's Cross with details of the Clapham rail disaster, the Kegworth air crash and the tragedy at Hillsborough football ground. It seemed that death was all around and the emergency service response was again sorely tested.

Despite the operational challenges to the Police Service, however, Sir Richard, like his predecessor, devoted a substantial part of his final 'review of the year' to a degree of personal social comment. His core message concerned the increasing propensity for commentators to unfairly criticise the police for many of the ills of society:

"Policing is not a true science because it is concerned with human beings and human behaviour which do not conform with predicted patterns and binding principles. Police have to respond to the demands of people and to the manifestations and consequences of their behaviour, much of which stems from factors and influences totally unrelated to police activities.

"In the words of one commentator, 'It is as wrong to blame the police for crime as it is to blame doctors for ill health.' Crime prevention is, nevertheless, an integral part of good policing and many people do perceive a link between some of our social problems, which include crime levels, robbery, drug peddling, street crime, public disorder and the misuse of firearms, and the likelihood of success of policing measures designed to combat such evils...

"... Informed opinion must recognise the usual good as well as the quite properly highly publicised occasional bad. Moreover, at a time when individual responsibility seems at a premium and when policing is being put under increasing pressure to rationalise and strive for greater value for money, care must be taken to ensure that the heavy burden that such pressures create does not undermine morale and lead to good, experienced officers prematurely leaving the Service. The task of policing in modern society is a difficult one. It is important that those who carry it out, and are accountable, should not have to carry the additional burden of unfair or misguided criticism."

Although Sir Richard remained in post throughout 1989, the report was finalised after his departure in March 1990, and therefore published in his successor's name. Interestingly, it was decided to repeat Sir Richard's poignant view on policing not being a 'true science' as a precursor to listing the many examples of activities that served to prove his point, not least the Bradford City football fire disaster and the issues surrounding the Guildford Four and the Birmingham Six.

Nationalisation of the Inspectorate's influence

Undoubtedly the period from 1962 to 1990 shaped the structure, ethos and burgeoning national influence of the modern Inspectorate. The statutory platforms of the Police Acts, the Police and Criminal Evidence Act, the Police and Magistrates' Court Act and others both advanced policing and, directly or indirectly, enhanced the role and importance of the Inspectorate. The advisory role of Chief Inspectors was also well ensconced in the policing and political landscapes, and the value of the inspectors' expertise in addressing difficult problems, on behalf of the government and the Police Service, well evidenced.

In *The handbook of policing*⁹⁸ there is a description of the increasing importance of inspection in what is described as the nationalisation of policing in the late 1980s:

“The HMIC was a key lever via which the Home Office exercised its duty to promote effectiveness and efficiency throughout police forces in England and Wales. During the 1980s the role of the HMIC was substantially enhanced. The inspection process was standardised and strengthened, and younger Chief Constables were seconded to the Inspectorate (along with senior ‘lay’ inspectors from outside the Police Service). HMIC reports were published from 1988 onwards and increasingly monitored the extent to which local forces were following national policy guidelines.”

CHAPTER SEVEN

1990–2006: REFORM AND MODERNISATION

If the period from 1962 to 1990 was epitomised by major statutory change and organisational evolution, within both the Police Service and the Inspectorate, the next two decades saw an acceleration in the pace of such reform and something much more like revolution. By the turn of the century, the police reform programme was gathering pace within the wider agenda of public sector reform, and, by 2006, the Inspectorate would again be leading the charge towards fewer, larger forces and fundamental modernisation of staffing, organisation and effectiveness.

The changing policing landscape

The image of British policing had suffered considerably during the disorder and miners' strike of the 1980s. The predominant style of policing appeared to have moved inexorably away from the approachable, helmeted 'bobby on the beat' to snatch squads, NATO helmets and drawn truncheons. Meanwhile, internally,

a succession of new legislation and powers during the same period brought with it associated training requirements, formalised checks and balances, programmes of introspective change, review, reorganisation and a burgeoning bureaucracy.

There was also further unwanted focus on the Police Service through the Court of Appeal's decision which led to the release of the Guildford Four, in addition to the issues surrounding the Birmingham Six and the ongoing inquiry into the West Midlands Police serious crime squad.

Policing was becoming ever more complex and forces were fighting against declining public support at the same time as more and more officers were being taken away from front-line policing to cope with organisational responsibilities and reviews. Action was needed to tackle both the image and reality of policing.



The changing image of policing in the 1980s

Forces embarked on programmes to reform both practice and image, such as the Metropolitan Police's Plus Programme, and the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) released a national *Strategic policy document* (1990), containing a 'statement of common purpose and values'. The main thrust of much of this activity was to sell the police as a 'service' rather than a 'force'. There was also a further concerted push to involve communities and statutory agencies in tackling crime and contributing to partnership approaches to crime prevention, culminating in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, which placed a statutory duty on Chief Constables, local authorities and other agencies to formulate and implement a strategy for multi-agency crime prevention. Police managers espoused a largely service-based, 'consumerist' view of policing⁹⁹ in the early 1990s and this ethos appeared to hold sway until the end of the century.

Another key front for police managers attempting to re-establish community confidence during this period was within minority communities. Significant action had been taken during the decade following the riots in Brixton, Toxteth and elsewhere and after publication of the Scarman report. It was believed that the report "was the trigger for a re-orientation of policing on a wide front. Indeed, by the late 1980s [Scarman's] ideas had become the predominant conception of policing philosophy amongst Chief Constables."¹⁰⁰ Then came the tragic death of Stephen Lawrence in April 1993 to challenge just how much progress had been made.

By the turn of the century, consumerism had evolved into a more citizen-focused approach within the wider context of public sector reform, seeking to provide the public with:

- a national framework of standards and accountability;
- devolution of power to a local level;
- better rewards for front-line staff; and
- greater choice for customers.

The details of the police reform programme emerged from high-level discussions between the tripartite partners and other key stakeholders at Lancaster House in London in 2000 and were encapsulated in the document entitled *Policing a new century: A blueprint for reform 2001*. That the government was prepared to be radical was there for all to see in the foreword from the Home Secretary David Blunkett:

"A new approach is needed from all of us, from Ministers to those we represent, from the beat constable to the Chief Constable, and from Parliament, which should exert new influence on both outcome measures and sentencing, through to the judiciary who apply and uphold the law. That is the spirit in which we approach this White Paper. Outdated and outmoded attitudes, regulations and procedures should be swept away. We need to work together to find answers."

The problems to be addressed were identified, in brief, as the following:

- Crime is still too high.
- Fear of crime is high.
- The performance of the criminal justice system needs improving.
- Persistent offenders need to be targeted.
- Detection and conviction rates need to be improved.
- Police performance is too variable.
- Public confidence needs reinforcing.

The work of the Inspectorate

The high-profile role of the Inspectorate, and in particular the Chief Inspector's role in directing and targeting its work, was increasingly evident in the late 1980s and early 1990s. While policing was to undergo a revolution, HMIC not only would need to keep pace but, in the increasingly influential role of change-agents, would be expected to get ahead of the game.

The Chief Inspectors of Constabulary

Sir John Woodcock, CBE,
CStJ, QPM
(April 1990 – May 1993)



Sir John Woodcock's policing career started as a Cadet in the Lancashire Constabulary in 1947. He served in the Army Special Investigation Branch from 1950 to 1952 before rejoining Lancashire Constabulary as a Constable. Between 1965 and 1968, he served as a Superintendent and then Chief Superintendent in Bedfordshire and Luton Constabulary, before being promoted to Assistant Chief Constable, and later Deputy Chief Constable, in Gwent. He then transferred to the larger Devon and Cornwall Constabulary in 1974 as Deputy Chief Constable, before being appointed as Chief Constable in North Yorkshire in 1978. In 1979 he was appointed as Chief Constable in South Wales and he joined the Inspectorate in 1983, as the inspector for Wales and the Midlands.

As an inspector of constabulary, Sir John undertook the first official inspection of the Metropolitan Police, having previously represented the Inspectorate on the small working group convened to debate the merits of carrying out such an inspection. The Metropolitan Police position had been that they had their own inspectorate and hence further scrutiny was unnecessary. HMIC was confident that external inspection would add rigour, challenge and considerable value to service improvement – and so it proved.

In his annual report for 1990, Sir John reiterated the central role of the Inspectorate in promoting 'service excellence' and emphasised the importance of value-for-money initiatives, good performance management and a healthy exchange of good practice. This set the scene for a more comprehensive assessment, in his 1991 report, of the issues that he felt would prove most important in the coming decade. Having confirmed his support for the statement of common purpose and values, launched the previous year, he identified three indicators by which he felt the Police Service would be judged in the 1990s:

"The first is measurement; the police must take part in the setting of an agreed system of standards for the delivery of service and then ensure that they are adhered to, with local results available for easy public scrutiny. These must particularly relate to the level of satisfaction experienced by direct customers of police services.

"The second is the demonstration of flexibility in the approach to the management of the Service. I believe that parts of the present rank structure are inappropriate for the late 20th century; I am certain that many of the current regulations, particularly as they relate to shift systems, inhibit police officers from performing to the best of their ability...

“The third challenge, however, is the most difficult... quality of service has to be taken to all of the workforce... Each member of every police force, sworn and civilian, has to be imbued with a passion for the customer of his or her service, as an individual... This is a cultural change of very considerable magnitude; a number of forces and many, many police officers are, however, already far down this road.”

In addition to this emphasis on quality of service and structural issues, Sir John also used his 1991 report to highlight the sheer magnitude of the operational demands placed on police forces through the highly innovative step of publishing the results of a unique survey of the demands on just one “very ordinary night” – a survey covering the eight-hour period from 8pm on a Friday night to 4am on the Saturday morning.¹⁰¹ His underlying point was that much of what the Police Service had to deal with remained wholly invisible to the general public.



General policing

Public order snapshot

It was an ordinary winter's night, relatively mild for the time of year and uneventful as far as the general public and the media were concerned. In fact, as the public sat down to their breakfast that Saturday morning they would have had no idea what the Police Service had been doing on their behalf during the previous night.

During this eight-hour period, in fact, police officers responded to 20,932 separate incidents, that is 43 incidents every minute. Of these, 6,212 incidents (approximately 30%) were the result of 999 emergency calls that required an immediate response. There were four murders, seven rapes and 502 serious and indecent assaults, together with 112 cases of arson and 1,264 incidents of criminal damage to property. Robbery, burglary and car crime amounted to a further 3,045 separate incidents. There were 108 road traffic collisions involving personal injury, which included six fatalities. Minor assaults and drink-drive offences accounted for 1,548 incidents, and 9,830 (47%) of the total incidents represented police attendance to matters not specifically identified but requiring advice and assistance.

In addition, there were 4,458 incidents of public disorder, ranging from 59 incidents of violent disorder and affray to almost 3,000 general disturbances in the street. As a consequence of this, 759 people were arrested, 30% of the total number arrested during the eight-hour period.

One of the most disturbing facts arising out of this survey is that, in this one short period, 54 police officers were assaulted while in the execution of their duty. In one area, three

continued overleaf

officers were injured while arresting a man for stabbing two other youths. In two different parts of the country, incidents occurred involving lone officers attempting to deal with an individual for a minor breach of the peace and suddenly being surrounded by threatening crowds. In both cases, only the immediate assistance of other officers prevented public disorder. Another force had to deal with the potential public disorder from a pay party attended by over 3,000 young people. This incident was resolved smoothly, but with 61 arrests for drug offences.

This is the nature of the incidents that ordinary police officers deal with on a day-to-day basis. None of them merited 'shock horror' headlines in a national newspaper. A survey such as this reveals the reality of the work that citizens expect police officers, often including the youngest and most inexperienced among them, to perform each time they don their uniforms.

Also in his 1991 annual report, Sir John reflected on what he described as probably "the most difficult year in the recent history of the Police Service of England and Wales", and drew particular attention to the decrease in levels of public trust, exacerbated by cases such as the Birmingham Six, Guildford Four and Tottenham Three. Public trust and officer integrity were subjects that he returned to throughout his period in office, not least in a much publicised speech to the International Police Exhibition and Conference in October 1992, when he gave his views on 'noble cause corruption' in a joint presentation with Sir Peter Imbert, Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police:

"The police working environment is one in which some procedures compete with others – the impetus of investigation versus the rights of suspects – so

that crime control is in conflict with due process. And, from the very beginning of a police officer's career, he or she finds that the demands of the tasks in front of him or her tend to overwhelm the procedures laid down to deal with them. There is a constant sense of urgency in the police world, which often leads to corner-cutting.

"... the working culture of the Police Service is shot through with corner-cutting and with expediency. Moreover, I am not talking only about the great causes célèbres which have dogged recent times. The police process hundreds of thousands of cases a year and I believe that a considerable number of them would, upon the closest possible examination, be found to be affected by some degree of expedient action."

The title of the subsequent four-page *Police Review* article¹⁰² was 'Why we need a revolution' and set out Sir John's arguments in full. He was adamant that the issue was not simply one of 'rotten apples' but of a Service that required wholesale radical change in itself and in its position within the criminal justice system.

The theme of his 1992 annual report was 'continuity amid change'. The Police Service was braced for the outcomes of the Sheehy Inquiry into police responsibilities and rewards, the Royal Commission on Criminal Justice and a White Paper preceding a Police Bill. The report concentrated on four strategic issues that the Inspectorate perceived as being critical to the Service: first, the continuation of the quality of service initiative, including the adoption of a national statement of ethical principles; second, changes to the criminal investigation process, to tackle the propensity to 'noble cause corruption'; third, revisions to the structure and management of forces, not least as a result of the Sheehy proposals; and last, equal opportunities within the Police Service. Sir John's view of the Inspectorate's role in these areas was clear:

“The Police Service is ripe for change and there is a chance that many old structures will be swept away. The role of the Inspectorate has grown in recent years, and could be enhanced in the context of the reforms currently being developed by the Home Secretary. The Inspectorate is well placed to bring to bear its energy and commitment to quality of service so that the very necessary changes are accomplished smoothly and as expeditiously as possible.”

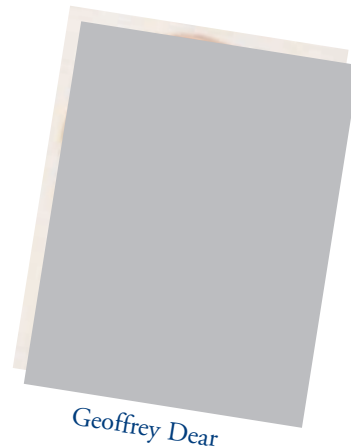
Sir John believed that the Inspectorate should be more than simply a facilitator of change or a commentator on it; he saw opportunities to drive improvements, act as a catalyst for reform of outdated practices, and provide an independent challenge to all elements of the tripartite partnership. He often said of the Inspectorate’s unique position:

“HMIC is in the Home Office but not of it; of the Police Service but not in it.”

In taking this stance, and in applying the Inspectorate’s attention to the four strategic challenges he had previously identified, the 1992 report highlighted HMIC’s positive contributions to: establishing a performance management regime to underpin the quality of service initiative; issuing guidance to Chief Constables on the use of specialist investigation squads; further guidance to forces on expectations for their move to a basic command unit structure; and publication of detailed information on the gender and ethnicity of police officers and police staff.

From its position as an impartial, honest broker, on occasion the Inspectorate was also able to take a stance that might not find favour with all key stakeholders. One such instance was in June 1992, when HM Inspector of Constabulary Geoffrey Dear declined to grant Derbyshire Constabulary a certificate of efficiency. This was unheard of in modern times and produced a high-profile debate on the perceived under-

resourcing of the force over a number of years by the local authority. Following publication of the Inspectorate’s report, all parties met and agreed an appropriate action plan to tackle both the operational resourcing and necessary repairs to the neglected infrastructure of the force.



The 1992 report opened by suggesting that it had been a relatively quiet year, but the legacy of the issues progressed and in train was to be significant for the Inspectorate and the Police Service. Reflecting on his impending retirement from the Inspectorate, Sir John took the opportunity to voice three concerns for the future of the Service:

*“The first cause for concern is that the very **quantity of change** in the next few years will be difficult for police officers and police managers. There is a danger that a focus on **processes** may divert the Service from its **purposes**...*

*“My second concern is that the opportunity should be taken, during the consideration of these many changes, to obtain widespread **agreement as to the role of the Police Service**. If pressures on public finances continue to mount, there is a considerable danger that the Police Service will be forced into giving priority to the delivery of that which is easily measurable, so that aspects of quality, at the present time uncountable, may be squeezed out. The Service needs to retain an emphasis on **values** as well as on **value**...*

“Lastly, I am concerned with assaults. There were about 18,500 assaults on the police in 1992, including a number of serious assaults and fatalities. There must come a point where such assaults will start to change the basic contract between patrolling constables and their community.”

Despite these three profound concerns, he also had what he described as one great satisfaction, namely the quality of police personnel:

*“Set against these challenges, lies one opportunity greater than all of these concerns: **the outstanding quality of the personnel of the Police Service...** I know that we have a workforce capable of splendid achievement and seeking direction as to how their efforts should best be channelled for the sake of the whole community.”*

Sir Trefor Morris, CBE, QPM (June 1993 – September 1996)



In 1955 Sir Trefor Morris joined Manchester City Police, which merged into Manchester and Salford Police in 1968 and then emerged as Greater Manchester Police in 1974. He gained a wide operational experience in the uniform and traffic divisions, but mostly in the criminal investigation department (specialising in fraud investigation), and rose to Assistant Chief Constable. In December 1979 he moved to Hertfordshire as Deputy Chief Constable and then became Chief Constable in 1984. In January 1990 he was appointed as an inspector

of constabulary for the Eastern region and the Metropolitan Police. In June 1993 he was appointed as Chief Inspector.

Sir Trefor served as an inspector under two Chief Inspectors, Sir Richard Barratt and Sir John Woodcock. He strongly supported the move commenced under Sir Richard to make Inspectorate reports public again:

“Sir Richard had gained agreement for ‘open reporting’ of the inspection with general publication. This was a considerable step forward and created some trepidation among Chief Constables and of course a closer scrutiny of the inspection system itself. Added to this was an external inspection of the Metropolitan Police, which had not taken place from the inauguration of that Service in 1829. Sir John Woodcock took over as Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Constabulary in April 1990 and brought his considerable energy to bear on bringing about other changes as well as ensuring the smooth operation of the new ‘open’ system.”

Inspectors also took on active responsibilities within the Home Office, and as an inspector Sir Trefor was given the remit for ‘value for money’ within the Police Service and for prompting the ‘quality of service’ initiative, which included the adoption by the entire Service of the agreed statement of common purpose. In addition, he retained his long attachment to information technology matters and, by the early 1990s, was heavily involved in the proposals for new systems of digital communications, upgrading the Police National Computer (PNC) and a national system for fingerprints.

He took over as Chief Inspector from Sir John in June 1993, at a busy time for the Police Service. The summer produced a White Paper on police reform, the report of the Royal Commission on Criminal Justice, and the report from the inquiry committee led by Sir Patrick

Sheehy. The Sheehy report met with a great deal of opposition and resentment from the police, but the newly appointed Home Secretary, Michael Howard, managed to put together a package of reforms that would lead to legislation. The relationship between the Home Office and the Police Service had become very strained, a situation that presented a challenge to the Inspectorate. However, with diplomacy, persuasion and advice, things improved.

By now the system of open reporting on the police had been accepted and the Inspectorate had a report ‘template’ that included more objective information on all the operational areas within a particular police force. This meant that comparisons could be made, which in turn led to the development of performance indicators. Although these had been introduced under his predecessor, indicators were first published in Sir Trefor’s annual report.¹⁰³ He later described the situation:

“This initiative attracted a deal of odium, particularly from those who received unfavourable comparison, but the introduction of indicators did tend to concentrate effort towards nationally agreed objectives.”

Following a less than complimentary review in *Police*¹⁰⁴ magazine on the use of these statistics, Sir Trefor responded in some detail in the subsequent issue (March 1996), highlighting the value of including the statistics along with an explanation of their context in the Inspectorate’s annual reports:

“When the opportunity fell to me to publish the key performance indicators for the first time, I seized it. Unlike others, I could put a proper explanation in my annual report that would hopefully put them in context and demonstrate to the media that you couldn’t look in a simple way at the outcomes in the league table and decide what police performance was. What performance indicators do is enable the

public, but certainly the Inspectorate, to pose questions rather than provide answers.”

Sir Trefor was also disappointed that, in highlighting concerns about the use of statistics more generally, his detractors missed the underlying message that police performance had made a number of significant advances. This was a disappointment that would be shared by his successors, for whom the collection, analysis and use of performance information would become a key aspect of their work in the coming years and would provide a core element in the assessment of forces (and, subsequently, of basic command units). Performance information was therefore an area of contention and was frequently challenged, but, equally, it had influence and importance.

There were also other significant changes to the Inspectorate in this period. Its size increased – a new section dealing with the analysis of performance statistics was created and the number of assistant inspectors grew to three – and, as an entirely new concept, two full-time inspectors from non-police backgrounds were appointed. Often termed ‘lay inspectors’, Dr Anthony Williams and Peter Hobbs were both from distinguished career backgrounds and had been selected from an enormous pool of applicants. They were to work alongside the regional inspectors, with a remit extending over the whole country.



The Home Secretary presents HMI warrants
(courtesy of NI Syndication, Times House)

As he set out in the official press release, Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, viewed these appointments as supporting the government's citizen's charter commitments while broadening the expertise within the Inspectorate:

“This is a forward-looking step which is in line with our proposals to strengthen the Inspectorate and reinforce its ability to act as an independent, open and objective assessor of the quality of policing. We are broadening its professional base with inspectors who do not come from the Police Service. They are two high-calibre individuals who will bring new skills to the Inspectorate.”

The availability of wider expertise supported the new inspection regime (see details in Chapter Eight), which included ‘thematic’ inspections; these were led by one of the regional inspectors but also involved ‘lay’ and assistant inspectors and others, including officers attached from forces. The idea was to compare force practices in a particular operational or administrative area, identify strengths and weaknesses with potential relevance to the whole Police Service, and then develop a ‘best practice’ model.

There were also significant structural changes within the Police Service, as highlighted in the annual report for 1994/95.¹⁰⁵ During the period covered by the report, most forces had de-layered their management structures and had instituted organisational changes broadly in line with the basic command unit model advocated by the Audit Commission¹⁰⁶ and endorsed by the Inspectorate. In addition, many forces had reduced the number of managers with the intention of increasing the number of constables, or at least making efficiency cost savings. Sir Trefor pointed out the potential anomalies involved in greater devolution of responsibilities:

“One major benefit expected to result from streamlined management structures was the reallocation of resources to provide more officers at constable level... Some forces have held staffing levels

below the old establishment level in order to compensate for resourcing pressures elsewhere... Paradoxically, the devolution of responsibility can result in additional costs which include:

- *permanent costs of providing the necessary infrastructure – for example, budgetary, IT and administrative support: and*
- *costs associated with change – for example, training.*

“This is not always offset fully by central savings, given the need to retain some residual headquarters functions. Thus the smaller the size of devolved units, the higher the comparative on-costs of supporting the structure.”

On the purely operational front, during Sir Trefor's tenure as Chief Inspector the ever-increasing volume of crime was a cause of great concern to the Inspectorate, the Police Service and, not least, to Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, and David MacLean, the Minister for Police. The Inspectorate conducted a thematic inspection, the Audit Commission carried out a parallel exercise,¹⁰⁷ and the results were combined with work from the ACPO Crime Committee to produce a manual, setting out frameworks for the investigation and detection of crime.

The manual was a significant step forward and collected some innovative policing initiatives from across the country, which were then promulgated by the Inspectorate and ACPO. There were major successes in a number of forces (for example Northumbria) that used people and technology to great effect. Sir Trefor summed up the impact of the initiative and the Inspectorate's role:

“I am convinced that it was this proactive, determined effort eventually adopted across the board which led to a genuine reduction in volume crime. I can think of no better achievement than reducing the number of victims of crime. And it has to be said the Inspectorate was seen as an active participant and influence on positively improving policing.”

Sir David O’Dowd, CBE, OStJ,
QPM, DL, Dip Soc, BA, MSc,
DSc (Hon), CCMI
(September 1996 – December 2001)



Sir David O’Dowd served in Leicester City Police from 1961 to 1977, including a period as Detective Chief Inspector. He transferred to West Midlands Police in 1977 on promotion to Superintendent then served as Assistant Chief Constable in Northamptonshire Police from 1982 to 1984, before serving two years in the Metropolitan Police as Deputy Assistant Commissioner. In 1986, he was appointed as Chief Constable of Northamptonshire, where he remained until his appointment as an inspector of constabulary with responsibility for London and the Eastern region in 1993. Immediately prior to joining HMIC, Sir David held the post of Director of the Police National Assessment Centre.

Sir David took over as Chief Inspector in September 1996. One of his first acts in the new role was to carry out a comprehensive consultation exercise with every chief officer on the role of the Inspectorate. He used the results of this exercise to inform the compilation of a long-term strategy for the Inspectorate,

published in April 1997, which focused on three main areas:

- ensuring consistency of approach;
- responding to the changing nature of policing; and
- improving the effectiveness of the inspection and advisory functions.

Sir David’s consultative approach was also extended to his relationships with other key stakeholders:

“I place considerable importance on working closely with all those who have a part to play in improving the efficiency and effectiveness of police forces. Much can be achieved through discussion with chief officers rather than relying entirely on recommendations in our reports. The Inspectorate has also built very constructive relationships both with individual police authorities and the Association of Police Authorities. We will continue to work closely with the Audit Commission.”

His first annual report also set out clearly his concerns regarding the level of financial provision to policing and the need for forces to constantly review and improve working practices to ensure efficient and effective delivery of services. This would be a central theme to his tenure and underpinned later work on tackling bureaucracy within the Service. It also informed the Inspectorate’s involvement in the inspection of best value reviews carried out in forces by police authorities.¹⁰⁸

Sir David’s 1997/98 report again spelled out the core importance of finance to policing, and identified the threats and opportunities presented by a hardening governmental approach to spending and achieving value for money:

“In my report last year, I warned of the challenge faced by the Service against a background of impending resource pressures, not least in the funding of technological advance. The extent of that challenge is now becoming much more apparent with most, if not all, important public services under considerable financial constraint. The implications for forces of the government’s comprehensive spending review, combined with the best value initiative, have yet to be fully clarified. It is, however, certain that a challenging framework will evolve within which forces will have to demonstrate improvements in efficiency more clearly than ever before. The key test will not be the total number of police officers that a force is able to employ, but the ability to maintain front-line capability and high levels of performance across the board.”

As predicted, the comprehensive spending review and the balance between cost and effectiveness became standard features and core elements in police funding from that date forward. By the time of the 1998/99 report, there was a clear template for achieving cost efficiencies: all forces had been given responsibility to achieve an auditable 2% efficiency gain year on year, to be ploughed back into front-line policing, and there were plans to establish best value reviews of all policing services from 2000, an area that was to provide a significant strand of inspection work over the next five years.

As part of the wider reflection on value for money, Sir David identified training provision as an important area of police spending that apparently offered genuine opportunities for economies of scale but had so far been subject to only limited national scrutiny. Training was believed to consume around £500,000 annually, of which just £40,000 related to national provision, so there was clear potential for collaborative initiatives and the likelihood of significant savings. In 1997, Sir David commissioned a thematic inspection to evaluate

the effectiveness of police training and to consider how improvements might be made. This work was coordinated with a Home Office review of national police training at Bramshill and an inquiry by the Home Affairs Committee into training and recruitment. The Inspectorate’s interest in driving up standards in training was to become a continuing theme for successive Chief Inspectors, and led to the appointment in 2000 of a non-police inspector, Robin Field-Smith, to specifically concentrate on training issues, both nationally and within individual forces.



Robin Field-Smith

A further area that was to emerge as a continuing theme for the Inspectorate was race and diversity. A thematic report in 1995, entitled *Developing diversity in the Police Service*, had flagged the importance of achieving a diverse workforce both in terms of operational effectiveness and in meeting the needs of increasingly mixed communities. Following the tragic death of Stephen Lawrence in 1993, a further thematic inspection was carried out, producing the 1997 report *Winning the race: Policing plural communities*. Despite all the good practice advice in these reports, Sir David reflected a wider disappointment at the persisting problems:

“It was therefore professionally disappointing for the Service to absorb day to day the evidence to the

Macpherson Inquiry into the tragic death of Stephen Lawrence. The hard-hitting report subsequently published should have come as no surprise to the wider Service. Much of the impact of that report and its recommendations reflected the findings of the HMIC thematic inspection of community and race relations (Winning the race, 1997). It was doubly disappointing therefore that such little progress had been made when HMIC conducted a follow-up inspection to Winning the race. Many of the lessons of Macpherson were already there to learn.”

In the event, between 1997 and 2001 the Inspectorate conducted three *Winning the race* thematic inspections – an unprecedented focus of attention reflecting the significance of the subject. Regional inspector Dan Crompton was asked to take the lead for the Inspectorate in this area of work and, in 2000, two specialist, non-police assistant inspectors, Maqsood Ahmad and Mike Franklin, were employed to provide the expertise and challenge that Sir David felt the Inspectorate and the Service required. Their appointment fulfilled one of the recommendations of the Macpherson report but Sir David made the appointments because he wanted to see a genuine step change in the Police Service, assisted and encouraged by the Inspectorate. In his 1999/2000 report he said:



Stephen Lawrence

“The tragic death of Stephen Lawrence has undoubtedly provided a catalyst for change. His lasting memorial will be a Police Service that more effectively enjoys the shared confidence of all the people it serves.”



Kate Flannery

To complete his re-shaping of the Inspectorate’s ‘top team’, Sir David also acquired on secondment a leading member of the Audit Commission, Kate Flannery, to work as an assistant inspector within HMIC to design a programme of inspections of basic command units (BCUs). As he explained in his 1999/2000 report:

“It has become increasingly clear that commanders of police divisions have a crucial role to play in the success or failure of front-line policing. Within different BCUs there can be huge variations in performance and it is apparent that good leadership at superintendent level plays a key role in delivering results.”

In 2001, a five-year programme began that was to see every one of the more than 300 basic command units subject to a rigorous inspection that focused directly on leadership and performance. Experienced basic command unit commanders were positioned at the heart of the inspection teams, providing peer assessment of individuals and also collating best practice for wider dissemination. This programme of inspections was undoubtedly one of the real ‘jewels in the Inspectorate’s crown’ in the coming

years; it was highly and enthusiastically acclaimed by police chiefs, police authorities, the Home Office and, perhaps most tellingly, by those commanders who were subject to inspection and therefore learnt most from the process. The methodology, as amended during the programme, was published in the *Going local* report¹⁰⁹ and still provides, with appropriate amendments, a valuable self-assessment resource for chief officers and commanders.

The importance of the Inspectorate's role in developing leadership in the Police Service was recognised when the Home Secretary asked Sir David to chair the Police Leadership Development Board and the Senior Appointments Panel. The Board set about consolidating best practice in terms of police leadership and commissioned several key pieces of developmental work, including: a review of the strategic command course and the extended interview process; an examination of leadership expectations and requirements below chief officer level; and an analysis of the relative merits of the more traditional and directive 'transactional leadership' versus the more developmental and inclusive 'transformational leadership'¹¹⁰ within policing.

In fact, in his 2000/01 report, Sir David identified leadership as one of four key recurring strands of Inspectorate work during his tenure. The other strands were integrity, productive partnerships and nurturing public confidence. In addressing integrity, the 1999 thematic report *Police integrity* had a significant impact on how the police handle public complaints, and also acted as a catalyst in reorganising the processes for dealing with potentially corrupt staff. Regarding productive partnerships, Sir David pointed to the opportunities presented under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, which established localised multi-agency partnerships, and the Inspectorate's thematic report entitled *Beating crime* (1998) provided timely advice on good practice. In terms

of public confidence, in addition to the *Winning the race* trilogy, the Inspectorate's report on public reassurance through visibility and accessibility – *Open all hours* (2001) – proved a seminal point in the development of more community-focused policing options.

In his last annual report, for 2000/01, Sir David reflected on his five-year tenure as Chief Inspector, the problems of policing, the contribution made by the Inspectorate and how he saw the future:

“Throughout, HMIC’s strategic thrust has been to assist the Service to meet emerging challenges, through realising continuous improvement in performance as well as delivering the right service, at the right time, in the right way, through an intense and incisive programme of force and thematic inspections. Individually the twenty thematic inspection reports, for example, have provided specific remedies in discrete areas of policing and its management: collectively they have proved a catalyst for improvement in overall policing performance...”

“The best predictor of future improvement through change is the response to the challenges of change in the recent past. Forces and HMIC have both demonstrated an ability to embrace these challenges as opportunities to improve the quality and relevance of their respective services. I am confident that the Service is willing and able to maximise the benefits that further developmental change will offer. I am equally confident that HMIC is well placed to play its full part in assisting the Service through the forthcoming demands of the police reform agenda.”

Sir David retired from his post as Chief Inspector in December 2001 but continued working at the Home Office, leading a task force to address the age-old, but still deteriorating, problem of unnecessary police bureaucracy, following a report from the Inspectorate and a study by consultants earlier in the year.

Sir Keith Povey, QPM, LLD (Hon),
BA (Law), CCMI
(January 2002 – January 2005)



Sir Keith Povey joined Sheffield Police in 1962, rising to the rank of Chief Superintendent of South Yorkshire Police. While an Inspector, he was awarded a full-time scholarship at Sheffield University, gaining a first-class honours degree in law in 1980. In 1984, he was promoted to Chief Superintendent and appointed as staff officer to Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary at the Home Office. He was appointed as Assistant Chief Constable of Humberside Police in February 1986, moving to Northamptonshire as Deputy Chief Constable in May 1990. He was appointed as Chief Constable of Leicestershire Constabulary in May 1993.

Sir Keith was Vice Chairman of ACPO's General Purposes Committee and Chairman of the Crime Prevention Subcommittee. He was also one of four Chief Constable advisers to the Audit Commission, chairing the working group that would produce the national document *Tackling patrol effectively*. He was appointed as an inspector of constabulary in June 1997, having a portfolio of responsibilities for community safety, public order, patrol and leadership. In 2001, he led the thematic inspection *Open all hours*, which provided a comprehensive examination of how to achieve

public reassurance through improved visibility, accessibility and police officers' local knowledge.

He was appointed as Chief Inspector of Constabulary on 1 January 2002, and found the national policing landscape once more subject to major change and upheaval. As he reflected:

"My appointment as Chief HMI in January 2002 coincided with the then Home Secretary, David Blunkett, embarking on what he described as 'the most radical period of police reform for a century'. The key words in this clarion call were 'radical' and 'reform'. I was to learn very early that if an initiative was not radical then it must be traditional – and traditional was bad, radical was good!"

The Police Reform Act 2002 and the government White Paper *Policing a new century: A blueprint for reform* set a proposed agenda for the Police Service for the next ten years. The government set out its clear intention to improve police performance, deliver real benefits in crime and disorder reduction, increase detection rates, promote safer communities and enhance public confidence.

Sir Keith viewed many of the reform proposals as excellent, in particular those designed to dramatically improve policing, increase police numbers, and drive up performance. Others he believed were more questionable, for example the wide extension of the Home Secretary's powers of intervention, the introduction of the Police Standards Unit, and the centralisation of many police functions. It took many months and much robust discussion to bring some clarity to the confusing overlap of roles between the Inspectorate and the 'new kid on the block', the Police Standards Unit. The emphasis on performance also resulted in a massive central collection of statistics. This wealth of excellent, timely and relevant information enabled senior

civil servants, and indeed Ministers, to pour over crime figures and delve into the minutiae of unexplained peaks and troughs. It was left to the Inspectorate to put much of the statistics into context, ensuring sensible inaction where necessary.

A key component of the complementary working of the Inspectorate and the Police Standards Unit was to be the baseline assessment methodology, introduced by HMIC in 2003. Inspector Kate Flannery led the development of this new format for evidence-led, validated self-assessment; it was designed to cover the whole police landscape, and to mirror and complement the policing performance assessment framework, which was being developed by the tripartite partners, with Inspectorate support. Baseline assessment heralded an era of greater transparency for force performance in each of the individual areas subject to assessment, not least via the annual award of grades – excellent, good, fair or poor – for each area.

In addition to performance assessment, a number of the Inspectorate's traditional areas of core focus resurfaced during Sir Keith's period in office. In the spring of 2001, violent community disorder erupted in Bradford (twice), Burnley and Oldham, as well as less serious disorder in a number of other towns. This was some of the

worst disorder in 20 years, and in just the four main incidents over 400 police officers were injured and damage was caused with an estimated value of £9 million. Inspectors and assistant inspectors were prominent within the groups established to examine the issues that emerged and the action taken.

The importance of the Inspectorate's role in developing leadership in the Police Service was re-emphasised in the work of the Police Leadership Development Board and the Senior Appointments Panel. The Board supported and influenced the redesign of the strategic command course for aspiring chief officers, the development of a national careers advisory service, and the introduction of a modular leadership training course for more junior ranks. Through the Senior Appointments Panel, Sir Keith removed the anomaly of assistant chief constables being considered for direct promotion to Chief Constable – a hangover from the Sheehy-inspired temporary removal of the deputy chief constable rank. He also agreed to inspectors taking on the role of appraising Chief Constables, a precursor to the controversial introduction of performance-related bonuses.

By the time of Sir Keith's annual report for 2002/03, he was able to report substantial progress in implementing the first stages of police reform:

“The National Intelligence Model has been adopted by all forces, the National Centre for Policing Excellence has been set up, the police family has embraced the new concept of community support officers and their useful contribution to crime reduction and public reassurance, and the priorities of the National Policing Plan are firmly embedded in local policing plans.”



Burnley disorders

Sir Keith regarded the strength of the Inspectorate throughout his period as Chief Inspector as providing an objective and professional assessment of many policing events and acting as a gentle constraint on the overenthusiastic exercise of the new powers mentioned earlier. For example, the Inspectorate was explicitly identified as the gatekeeper in the procedures established to consider statutory intervention in police forces, as an Inspectorate report of inefficiency or ineffectiveness at force, basic command unit or functional level would provide the trigger for action. Sir Keith overtly declared his earnest intention to avoid triggering those intervention powers if at all possible – rather, he intended to work with forces to sustain and improve performance in those areas where concern was expressed. Despite this position, he also made it abundantly clear that he would not hesitate to trigger intervention where continual underperformance required it.

He also used his position as senior adviser to the Home Secretary to challenge proposals for major changes to the Inspectorate itself, which he felt would be to the detriment of policing generally:

“Perhaps the most radical proposal affecting HMIC during my tenure was to merge the five Criminal Justice Inspectorates (Prison, Probation, Courts, CPS [Crown Prosecution Service] and HMIC) into one. The case for this was never properly articulated and was championed more by senior civil servants and political advisers than by David Blunkett. I spent two years robustly resisting this ill-thought-out scheme and at one stage had actually persuaded the Home Secretary to leave HMIC intact as our demise could expose his office unnecessarily. Unfortunately, as my retirement approached, pressures from outside the Home Office were mounting in favour of the original proposal.”

A key plank of Sir Keith’s argument against the proposed radical change to the Inspectorate was

that the proposed alternative would threaten the unique relationship of trust and respect enjoyed with all three partners in the tripartite arrangement. Whenever a particularly sensitive or difficult issue surfaced, the Inspectorate was able to address it from a position of impartiality and credibility.

A clear example of the Inspectorate’s worth in this regard was provided in 2003 following the Soham murders, where school caretaker Ian Huntley murdered Jessica Chapman and Holly Wells. While Huntley and his girlfriend were arrested and convicted of offences connected to the murders, the case revealed serious concerns over its handling by the two police forces involved, namely Cambridgeshire and Humberside. There were concerns over the operational response by Cambridgeshire Constabulary to the initial reports of the missing girls, and, in parallel, it appeared that there had been a catastrophic breakdown in the handling and sharing of intelligence concerning Ian Huntley, which involved Humberside Police.

Sir Keith was asked by the Home Secretary to examine both issues as a matter of urgency. Inspector Sir Ronnie Flanagan addressed the operational response while Assistant Inspector Peter Todd looked at the intelligence-handling and disclosure issues. Separate reports were compiled and submitted to the Home Secretary. Each aspect under scrutiny was to prove highly relevant to the future shape and approach of police forces.

The examination of the operational response uncovered a situation that could be said to reflect both the best and worst in police responses to major or critical incidents. Once the right staff, with the appropriate skills and experience, were in place and focused on the case, the operational handling of these murders was exemplary. Unfortunately, in the initial

stages, when the force was dealing with two apparently missing children, it allocated insufficient resources, and in particular insufficient specialist or strategic knowledge and experience. It was arguably a typical small-force response to an escalating serious incident – under-resourced and lacking key staff with relevant experience. The challenge faced by small forces in responding to critical incidents and the lack of local expertise were to become key elements in later proposals for the strategic merger of police forces.

If anything, the failures in the exchange of intelligence between forces uncovered an even more serious and widespread threat to effective policing on a national scale. In essence, Humberside Police had a number of self-contained and mostly incompatible electronic and manual databases within which various aspects of 'intelligence' were stored. The systems for capture, recording, use and deletion of such intelligence were ad hoc and unstructured, greatly reducing the likelihood of trends or threats being identified and rendering checks for disclosure purposes highly unreliable. Humberside Police, and indeed the local social services, held relevant information on Ian Huntley that was not disclosed at the time of his appointment as school caretaker nor revealed to Cambridgeshire officers involved in the murder investigation.

The Inspectorate's examination of the reasons for non-disclosure made it clear that, while there were some specific localised issues, the core problems of intelligence handling and incompatible technology were relevant across the whole Police Service. Taken together, the issues and concerns raised by the response to Soham were of such national importance that the government established a public inquiry led by Sir Michael Bichard, a move welcomed and supported by Sir Keith, who gave substantial direct evidence to the inquiry.



Sir Michael Bichard

The Bichard Inquiry report, issued in 2004, identified substantial areas for improvement within the Police Service and indeed in other organisations associated with the Soham case, such as local social services. In his report of 2003/04, Sir Keith reinforced his commitment to assist in the implementation of the Bichard recommendations:

“HMIC will be examining very carefully the Service’s response to Sir Michael, and will be building into our inspection programme such examination as would seem appropriate.”

The 2003/04 report also heralded a renewed focus on force structures, a subject that had been raised in the Home Office consultation paper *Building safer communities together*. Sir Keith reported that the Inspectorate had been commissioned by the Home Secretary to provide a detailed assessment of whether the 43-force structure of England and Wales remained appropriate to meet future needs and challenges. This commission would lead to a highly influential report by Her Majesty's Inspector Denis O'Connor and a substantial programme of restructuring and mergers.

2003/04 was also a year of substantial change for the Inspectorate itself. It marked the first full year of baseline assessment complete with explicit comparative gradings for forces'

performance across a range of service areas. For the first time, information on forces' performance was available to the public in a clear format, with a published report for each force explaining not just the quantitative measures but also providing a qualitative assessment.

The assessments were also used to identify areas for improvement across the Service as a whole, and to target thematic inspection efforts:

“HMIC’s work highlights a need for urgent improvement in the way that calls from the public are dealt with, in the tracking and arrest of criminals who operate across force boundaries and in the way that police officers and staff are managed. In each of these areas HMIC will conduct thematic reviews to identify how improvement can best be secured.”

Sir Keith summarised the Inspectorate’s activity during 2003/04 as “substantial and broad-ranging”. He also took the opportunity to re-state his concerns regarding the proposal to amalgamate the five criminal justice inspectorates:

“This proposal underestimates the complexity of policing and understates the vast range of policing activity which lies outside the criminal justice system. The Police Service of England and Wales is not just a law enforcement agency. It provides a 24-hour, seven-days-a-week service to the community, acting as gatekeeper and point of entry to many other public services and having a fundamental responsibility for community safety in its broadest sense. The command and control of critical incidents, counter-terrorism, public order, traffic control, call handling and reassurance policing are all examples of activity unrelated to the criminal justice system yet vital to community confidence. Such activity is comprehensively inspected by HMIC...”

“Considerable thought needs to be given to the longer-term vulnerabilities of not having an inspectorate dedicated to the inspection of the Police Service, staffed by professionals whose judgement and expertise are highly valued by the key stakeholders.”

Sir Ronnie Flanagan, GBE, MA (from February 2005)



Sir Ronnie (born 1949) joined the Royal Ulster Constabulary in 1970 and served in uniformed and criminal investigation disciplines, including Special Branch. Following his promotion to Chief Superintendent in 1990, he was appointed to the Police Staff College at Bramshill as director of the Intermediate Command Course and subsequently of the Senior Command Course, which prepares selected officers for chief officer rank.

Returning to Northern Ireland in 1992 on appointment as Assistant Chief Constable, he headed the operations department; in April 1993 he was appointed as Operational Commander for the Belfast region; and in August 1994 he was appointed as Head of Special Branch. In March 1995 he was appointed as Acting Deputy Chief Constable (Support Services) and formally appointed Deputy Chief Constable in February 1996, taking over operations in April that year. During 1996 he conducted a fundamental review of the structure and organisation of the Royal Ulster Constabulary.

Sir Ronnie was awarded the OBE in Her Majesty’s 1996 New Year Honours List, and on 4 November of the same year he took up office as Chief Constable. Sir Ronnie received a knighthood in the New Year Honours List, December 1998.

On 31 March 2002, Sir Ronnie retired from the Police Service of Northern Ireland and on 1 April 2002 was appointed as an inspector of constabulary for London and the Eastern region. Sir Ronnie was awarded a Knight Grand Cross of the Order of the British Empire in the Queen's Birthday Honours List in 2002.

As the inspector for London and the Eastern region, Sir Ronnie undertook a number of very important thematic inspections and ministerial commissions. For example, he led on the workforce modernisation thematic, which set the context for a major element of police reform, and on one of the 'mission-critical' work streams adopted by ACPO on behalf of the Police Service. He also undertook the very sensitive re-examination of the investigation by Cambridgeshire Constabulary into the murders of Jessica Chapman and Holly Wells.

Sir Ronnie was appointed as Chief Inspector of Constabulary on 1 February 2005. His first annual report touched on the deaths of 52 people in the London bombings of 7 July 2005,



although the event fell outside the official period of the report. He took the opportunity to praise both the emergency services' response on the day of the tragedy and the public's contribution since the event in providing intelligence and information to those investigating the incidents. The heightened focus on terrorism, and the capacity of the police to respond to such threats, served to support the Inspectorate's pre-existing concerns about the capacity and capability of individual forces to deal with major and cross-border criminality.

The baseline assessment of 2003/04 identified forces' capabilities in tackling cross-border ('level 2') criminality as having the lowest grade out of the 27 services assessed. With the understandable localised pressure to deploy resources within force boundaries, there were few examples of consistent collaboration between forces. The Home Secretary asked the Inspectorate to look at the issue and Denis O'Connor led an inspection of 'protective services' – services that provide protection to the public and safeguard the Police Service. The resultant reports – *Closing the gap* – pointed the way to restructuring into larger, strategic forces.

The concerns over individual force capacity and capability were heightened in March 2005 when the Chief Constable of Nottinghamshire Constabulary publicly voiced the view that his force was insufficiently resourced to be able to deal with its intolerable burden of serious crime. As the BBC news website described it: "Chief Constable Steve Green said his force was 'reeling' from dealing with 30 murders and excessive paperwork and had to 'borrow' officers."

The force was already receiving direct support from the Inspectorate and the Home Office Police Standards Unit, but the public statement meant that additional focus was justified, and the regional inspector arranged for another

force to loan its deputy chief constable to help plan Nottinghamshire's revival. It was a successful decision.

Another service that received consistently poor grades in baseline assessments was the handling of public calls to the police ('contact management'). As Sir Ronnie explained in his annual report:

"For some time we had felt some unease about the Service's handling of calls from the public... As Baseline Assessment 2003–2004 showed, performance continued to be poor: not a single force achieved an Excellent grading, and 27 of the 43 forces were scored as only Fair or Poor."

Sir Ronnie commissioned a major thematic inspection to examine all aspects of the issue and to identify how to achieve substantial improvement across the board. The resulting report – *First contact*, published in November 2005 – built on emerging national standards to deliver both a set of rigorous standards and an assessment framework to gauge performance.



The annual report also highlighted a further five thematic inspections, a series of joint criminal justice inspections, ongoing audits of the Police National Computer (PNC) and the monitoring of efficiency plans. There was also the emergence of new business involving inspection of the Serious Organised Crime Agency and HM Revenue and Customs, plus continuing work on training, development and diversity. Overall, the report reflected the intensive work programme for the Inspectorate and the breadth of its influence.

The report also represented a move away from previous formats in a number of ways. The volume of performance statistics was reduced considerably; historically, the Inspectorate had collated and had ownership of a very wide range of data, but the Home Office took over responsibility for data collection and so Sir Ronnie decided to restrict publication in the annual report to just the data directly related to HMIC's work. In addition, a third of the report's 120 pages were devoted to the purpose, structure, roles, generic programme of work and statutory duties of the Inspectorate. With the impending move to an amalgamated criminal justice inspectorate, it represented a useful consolidated reference, and it was also produced as a stand-alone document for wider use.¹¹¹

If 2004/05 was busy, the following year proved to be even more so. The move towards forces merging into larger strategic forces took off apace. Amid a mixture of positive and negative responses from forces and authorities, Sir Ronnie and his inspector colleagues found themselves increasingly engaged in mediation and discussion between police chiefs, authorities and a succession of Ministers. For some in the Inspectorate, the business of force mergers became a full-time occupation.

Modernisation of Service and Inspectorate

In the two decades spanning the turn of the new century, both policing and the activities of the Inspectorate evolved almost beyond recognition from their positions in 1990. The greater nationalisation of the Inspectorate, as previously identified in the 1980s, had moved on apace to the extent that many would characterise the thrust for force amalgamations in 2005/06 as evidence of the Inspectorate carrying out the will of the government in proposing even greater central control over policing.

Undoubtedly successive Chief Inspectors of this period wanted HMIC to adopt a role as catalyst for change, but surely none would accept that in so doing the Inspectorate had become a tool of the state or that the famed impartiality of inspectors had been surrendered.

PART C

The **LEGACY** and the
FUTURE



CHAPTER EIGHT

150 YEARS OF THE INSPECTORATE'S INFLUENCE



The Inspectorate has a long and proud history and has undeniably contributed greatly to improvements in policing and to the evolution of the Police Service from its Victorian origins to the highly professional organisation in existence today. It is interesting to reflect on how the Inspectorate itself has changed over 150 years, as well as highlighting a few recurring or echoing themes throughout its history.

The six original objectives for the Inspectorate, as identified within Cartwright's general report of 1857, were:

- the achievement and maintenance of efficiency in unsatisfactory boroughs;
- the eradication of tiny borough police forces;
- the provision of a sensible, settled pension scheme given as a right, rather than being discretionary;
- standardised national pay scales;

- the provision of decent police stations, accommodation, cells and lock-ups; and
- the extension of the use of police officers in civil and social legislation, for example as relieving officers under the poor laws or as weights and measures inspectors.

In essence, the Inspectorate of 1857 was trying to tackle forces' efficiency and effectiveness through: the spread of good practice; amalgamating smaller, inefficient forces; improving staff pay, conditions and working environments; and a better definition of the scope of police officer activity. Fast-forward to the 21st century and HMIC is still addressing efficiency and effectiveness, amalgamations, working environments and practices, and redefining the scope, roles and membership of the extended police family. In addition, along the way the Inspectorate has accumulated further core themes, such as performance assessment and professional standards.

There are too many areas within policing where the Inspectorate has left its mark to cover them all in detail in this chapter. However, bearing current and recent developments in policing in mind, perhaps the key recurring areas of HMIC focus and influence are:

- efficiency and effectiveness;
- improving performance;
- strategic mergers of forces;
- modernising the workforce;
- maintaining professional standards;
- advising and troubleshooting; and
- enhancing the reputation of UK policing.

Efficiency and effectiveness

The efficiency and effectiveness of police forces has been a core concern for the Inspectorate throughout its 150-year history. In the early years, 'efficiency' was directly concerned with ensuring the appropriate use of the central exchequer grant. A declaration of inefficiency, with the associated withholding of the efficiency certificate, could lead to a force losing its central grant, with potentially disastrous consequences. As government did not provide any definition of efficiency, it was largely a matter for individual inspectors' judgement. Since the 1890s, few forces have been officially deemed 'inefficient', and thereby subject to any form of direct remedial or punitive action; however, the Inspectorate has been able to use the threat of an 'inefficient' judgement as a method for focusing Chief Constables' and police authorities' attention on areas where they need to improve.

Initially, efficiency was considered in light of police numbers, the ratio of officers to the population, levels of supervisory ranks, and the willingness to assist neighbouring forces. Over

time, the inspectors' decisions were influenced and informed by wider criteria, and more particularly by their own subjective judgement of each force.

In the modern era, just one force – Derbyshire in 1992 – has been declared inefficient and has therefore had its certificate of efficiency withheld. Although this declaration owed as much to the local politics of under-provision of resources as to operational results, it was a good illustration of the Inspectorate's power and the impact on a force of being declared inefficient.

In the early 1980s, the emphasis turned quite pointedly to the use of cash and staff resources, in the drive for "efficiency, effectiveness and economy" articulated in Home Office Circular 114/83.¹¹² The thrust was for forces and authorities to demonstrate the three 'E's in all their financial dealings and in the management of their resources. Although the jargon changed over the ensuing period – 'efficiency' evolved through 'value for money' into 'best value' – the central aim for the Home Office, encouraged by the Treasury, remained to find a way to more accurately measure the financial efficiency of police forces. The 'holy grail' has been to calculate a single, quantitative efficiency score that would permit an absolute comparison between forces and would allow annual awards of policing grants to be varied between forces, with the most efficient forces being rewarded.

The late 1990s brought together four elements that moved the goal of grading the efficiency of individual forces much closer to reality:

- the requirement to present annual efficiency plans;
- best value legislation for local authorities;
- the policing performance assessment framework; and
- the Inspectorate's baseline assessment.

Efficiency planning

In 1997, the incoming Labour government decided to continue with the existing spending plans of its predecessor. This presented a particular difficulty for policing as costs were already rising faster than the general level of inflation because of the cost of police pensions, the need for investment in new technology and pressures regarding the reform of police pay. To help with this problem, the Home Office agreed with the Treasury and the Police Service the introduction of a new efficiency planning process. This was not to be a conventional cost reduction programme or the traditional Civil Service efficiency drive but a process that would allow resources to be recycled to improve performance. The Inspectorate was positioned at the heart of this development.

The first police efficiency plans were introduced in 1999/2000. The design of the efficiency plan process, which was unique to the public sector at the time, was the product of discussions between the Home Office and Treasury over the 2000 spending review. The funding settlement for policing for the year was agreed on the basis that:

- efficiency plans would be rigorously monitored by the Inspectorate;
- overall, the Police Service would achieve a 2% efficiency saving on the revenue budget;
- efficiency gains would be recycled within each authority (or used to support the authority's overall budget); and
- efficiency gains would be linked to performance.

In particular, the process was designed to ensure that any cash gains that were not recycled were removed from a police authority's base budget and that a force's overall performance was formally assessed by the Inspectorate.

Undoubtedly, some forces treated the efficiency planning process as an exercise in applied mathematics to satisfy national requirements rather than as a way of improving local policing. As one chief officer described it:

"Efficiency plans are a game of 'smoke and mirrors'. The trick is to count both the reductions in one area of business and the consequent additional investment elsewhere as efficiency gains."

Despite this view, which was not unique, close scrutiny by the Inspectorate, and in particular by experienced staff who understood the rules of the game, served to ensure that not only were efficiencies made across the board but forces were encouraged to reinvest in the most effective and productive areas of their business.

Best value

In 1999, the efficiency planning process was supplemented by the 'best value' regime, which emerged from the Local Government Act of that year. Best value was the successor to compulsory competitive tendering as a means by which local authorities could seek out the best deals. The Act placed a statutory responsibility on all local authorities to achieve best value in the delivery of policing services by securing "continuous improvement in the way its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness" (section 3, Local Government Act 1999). The legislation was aimed more directly at ensuring cost-effective local council services by encouraging authorities to carry out formal reviews of all their services, giving due consideration to consultation, challenge, competition and comparison (the four 'C's').

To the surprise of many, the legislation swept up police authorities together with other local authorities and in so doing required them to review all policing services over a five-year period. It also made the Inspectorate responsible for monitoring these best value reviews, and

therefore provided a unique opportunity to inspect police authority activity. Interestingly, although the measure was designed to achieve more efficient ways of delivering services, within the Police Service the best value regime generally created significant bureaucracy and an overly resource-intensive process for reviewing police functions and service provision.

In parallel to the activity generated within forces in reviewing their service provision, the Inspectorate drew on a comprehensive set of performance indicator data that was collected by its knowledge management team and reproduced as a core measure of comparative force performance. Widely known as best value performance indicators, the data was used to assess whether reviews had led to action that had improved performance.

The first year of the best value regime produced a raft of reviews, many targeted on narrow tactical issues such as the provision of car cleaning services, while others took on more strategic services such as 'operational policing'. In fact, most reviews were either too limited or too ambitious, and the first year produced little of real value – this was reflected in the inspection reports provided to the relevant authorities. There had been little attempt to formulate a range of options or to evaluate any proposed action in terms of its cost or its effect on performance.

Building on the lessons learnt in the first year, the Inspectorate issued a good practice guide to forces and authorities which led to a more consistent and proportionate approach to the review programme in subsequent years. The Inspectorate's lead staff officers also provided advice and training for force and authority representatives engaged in the reviews, and inspectors worked with the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and the Association of Police Authorities to develop national approaches and regimes that would reduce unnecessary bureaucracy and resource use.

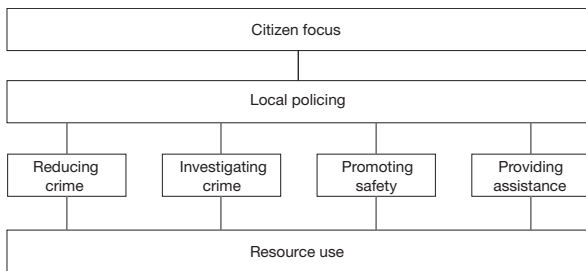
The policing performance assessment framework

Best value was clearly not the vehicle to achieve the government's 'holy grail', and the efficiency plans were originally intended to provide only a stopgap, for a three-year period (from 1999) until a more sophisticated model could be developed that would link resources to police performance. In the event, this took much longer than had been anticipated, due in no small part to the inherent complexities in delivering policing services and the associated difficulties in identifying the appropriate performance measures. The attempts to devise a set of indicators to underpin the assessment of individual forces' efficiency were achieving little progress, to the obvious frustration of the Home Office and the Treasury.

From 1999, the Home Office took increasing responsibility for the collection, ownership and analysis of data relating to the best value performance indicators, and, around the same time, it created the Police Standards Unit (PSU). The approach to performance measurement in policing took a different direction and the decision was taken to start from a wider, all-inclusive definition of policing activity and thereafter to identify the relevant measures for each element. The 'more sophisticated' system that evolved from this approach was the policing performance assessment framework (PPAF), which defined six (later seven) 'domains' of policing – for example crime investigation and public protection – and then set about populating each domain with appropriate performance measures.

PPAF was underpinned by a number of key performance indicators – such as crime and detection rates – and the PSU established a quite sophisticated data measurement procedure that allowed performance monitoring, against these indicators, at basic command unit, force and national levels. It also provided statistically relevant inter-force and 'similar force' comparisons.

Policing performance assessment framework (PPAF)



While undoubtedly representing the best attempt to date at a scientific comparison of forces' performance, there were significant gaps in the PPAF domains that the PSU was unable to fill using existing performance indicators. It was agreed that each domain required both quantitative and qualitative measures, and this is where the Inspectorate's contextual knowledge of every force came into its own. While some thought that the PSU, as the 'new kid on the block', could replace HMIC in terms of force assessment, the reality was clearly that the Inspectorate's qualitative judgements were more essential than ever. It was also even more important that these judgements were reached on the basis of auditable evidence and intelligence, and so baseline assessment took centre stage.

Baseline assessment

In essence, baseline assessment was developed by Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary Kate Flannery, drawing on her background of having worked at both the Audit Commission and HMIC. In local government circles in the late 1990s, the Audit Commission was developing 'comprehensive performance assessment', which sought to bring together a number of pieces of performance evidence on individual council services and produce one overall grading for the authority. The methods for grading varied from star ratings to descriptors such as excellent, good, fair and poor.

The full detail of baseline methodology appears on the Inspectorate's website,¹¹³ but, in brief, it was developed from its first iteration in 2003/04 to a point where in 2004/05 it was published alongside the PSU's annual data to provide the first annual performance assessment of all forces.



The 2005/06 baseline assessment process represented the most comprehensive engagement ever with the Police Service, the Home Office and other stakeholders to produce a consolidated assessment of the performance of every force across 23 core policing service areas.

Improving performance

From the earliest Inspectorate reports to the most recent, police performance has always been included in one form or another. As far as statistics are concerned, in the 1800s and early 1900s this consisted of factual reporting of officer numbers and crime rates, and, while the range of data has widened, the recent Chief Inspectors' reports have kept that core content. Undoubtedly, the publication of statistics on individual forces and the Police Service as a whole achieves a degree of transparency of performance that is an essential element in allowing the public to assess and challenge poor performance.

However, the great strength of the Inspectorate in driving performance improvement has not been simply in publishing statistics but in providing an analysis of performance, based on professional knowledge and contextualised through a thorough understanding of the circumstances and operational constraints experienced within every individual force or command area. The dissemination of good

practice has also been key in convincing individual forces to change their approaches, where they are considered by the Inspectorate to be ineffective. The informed commentary provided by inspectors on the relative achievements or shortcomings of forces has been important in holding forces to account. The knowledge of this context and of local variations in circumstance comes most consistently through the inspection programmes and individual force liaison activity.

Statistics, analysis and professional context

The importance of providing professional, informed and contextualised advice and analysis has been proven on many occasions. Successive Chief Inspectors of Constabulary, above all in their role as principal policing adviser to the Home Secretary, have been able to help governments focus effort and, at times, resources to achieve the best return and greatest improvement in specific areas of performance. Recent examples include the work carried out on the Prime Minister's Street Crime Initiative (2002) – while other advisers were suggesting that all ten participating forces would hit the target reductions in robberies and street crime within the time limits imposed, the Inspectorate carried out a snap inspection in each force and was able to accurately predict that eight of the ten would fail. In addition, the Inspectorate was

able to identify the action required in each force to improve performance, and, in the event, nine of the ten forces met their targets within the timescale. The lessons learnt and good practice identified were also published in the thematic report *Streets Ahead*¹¹⁴ for the benefit of all forces.



Another recent example of the Inspectorate's direct impact on performance improvement relates to the long-standing problem of forces failing to meet standards of timeliness for inputting information on the Police National Computer (PNC). Despite a national set of standards agreed by all Chief Constables in 1999/2000, by 2001 every force was failing to achieve the two most important standards, meaning that details of arrests, summonses and final case results were not appearing on the PNC until many months after the event, if at all. The Inspectorate engaged in two consecutive thematic inspections of data inputting and was instrumental firstly in achieving an improvement in performance in every force and then in consolidating those improvements so that all but a handful of forces were meeting both targets.

The lack of PNC data on criminal cases meant that the Police Service was vulnerable; this was highlighted in the report of the Bichard Inquiry, which examined the tragic murders in Soham in 2002 and showed that vital checks failed to reveal relevant information. The importance of data inputting was further emphasised when the Home Office agreed to incorporate the previously voluntary standards into a statutory code of practice (2005), making continued compliance mandatory.

Dissemination of good practice

Coupled with analysis, the identification and dissemination of good practice throughout the Police Service has helped individual forces learn from the successes, and sometimes failures, of colleagues without having to make the full, painful journey of discovery themselves. The publication of all the Inspectorate reports provides forces, chief officers and police authorities with an opportunity to learn from each other and be part of a communal learning experience. This is particularly important in the current 'confederation' of 43 independent and largely autonomous forces.

The value of the Inspectorate's role in disseminating good practice has been evidenced time and again in the series of thematic inspection reports. The underpinning ethos of thematic inspections has been that HMIC 'names and praises' but does not 'name and shame'; this allows a celebration of good practice and also an opportunity to learn from errors or omissions without forces fearing public exposure. This approach has engendered an often unnerving degree of honesty from interviewees.

The Inspectorate has consistently driven improvements through inspection and assessment and has successfully deployed its professional expertise and credibility to achieve support and consensus from chief officers and police authorities. In most cases, this has achieved the required action, although there are examples of Inspectorate recommendations, and even repeat recommendations, having been ignored by individual Chief Constables. Inspectors of constabulary have had the options of publishing criticisms in inspection and annual reports and, as a last resort, of declaring a force inefficient. The latter option, however, required inefficiency across the board, which was very unlikely. With the advent of the Police Reform Act 2002, the Inspectorate was given the power to recommend the consideration of sanctions at a national level if there was poor performance or inefficiency in individual service areas.

Improvement through inspection

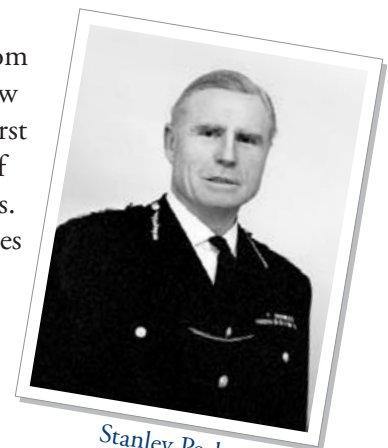
It may appear unnecessary to provide evidence that inspection is an important tool of an inspectorate, but the role, format and impact of inspection has changed dramatically over the lifespan of HMIC.

The format of the earliest inspections is not well documented, but reports suggest that they consisted of visits to every police station and lock-up in the force and, even with the small

size of forces of that time, this entailed being in each force for many days. It is also likely that police officers were routinely formally inspected on parade in military fashion.

One of the 'urban myths' (or perhaps a faithful account) concerning differing styles of inspection is widely recounted in Inspectorate circles, but sadly lacks any documentary provenance. It is said that, in the early 1900s, an inspector was travelling by train to Scotland for a grouse shooting excursion. Keen to make the most of the journey, or perhaps to justify it, he arranged for the entire officer complement of one of the smaller northern English borough forces to parade along the relevant platform of the town's railway station. Although the train did not stop at the particular station, it is said he took the salute via his carriage window.

Stanley Peck was a regional inspector from 1964 to 1978 and saw and experienced at first hand the approach of HMIC to inspections. He inspected 28 forces during his term of office and described his general approach to inspections thus:



Stanley Peck

"The dates of the annual inspection of forces were arranged well in advance and consisted of two days for the smaller borough and city forces (prior to amalgamations) and seven to fourteen days for the larger forces. In the largest forces, ie Greater Manchester and West Riding, fourteen days or more. Prior to the inspection, my staff officers would visit the force and spend some time at HQ looking at crime reports, complaints against police, and other administrative records. This saved time for the HMI in the actual inspection."

“In my case, I would ask the Chief Constable to arrange divisional parades in appropriate surroundings such as magistrates’ courts or divisional HQs. I requested representatives of administration, traffic and CID branches to attend for what was affectionately referred to as inquisitions, inquests and other frightening names.”



Inspection of the CID

For those on parade for an inspection, these ‘inquisitions’ could indeed be frightening. The inspector would normally select an officer, ask them to stand up and then question them about their duties, their most recent attendance at court or crime arrest, and have them explain the procedures undertaken and produce pocket book entries to support their account. The occasion could be an ordeal, although inspectors would not normally set out to embarrass or humiliate, simply to obtain a true sense of the operational capabilities of those engaged in front-line policing. However, the events were sometimes used to fulfil other purposes as well. As Stanley Peck explained:

“I always asked a question about assaults on police. I would ask all officers who had ever been assaulted on duty to stand up. It was interesting that virtually every one had been. My next request would be for all to remain standing where their assailant had been sentenced to imprisonment. Maybe one or two might remain but usually none at all, which was always enlightening for any magistrates present.”

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, forces could expect to be subject to a comprehensive inspection when the inspector would meet operational staff, specialists, administrators and senior command officers. By the early 1990s, the ever-expanding complexity of policing and the limitations on Inspectorate resources meant that the comprehensive inspections were a biennial event for the majority of forces.

The primary inspections of forces remained highly formalised events, with the inspector and his or her entourage arriving in a force in convoy and in large numbers. Sometimes the convoys would go astray as they tried to move from one inspected station to another, as one Chief Inspector recalls:

“It was my first force inspection and I turned up with every conceivable fact and figure you could ever wish to know. I spent the morning with the Chief Constable and his team and the Chair of the Police Authority. The inspection of a division was due in the afternoon and so I left headquarters at 12.30pm with full entourage including motorcycle escort and arrived at an impressive building to find no chief superintendent; no superintendents; no chief inspectors or inspectors; in fact nobody at all except for front office staff. The accompanying Chief Constable became very agitated and there was much running to and fro only for it to be discovered that we had been directed to the wrong station – one with a similar name but distinctly different.”

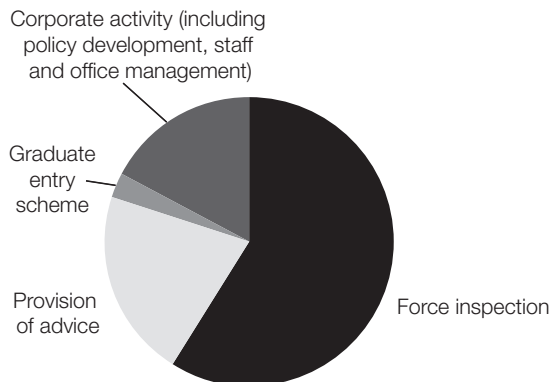


Divisional inspection

As a result of the Police and Magistrates' Courts Act of 1994, there were major changes in the governance and management of the Police Service: new types of police authorities were established; responsibility was placed on forces to publish a costed annual policing plan; and the Home Secretary set national objectives, over and above local objective setting by the new authorities. In response to these major reforms, the pattern of inspection also changed.

From 1994, each force was subject to an annual performance review with a comprehensive inspection now occurring every third year. In addition, thematic inspections were carried out on issues identified for particular cross-force attention. By 1996, this pattern of 'primary', 'performance' and thematic inspections had bedded in and, between them, they accounted for 59% of all Inspectorate resources.

Resource deployment, 1996



Source: Chief Inspector's annual report, 1996/97

By the turn of the century, to this three-tier core inspection regime had been added a programme of inspecting police authority best value reviews of policing services, under the Local Government Act 1999; a five-year programme of basic command unit inspections; and joint inspections, together with other inspectorates, of criminal justice area activities. There was an increasing need to move even further away from blanket inspection, and in 2003 the annual risk

assessment process, which identified which forces should receive primary inspection, changed to become the forerunner of the annual baseline assessment process, where inspection is minimised but targeted at the issues and areas of greatest need.

By 2006, the formal annual or biennial HMIC inspection, with full entourage and motorcycle outriders, was largely replaced by ongoing engagement and liaison involving quarterly staff officer visits, six-monthly visits to chief officers – when an inspector carried out the Chief Constable's performance review and assessed the leadership element of the baseline assessment – and, for most forces, one or more thematic inspections. Overall, this probably represented a significant reduction in actual inspection, but it did not seem so to the forces, especially with the additional imposition of visits from other bodies, such as the Home Office Police Standards Unit – checking progress against crime targets – government office regional coordinators – examining local partnership working – the Independent Police Complaints Commission, surveillance commissioners, health and safety inspectors and numerous others – all with specific areas of scrutiny.

Undoubtedly, inspection has been, and remains, a useful tool in improving force performance and in providing the Inspectorate with the contextual information so important to its role. Now, however, it is sometimes viewed more as a burden than a boon, and, as the policing landscape continues to become increasingly complex, there is a clear need for inspection and monitoring activity in forces to be subject to constraint, perhaps by imposing a gateway function to at least coordinate the efforts of the disparate bodies – a job for which HMIC would seem eminently qualified.

Strategic mergers of forces

Apart from assessing individual forces’ efficiency and effectiveness, arguably the single most consistent theme within the work of the Inspectorate over 150 years has been its focus on reducing the overall number of police forces, in the interests of greater operational efficiency of the Police Service as a whole.

From 234 to 43 forces

In 1856, after every county and borough was mandated to establish a police force, there were in excess of 230 forces, ranging from those with just a handful of officers to large metropolitan forces. From the outset it was clear that many of the smaller forces were chronically inefficient and ineffective. Of Cartwright’s six initial objectives for the Inspectorate, one set out to “eradicate the tiny borough police forces”, and between 1857 and 1870 their number had already been reduced from 63 to 18. Between 1870 and 1974, there were also distinct reductions in the total number of police forces, at both county and borough levels.

Year	Number of forces		
	County	Borough	Total
1870	56	167	223
1907	56	127	183
1947	56	83	139
1964	51	71	122
1974	–	–	43

The changes in local government boundaries in 1974 produced the last major 20th-century change in police force boundaries. These changes led to the amalgamation of the last remaining borough forces with their respective counties – such as Luton with Bedfordshire – and the merger of some counties into more viable forces or to reflect boundary changes – such as Thames Valley Police and Humberside Police respectively.

These changes produced the current landscape of 43 English and Welsh forces, which for many involved in policing represents the only configuration they have known. Before considering whether the landscape should change again, it is worth reflecting on just how much change each of the 43 forces has experienced in the past 150 years. Annex 4 to this book contains the ‘family tree’ of each of the current 43 forces – it is clear that local policing and national service delivery have survived and prospered despite, or perhaps because of, the previous amalgamations.

Proposed strategic mergers

In view of the history of amalgamations and mergers, it is not a total surprise that in the 21st century the Inspectorate is again



Denis O'Connor

seeking to achieve a consolidation of some forces, to benefit the Police Service as a whole. The *Closing the gap*¹¹⁵ report in 2005 from Inspector Denis O'Connor contained an assessment of the ability of the current structure of policing in

England and Wales to provide effective and sustainable protective services¹¹⁶ to a common standard in the future. Its findings are reflected in the executive summary:

“Looking ahead, the Police Service needs not only to deal effectively with volume crime, the current performance focus, but also have demonstrable readiness to tackle complex, volatile threats to individuals, neighbourhoods and businesses. This implies a major development in capability and, to achieve this, changes must be made not only to the

structure, but the whole configuration of policing at this level.

“There will be a requirement for a more efficient, integrated operating platform above BCU level. The organisation of service delivery must be on a scale large enough to respond dynamically, but local enough to understand the diverse context within which it operates. This means significant rationalisation of the protective services and support processes to put them on a stronger, more efficient footing. In turn this will place new demands on leadership, oversight and support from government.

“This report presents a set of options for change, supported by a number of design considerations that could enable the creation of a strong configuration which supports dynamic protective services and the necessary development of neighbourhood policing.”

In essence, the report concluded that ‘size matters’ and that smaller forces would need to merge to have the critical mass required to provide the capacity and capability to deliver sustainable protective services. While the Inspectorate team did not make recommendations as to which forces should merge and with whom, it was able to establish some standard criteria by which any proposed merged, or indeed stand-alone, forces could be assessed. In 2006, the work to progress these mergers is still ongoing, and contentious.

Modernising the workforce

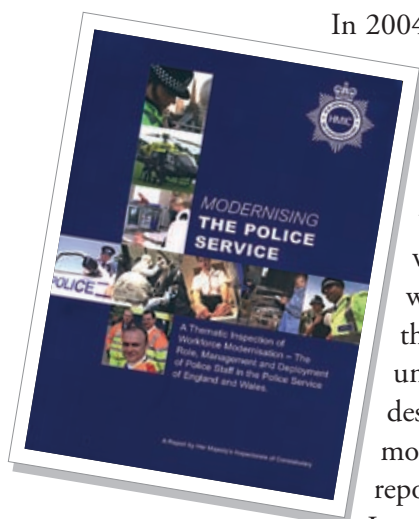
Throughout the history of the modern Police Service, the scope of duties for police constables has been widened progressively, well beyond simple law enforcement. In 1857, Cartwright spotted the opportunity presented by the creation of a disciplined force to carry out associated civil and social enforcement, as illustrated by the Chief Constable of Godalming, who, in 1880, had additional responsibilities as Inspector of Nuisances, of Common Lodging Houses, of Explosives, of the

Petroleum Acts, of the Dairy and Cowsheds Act and of the Food and Drugs Act.¹¹⁷ More recently, police officers have found themselves routinely carrying out roles in parking enforcement, on school crossing patrols, and as office managers, finance specialists and administrative support staff.

The 1970s and 1980s saw a major move within police forces towards the ‘civilianisation’ of roles that did not require police powers or specialist policing experience. The arrival of traffic wardens removed some low-level operational roles, while the employment of specialists in personnel, finance and office management removed many of the previous administrative roles. In addition, the emergence of many more specialised operational support roles – such as scenes of crime officers – has presented opportunities for the direct employment of staff with relevant operational expertise.

The Inspectorate was a key driver for forces in identifying posts or roles that would be suitable for civilianisation. Each year forces needed to identify such posts under a categorisation scheme and then justify to inspection teams why civilianisation had not taken place. The debate also spilled over into the efficiency and cost-effectiveness arena, since most civilian staff were less expensive than police officers carrying out the same functions.

In the past decade, the debate has moved on beyond a simple categorisation of non-operational roles to a holistic examination of every role within policing, with a view to identifying the skills they require rather than automatically deploying warranted police officers in specific roles. The emergence of neighbourhood wardens, police community support officers and non-police investigators illustrates how the ‘police family’ has been extended substantially.



In 2004 the Inspectorate undertook a major thematic inspection¹¹⁸ of the increasingly diverse ways in which non-warranted police staff were being deployed in the Police Service, under the now accepted description of 'workforce modernisation'. The report's findings and the Inspectorate's subsequent

work in conjunction with the police have had a major impact on the development of a more balanced, representative and appropriate mix of skills and backgrounds within the police workforce. In October 2005, ACPO issued its blueprint for workforce modernisation, and the Inspectorate still has a core role to play in helping the Service reach its proposed destination.

Maintaining professional standards

The importance of achieving and maintaining high standards of professionalism and discipline within policing has been clearly acknowledged since the emergence of the modern Police Service in the 18th century. The honesty, integrity and professionalism of members of a police force are absolutely key determinants in how the public perceives them and consequently in the degree of confidence and support that is afforded to them. The British Police Service is built on the foundation stones of public consent and support, and without these it simply cannot function effectively.

The handling by police forces of professional standards issues, and in particular complaints from the public, is one of the only areas within policing where inspectors are under a statutory direction to keep themselves informed

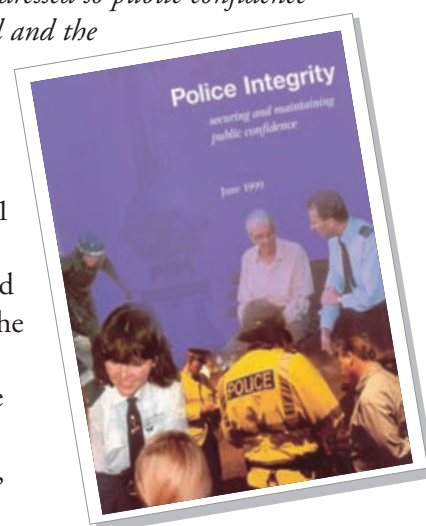
as to the effectiveness of provision. Successive statutes have reinforced this direction, and the Inspectorate has consistently taken its duty very seriously, making professional standards a standing element of its core inspection of every force.

The central importance of this issue was further emphasised by a number of high-profile scandals in the 1990s, such as the Birmingham Six and the Guildford Four, which prompted a thematic inspection entitled *Police integrity* (1999)¹¹⁹ and the subsequent formation of an ACPO presidential task force to tackle police corruption.

"The public has a right to expect a high standard of behaviour from its Police Service, and generally speaking the inspection confirmed the vast majority of men and women – police officers, civilian support staff and special constables – working within the 44 police forces of England, Wales and Northern Ireland, are honest, industrious and dedicated..."

"Regrettably, the inspection found failings in the Service, some minor and others quite serious, all of which need to be addressed so public confidence can be re-established and the good reputation of the Service restored."

The report made 11 recommendations and included a good practice guide. In the five years that followed, the Police Service made significant progress, assisted by the Inspectorate, and by 2004 virtually every force had established an anti-corruption team within their professional standards department, and work to drive up overall standards was under way.



The unwelcome focus on police integrity and professional standards returned in 2004/05 with the findings of three major reports. Two of the reports resulted from public inquiries – one carried out by Sir William Morris, who examined procedures in the Metropolitan Police following the recommendations of the Stephen Lawrence inquiry, and one from the Commission for Racial Equality, which was in response to the television documentary *The secret policeman*. The third report followed on from a thorough review of police discipline procedures by William Taylor. All three were critical of elements of the police professional standards environment and so the Inspectorate resolved to reinforce the importance of the issue and ensure compliance with its statutory duty by undertaking a comprehensive programme of professional standards inspections in every police force in England and Wales during October and November 2005.



This programme resulted in a report on the performance of every individual force, which was published as a supplement to the Inspectorate's annual baseline assessment of forces for 2004/05. In addition, themes, good practice and issues of national importance were collated into a

thematic report.¹²⁰ Once

again, the Inspectorate was able to speak from a position of informed impartiality and thereby add substantially to improvements in how forces handle public complaints and anti-corruption issues – so vital to public trust and confidence in the Police Service.

Advice and troubleshooting

The provision of impartial advice to the Home Secretary, police authorities and Chief Constables has been a core element of the Inspectorate's role since its creation and became further embedded when the current tripartite arrangements were established by statute. This advisory role is largely unseen by those outside policing, and even those within policing probably do not know or fully understand the absolutely vital role the inspectors, and in particular the Chief Inspector, play in averting crises or helping to deal with the aftermath of major events.

Probably the most obvious example of where the advisory relationship with the Home Secretary broke down, with major consequences, was in the lead up to the 1918 and 1919 police strikes (see page 46). The government was caught totally unawares and vowed never to be in such a position again. The subsequent strengthening of the Inspectorate has, to date, ensured that its advisory role has been given due prominence, and the views of HMIC sought in virtually every area of the development of policing, including:

- identifying and testing new approaches to policing;
- developing police leaders;
- responding to critical incidents; and
- dealing with poor performance.

Identifying and testing new approaches

The role of identifying good practice from inspections is discussed elsewhere. The Inspectorate also plays a prominent role in working with the Police Service and key agencies or departments to develop approaches or initiatives and to test their implementation and effectiveness.

For example, in addition to contributing to development of the policing performance assessment framework, HMIC has taken a leading role in producing national call-handling standards; testing compliance in respect of national crime-recording standards; and helping to test the implementation of the quality assessment framework established to underpin the operation of the Criminal Records Bureau.

Developing police leaders

HMIC has traditionally forged strong relationships of influence with the tripartite partners and in particular through the Police College at Bramshill. In more recent times, inspectors have played an increasingly important role in advising police authorities on the selection of chief officers. Since 2001, the Chief Inspector has further expanded the Inspectorate’s influence by chairing the Police Leadership Development Board (PLDB) and the national Senior Appointments Panel (SAP).

The latter role, in particular, has required the utmost diplomacy in maintaining the appropriate balance between central and local decision making over long-listing and short-listing decisions. While ministers have expressed a desire to see a robust approach by SAP, with only the very best candidates being allowed to go forward to authorities for final short-listing, the APA representatives on SAP have expressed the view that such strong sifting denies local authorities their right to select to meet their local needs.

Work within the wider PLDB has also allowed HMIC to support the extension of debate and thinking to include leadership at all levels, in particular first and second-line supervisors, and to champion a move from reactive to proactive, transformational leadership. Inspectorate representatives have also contributed to the development of national careers advisory services for aspiring leaders and to the evolution of the

pre-existing senior command course into a more modular, skills and competency-based process that is open to a greater proportion of potential chief officers.

Responding to critical incidents

Since the establishment of the chief inspector role in 1962, successive Home Secretaries have increasingly come to rely on their advice and counsel in respect of difficult, complex and highly sensitive policing issues. In addition to advising in advance of government initiatives this relationship has become particularly important in the immediate wake of high-profile incidents.

Under successive Police Acts, Home Secretaries have for some time been able to commission the Inspectorate to carry out specific inspections or investigations. Although this power has occasionally been invoked – for example in the aftermath of the investigation into the ‘Yorkshire Ripper’, in the early 1980s – specific commissions have far more routinely been as a result of personal discussions and a consensus agreement by respective Chief Inspectors to carry out such work.

The Inspectorate’s examination of such critical incidents has included re-visiting criminal investigations, such as the Soham murders; looking into major incidents, such as the bombing of the Grand Hotel in Brighton; and examining wider policing response to civil disturbances, such as the riots in Oldham and Bradford.

The Inspectorate’s contribution in these, and many other similar pieces of commissioned activity, has been to draw together those involved into meaningful and productive discussions, with a view to improving procedures, identifying gaps in the Service’s armoury and trying to prevent any repetition of inappropriate or ineffective responses. The

independence of the Inspectorate has repeatedly proven its worth in this regard, and while much of the product of these often sensitive issues has not been published beyond policing and governmental circles, all such reports have led to distinct improvements in practice, procedures, training and/or provision of equipment.

Dealing with poor performance

Another area of often unseen Inspectorate activity is in addressing individual areas of poor performance. While core inspection and assessment seeks to identify and address performance issues at national, force and command unit levels, there are occasions when concerns focus attention squarely onto individuals, often individual Chief Constables.

For many years, addressing concerns over individual chief officers' performance has been a mix of public and private debate, cajoling and counselling behind the scenes and, on occasion, public naming and shaming. Typically, Chief Constables rely on their statutory independence from government, while Home Secretaries express frustration at being unable to enforce changes in practice or procedures related to operational policing delivery. In the midst of such interactions, all parties have consistently looked to inspectors to provide the impartial voice of reason. As one inspector described the delicate balancing act:

"It can be a thankless task. You have probably got the balance right when you find all parties involved, from all sides of the debate, are equally convinced that you are favouring their opponents in the argument. This doesn't make for an easy or comfortable relationship, but so long as we retain integrity and impartiality we can invariably find an acceptable way forward."

The delicate balance was in danger of being disrupted in 2002 when the Police Reform Act gave powers to the Home Secretary to intervene into any police force where there may be serious

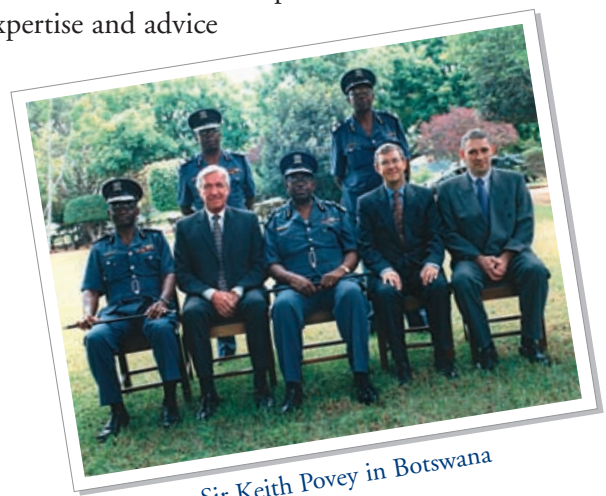
and evidenced concerns over performance and ultimately to order the removal of a recalcitrant Chief Constable. These powers, if used, represent a fundamental and direct challenge to the statutory independence of the Chief Constable and the authority, and so perhaps it was no surprise that after much lobbying and debate the Inspectorate has been entrusted with the 'gate keeping' role – to decide and provide the evidence to initiate the escalation process that would be a precursor to intervention.

Enhancing the reputation of UK policing

Public trust is also linked closely to the Police Service's reputation and, in this regard, 'UK policing plc' has traditionally fared very well. Over the years, British policing has come to be regarded as among the best in the world, and the iconic figure of the British bobby, and all that goes with it, has greatly influenced the development of policing services worldwide.

The international reputation of British policing has continued to grow, to the point where, in 2006, some 170 British police officers are working abroad in places as diverse as Bosnia, Botswana, Afghanistan and Iraq.

Just as the British Police Service has earned a high reputation internationally, and has therefore been asked to spread its expertise and advice



Sir Keith Povey in Botswana

throughout the world, the Inspectorate has provided inspection advice and guidance to police organisations throughout the world. The sheer range of countries seeking Inspectorate advice and assistance can be gathered simply by scanning HMIC’s annual reports.

While the annual reports list the range of countries visited by inspectors and their staff, they often understate the purpose behind such visits or the impact they have. Also, many of the areas visited are far from being safe havens for visiting British police officers, and so, while mention of such destinations as the Cayman Islands may appear attractive, many more visits are to war-torn areas, either to visit UK officers serving abroad or to provide direct advice on civil policing matters.

In 1978/79, regional inspector Sir Lawrence Byford led a Foreign and Commonwealth Office consultancy team to Turkey, providing advice to the Turkish Prime Minister on problems relating to terrorism and internal disorder. He was accompanied by, among others, HMIC staff officer Chief Superintendent Steve Vessey and a Metropolitan Police Special Branch officer. As Steve Vessey recollected, the visit was hazardous from the outset:

“The nature of the problem in Turkey was revealed during our second morning in Ankara, when we were invited to examine three suspect parcel bombs... A policeman carried in the three packages from the police station cell where they had been stored and dumped them unceremoniously on a table. Mr Byford asked how they would normally be examined and learned that they would have been taken to a rifle range and shot at until they exploded or otherwise.”

The team was not only able to suggest far more effective ways of examination and preservation of valuable forensic evidence, but actually set about demonstrating the methods recommended. A local hospital technician with portable X-ray equipment was summoned to confirm that one of the

packages was indeed a bomb, and a Metropolitan Police bomb disposal officer was requested, and provided, to make the device safe. This was the first of a number of visits to Turkey and a good example of a productive and instructive liaison.

However, not all visits have been quite as productive. In 1988, Sir Richard Barratt led the official police delegation to the People’s Republic of China to promote good relations between the two countries’ police services. This initiative came to nothing due to the massacre in Tiananmen Square in Beijing in the following June. During the trip the delegation visited Shanghai Prison, where it was entertained by the prison choir, singing, among other pieces, Beethoven’s *Ode to Joy* and, most memorably considering the venue, *There’s No Place Like Home!*

Sir Richard was also head of the 1990 official delegation to Pakistan to give advice to the Pakistani government, primarily on the training of senior police officers. This was a more successful visit professionally, but, unsurprisingly, he reported that the most memorable event of the trip was the journey, complete with heavily armed escorts, through the Khyber Pass from Peshawar to the border with Afghanistan.

International policing

Iraq

In 2005 the Secretary of State for Defence asked Sir Ronnie Flanagan to review the United Kingdom’s contribution to security sector reform in Iraq. The UK police service was, at the time, playing a substantial role in helping to develop a professional Iraqi police service and to embed the rule of law, with officers drawn from general police duties deployed in a variety of training and mentoring roles both in the country itself and in Jordan, where initial recruit training is undertaken.

“The visit was an opportunity to demonstrate my support for colleagues deployed overseas and to get a real feel for the difficulties they face. Although I do



Sir Ronnie Flanagan in Iraq

not underestimate the scale of the challenge, it was gratifying to see that the UK Police Service is helping to make a real difference, one that will ultimately be to the benefit of ordinary Iraqis. In particular I would like to pay tribute to the courage, determination and commitment shown by all officers concerned.”

The Inspectorate was able to add an extra dimension to the debate, and subsequent recommendations focused on a number of areas, including governance, recruitment and the development of the concept of joint operations.

CHAPTER NINE

2006 AND BEYOND



Inspectors and assistants, 2006

21 July 2006 marks the 150th birthday of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and provides an opportunity to draw breath and take stock of its achievements, its history and its future. The first 150 years have provided clear evidence of the importance of the Inspectorate's work in the development of policing in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and it might be argued that it would be foolish to change a winning formula. However, public sector reform continues apace, and all involved, including the Inspectorate, must review and evaluate their role and contribution and continue to evolve appropriately.

In the synopsis of the rationale for workforce modernisation produced by the Association of Chief Police Officers,¹²¹ the author reflected on the formation of Peel's new police in the 1820s, when the public consented to exchange freedom and taxes for better protection:

"Public service organisations have to evolve and alter to meet the needs of the changing

environments and emerging needs... The challenges facing the Service today require changes that are pragmatic and sustainable and decisions that are based on desired outcomes. The Service has already started a journey of modernisation and it is time to progress to the next stage."

At a time of major change in the structures and approaches of modern policing, there is also major change in the way the government wishes to see the Inspectorate contribute to the reformed public sector and the expanding law enforcement landscape.

A wider enforcement inspection remit

In addition to the 43 English and Welsh police forces, in recent years the Inspectorate has expanded its inspection activity to include, initially by invitation, non-Home Office forces – such as the Ministry of Defence Police and British Transport Police – and national agencies – such as the National Crime Squad and National Criminal Intelligence Service. Inspection and advice have also been provided to forces outside England and Wales, for example on the Channel Islands and in Gibraltar and the Sovereign Base Areas of Cyprus.

In 2006, the National Crime Squad, the National Criminal Intelligence Service and part of HM Customs and Excise were consolidated to form the newly established Serious Organised Crime Agency. The Inspectorate's inspection

remit was formalised in respect of the new agency by the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005, and the Commissioners for Revenue and Customs Act of the same year further extended it to include inspection of the enforcement arm of HM Revenue and Customs.

However, at the same time as its remit to inspect law enforcement agencies was expanding, elsewhere moves were afoot to carry out radical changes to HMIC as part of streamlining all the inspectorates involved in the criminal justice system.

Joined-up criminal justice inspection

The drive for public sector reform has had a wider impact than simply within the agencies themselves. One strand of the programme has looked closely at the nature of inspection and oversight in the criminal justice arena and has concluded that the five existing criminal justice inspectorates should be merged into just one body. The proposed timetable will mean that the 150th year of HMIC will also be its last full year of independence; the amalgamation with inspectorates for the Crown Prosecution Service, the courts, probation and prisons is scheduled for April 2007.

The full details of the background to, rationale for and proposals concerning amalgamation appear in the criminal justice system policy statement, published in November 2005.¹²² A flavour of the anticipated benefits can be adduced from the following extracts:

“A single inspectorate will highlight the perspective of the service user by providing a single fulcrum for assurance and improvement in every aspect of their experience of the delivery of the system.”

“It will... be independent of the service providers; provide assurance to Ministers and the public

about the safe and proper delivery of those services; contribute to improvement of those services; report in public and deliver value for money.”

A major project during 2006 and 2007 will map out the scope and business objectives of the new inspectorate as well as establishing the methodology and parameters for the new joint inspection regime.

The received wisdom among those who set the wheels in motion to amalgamate the five inspectorates is that a number of HMIC's functions, for example the development of future leaders of the Police Service and consolidation and dissemination of good practice, will be taken up by the new National Policing Improvement Agency.

The National Policing Improvement Agency

There are currently a number of individual organisations that contribute to improving the work of police forces nationally. These include CENTREX – responsible for delivering national police training – the Police Information Technology Organisation (PITO), the Home Office research, development and statistics department, the Police Crime and Standards Unit, ACPO, APA and of course HMIC.

In November 2003, the Home Office published a green paper within which was a proposal for the establishment of a new improvement agency for the Police Service, which would consolidate some of these individual organisations. ACPO were already in favour of this proposal, and so it was no surprise when the idea progressed further in the 2004 police reform White Paper, *Building communities, beating crime* and the National Policing Plan 2005–2008.

The impending Police and Justice Act 2006 will give life to the National Policing Improvement

Agency (NPIA), which will be established on 1 April 2007. The agency will be a non-departmental public body responsible to the Home Office and Parliament for the effective and efficient management of its remit. NPIA will totally subsume CENTREX and PITO while also taking responsibility for some functions currently exercised by ACPO and the Home Office.

In the early stages of the planning of the agency, consideration was given to NPIA taking over all current HMIC responsibilities. However, as discussions progressed it became clear that an organisation that is responsible for setting policing standards should not also have control of the function of inspecting and challenging the implementation of those standards – the inspectorate must remain independent of the providers.

Some aspects of HMIC's responsibilities may, however, transfer to NPIA, for example activities relating to leadership development and collation of good practice. There remains a strong doubt, however, that NPIA will be able, or indeed suitable, to take on other advisory and trouble-shooting roles currently carried out by HMIC.

The future of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary

Assuming that the Police and Justice Act is passed in autumn 2006, with effect from April 2007 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary will cease to exist, having been legally 'abolished' along with the other four criminal justice inspectorates. From the ashes will emerge the Justice, Community Safety and Custody Inspectorate, designed to provide a better inspection service than those of the current five inspectorates, in particular in addressing cross-agency issues and processes within the criminal justice system.

Having spent virtually all of its 150-year history recommending and indeed driving change in the Police Service, and consistently seeking the merger of inefficient forces into larger, more effective organisations, it seems ironic that merger with colleague inspectorates should mark the end of HMIC. The important thing will be to ensure that the new inspectorate inherits all the strengths of the current HMIC and continues to work energetically in all the areas that have been proven to add value to the Police Service over a century and a half.

HMIC has been, and remains, more than just an inspectorate; its value to policing transcends the sum of recommendations and advice meted out over 150 years. This organisation, its leaders and every member of its staff have contributed to the development and improvement of the best police service in the world – the challenge is to continue to provide that contribution well beyond 'the first 150 years'.

Annexes

Annex 1

HER MAJESTY'S INSPECTORS OF CONSTABULARY, 1856–2006

	First appointed		First appointed
John Woodford	1856	George Twist	1974
Edward Willis	1856	Clarence Cooksley	1975
William Cartwright	1856	James Haughton	1976
Charles Cobbe	1869	James Crane	1976
William Elgee	1869	Colin Woods	1977
Charles Legge	1880	Charles Page	1977
Herbert Croft	1892	Lawrence Byford	1977
Frederick Parry	1892	Raymond Buxton	1977
Herbert Terry	1900	Richard (Stanley) Barratt	1978
John Eden	1902	Philip Myers	1982
Leonard Dunning	1912	James Brownlow	1983
Llewellyn Atcherley	1919	John Woodcock	1983
Charles Parry	1927	Brian Weigh	1983
William Allan	1932	Charles McLachlan	1987
Frank Brook	1935	Donald Elliot	1988
Jacynth Coke	1938	Robert Bunyard	1988
Gordon Halland	1938	Colin Sampson	1989
Michael Egan	1943	Geoffrey Dear	1990
William Johnson	1946	Trefor Morris	1990
Frederick Tarry	1946	John Smith	1990
William Willis	1953	Brian Hayes	1991
Frederick Armstrong	1954	Colin Smith	1991
Charles Martin	1958	David O'Dowd	1993
Sydney Lawrence	1962	Peter Hobbs	1993
John Gaskain	1962	Antony Williams	1993
Edward Dodd	1963	Dan Crompton	1995
Nicholas Bebbington	1963	Peter Winship	1995
Alan Scroggie	1963	John Stevens	1996
Joseph Manuel	1963	William Taylor	1998
Peter Brodie	1964	Keith Povey	1997
Neil Galbraith	1964	David Blakey	1999
Stanley Peck	1964	Robin Field-Smith	2000
John Hill	1965	Kate Flannery	2002
Eric St Johnston	1966	Ronnie Flanagan	2002
Frank Williamson	1967	Ken Williams	2002
Robert Fenwick	1967	Jane Stichbury	2004
John McKay	1967	Denis O'Connor	2004

Chief Inspectors are in bold.

Annex 2

THE ACTING INSPECTORS OF CONSTABULARY, 1939–45

Godwin Edward Banwell had been in the Indian Police since 1920 and was appointed an acting inspector between 1941 and 1942, before becoming Chief Constable of the East Riding of Yorkshire, and subsequently of Cheshire.

John de Vere Bowles had an army background and had been Provost Marshal and Commandant of the Corps of Military Police between 1931 and 1934.

Sir Charles Carter Chitham had joined the Indian Police in 1906 and had been Inspector General of Police in the Central Provinces since 1931.

Sir Charles Banks Cunningham had also been in the Indian Police, since 1904, and had been Inspector General of Police of the Madras Presidency between 1930 and 1938.

George William Richard Hearn had been appointed as Assistant Chief Constable of Staffordshire in 1935 after an army career. He was an acting inspector between 1940 and 1943 before returning to Staffordshire. He was subsequently Chief Constable of Staffordshire between 1951 and 1960.

Frederick Charles Isemonger had a background in the Indian Police, which he had joined in 1898. He had been Inspector General of Police for the North West Provinces of India between 1925 and 1930 and Chief of Police of the British Municipal Council in Tientsin, China, between 1931 and 1935.

Henry Benson Wyndham Ball Lenthall was a member of the Royal Ulster Constabulary, having previously been in the old Royal Irish Constabulary.

Francis Ralph Parry was a Chief Superintendent in Lancashire County Constabulary, which he had joined in 1919.

Frederick Gerard Peake had an army background, but since 1921 had been the Inspector General of Gendarmerie and the Director of Public Security in Transjordan.

Thomas Rawson had joined Carlisle City Police in 1909. He had been Chief Constable of Hereford City from 1920 to 1927, of Swansea Borough between 1927 and 1931, and of Bradford City from 1931 to 1940. He was appointed as an acting inspector in 1940.

Joseph Simpson had a background in the Metropolitan Police, which he had joined under the Trenchard Scheme in 1931. By 1937 he had become Assistant Chief Constable of Lincolnshire, before being appointed as an acting inspector in 1940. In 1943 he became Chief Constable of Northumberland, and of Surrey in 1946. In 1958 he became Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, being knighted a year later. He was to die while holding office in 1968.

Sir Charles Stead had joined the Indian Police in 1898, eventually becoming Inspector General of Police in the North West Frontier Provinces in 1927 and Inspector General of Police in the Punjab a year later.

No biographical details can be found on either *Captain R N G Martin* or *M I Valentine*. However, although neither had been, or subsequently became, Chief Constables of British mainland forces, judging by the biographies of the other acting inspectors it must be assumed that these two gentlemen had similar backgrounds, probably in the Indian or colonial police.

Annex 3

BARBARA MARY DENIS DE VITRÉ: THE FIRST FEMALE ASSISTANT INSPECTOR

It is difficult to overestimate the contribution Barbara Denis de Vitré made to women in policing or the value of her appointment as the first female Assistant Inspector of Constabulary. During her 15 years in office between 1945 and 1960, 'the number of policewomen in England and Wales rose from 445 to over 2,500', and this staggering increase is undoubtedly related to her unrelenting persistence and dedication. Throughout her career she worked to ensure that her prediction came true "that in 20 years' time, the policewoman will be looked on as an essential factor of our social life, and the world will stand amazed that such a natural reform could ever have been the subject of bitter altercation".¹²³

Barbara did not begin her working life in the Police Service. In fact, her decision to join the Women's Auxiliary Police Service was made while on a training course at Manchester University in social welfare work. Although this group was not widely respected at the time, described by the Metropolitan Police commissioner as "an amateur women police organisation", it was this six-week course which secured her future in the force and in October 1928 she joined Sheffield Constabulary as a woman police officer. Her time there was primarily spent working on the detection of shoplifters, and her success in this area earned her a commendation from the city justices.

On 30 September 1931, Barbara Denis de Vitré left Sheffield, with Helen Hoskyn, a colleague, to become head constable in the Cairo city police where they were to raise and train a

branch of Egyptian policewomen to help eradicate the huge drug-trafficking problem in the Near East. In this she undertook a variety of demanding tasks, including acting as an undercover agent for the Narcotics Bureau. However, the terrible conditions under which she was working (a miserable living situation and poor pay) inevitably led to her resignation in April 1932.

June 1933 yet again signalled a new challenge. She joined Leicester Constabulary, where she stayed until 1944, as their second woman police officer (the first to work in plain clothes in CID), aiding male police officers in raids and arrests where women were involved. During her time there, she did a great deal of work on abortion cases, and in one instance she even aided the arrest of an illegal abortionist by posing as a heavily pregnant woman. Before finally joining the Inspectorate, she spent a short time in Kent, where she was recruited to help the Chief Constable draft in a large new team of women constables and sergeants and was responsible for bringing them up to scratch.

It was while at Leicester that she organised the first ever policewomen's conference, a big achievement in itself, which was held in March 1937. Thirty-six female officers from all over the country, including Scotland's future Assistant Inspector of Constabulary, Janet Gray, turned up to hear the addresses of a number of important speakers. Although the event was well received and another took place the following year, the advent of war meant that it was 1947 before the first District Conference of Policewomen of England, Scotland and Wales took place. Barbara turned up to speak at this and to help set the foundations for their success in the future.

The decision to appoint a woman to assist in matters relating to women police was made by Herbert Morrison (then Home Secretary) in October 1944, and the role was swiftly taken up by Barbara, who beat several other candidates to the post of 'staff officer'. Her role was to assist inspectors, chief police officers and police authorities on all issues relating to policewomen and auxiliaries, not only in England and Wales but in Scotland as well. But her task was not an easy one. Many Chief Constables and police authorities disapproved of the drive to incorporate female officers into their teams and were less than keen on expanding their numbers. Barbara Denis de Vitré faced great difficulties in trying to convince them of the potential they could bring to their force.

However, her perseverance and skill evidently impressed the Home Secretary, the future Baron Chuter Ede of Epsom, who made the decision to appoint her as Assistant Inspector of Constabulary from 10 May 1948. Her great success made it necessary to appoint Miss Kathleen Hill, then a Metropolitan Police woman inspector, as her 'staff officer' just six months later to share her ever increasing workload, and in 1951 she was awarded an OBE in the Birthday Honours List.

Only one year after her appointment, the value of her work was being recognised outside the British Isles. In 1949 she took up an offer by the United States government to take a look at the police system of their zone in Germany, along with the former Belfast Police Commissioner and Henry Studdy, an inspector of constabulary, where she was to offer advice on public safety issues in the zone.

Eight years later, in May 1957, she also chaired the selection board that was set up to decide on a suitable contingent of policewomen to be sent to Cyprus and that paved the way for the

formation of the permanent branch of the Cypriot Women Police. This idea was first conceived in September 1955, when Colonel George Grivas's EOKA (the national organisation of Cypriot combatants) was in the midst of its guerrilla campaign against the British, but was considered too dangerous at the time. Eighteen months later the situation was calm enough to make this a possibility and so 53 single women were chosen from the large number of volunteers and were offered 12 months' secondment, an upgrading of rank, gratuity for every three months' completed service and free uniforms and living quarters. The unit was well received by both the Greek and the Turkish families. In a joint report, Barbara and the head of the Metropolitan Women Police wrote:

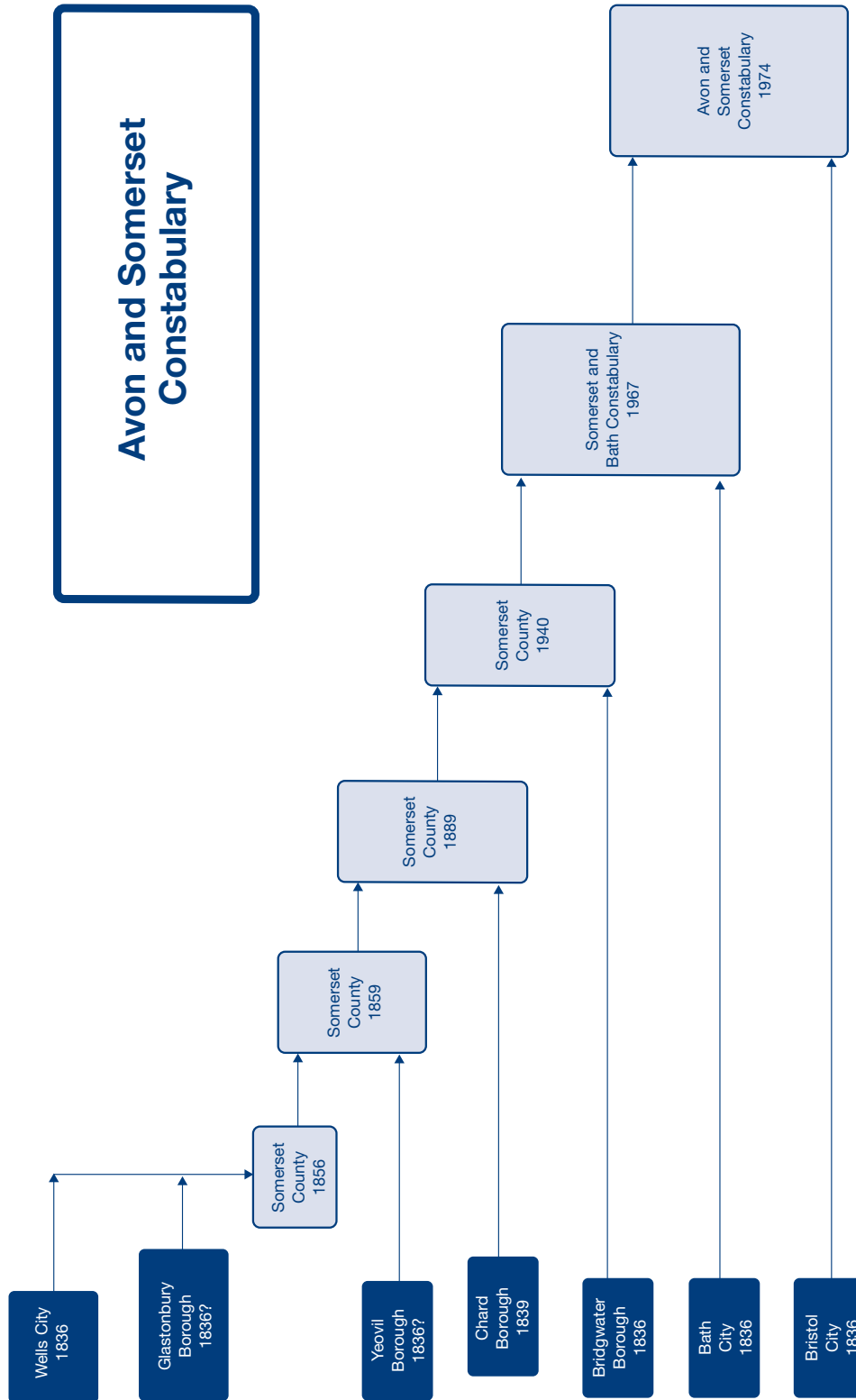
"In examining their work we have found abundant evidence that they are succeeding in doing what was hoped of them in fostering the confidence and respect of the public in the Police Service."

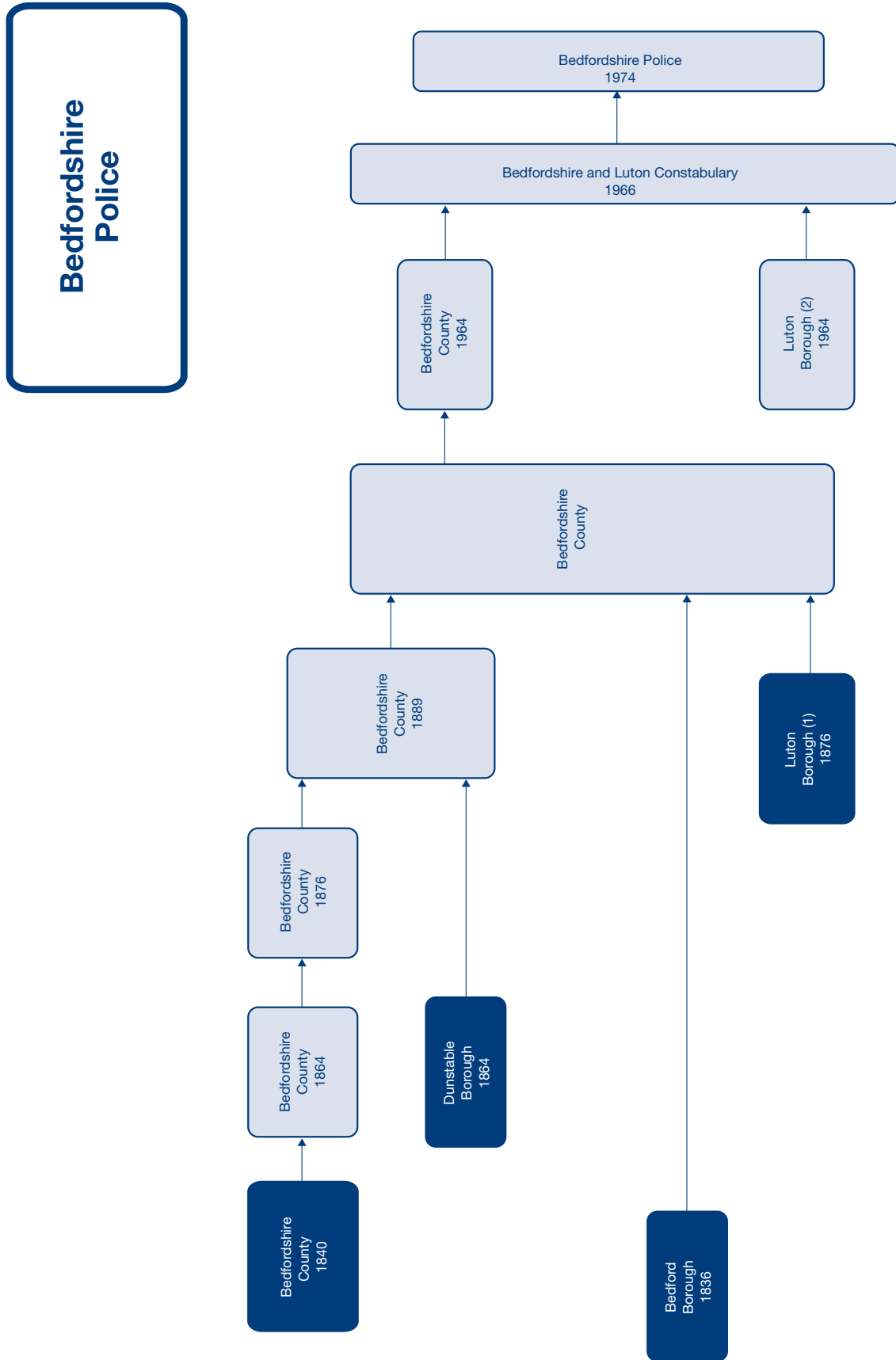
There were innumerable other highlights in Barbara's illustrious career. To name but a few, she had given an address on 'The women police in Britain' to the 27th General Assembly of Interpol on 15 September 1958 and could lay claim to being a special guest of the Irish police (Garda Síochána) commissioner in 1959, helping to select the 'first batch' of uniformed women police. Her advice was clearly valued throughout policing.

After continuing ill health, Barbara Denis de Vitré died on 8 August 1960.

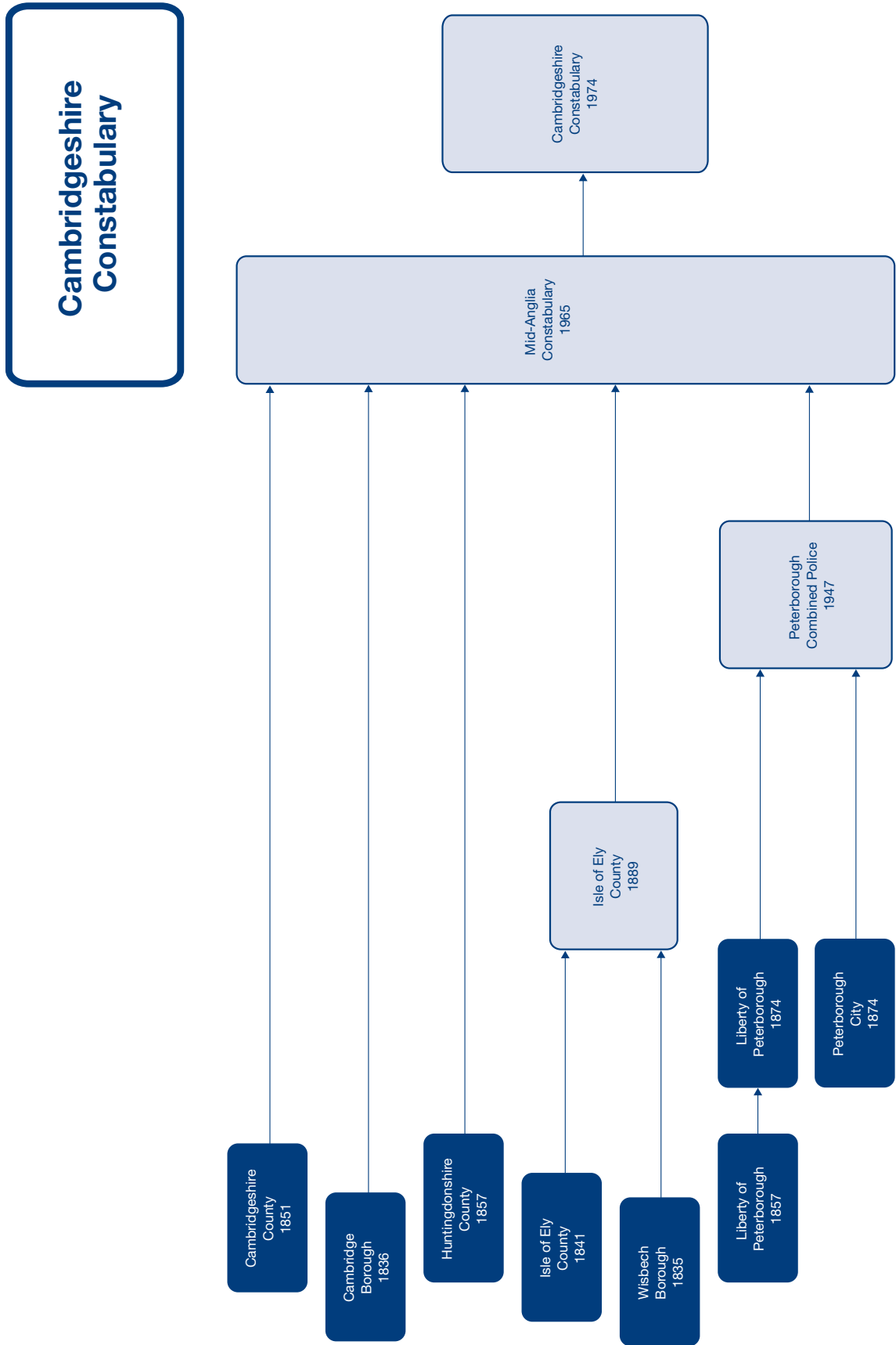
Annex 4

FAMILY TREES OF ENGLISH AND WELSH POLICE FORCES, 1814–2006 (excluding London)

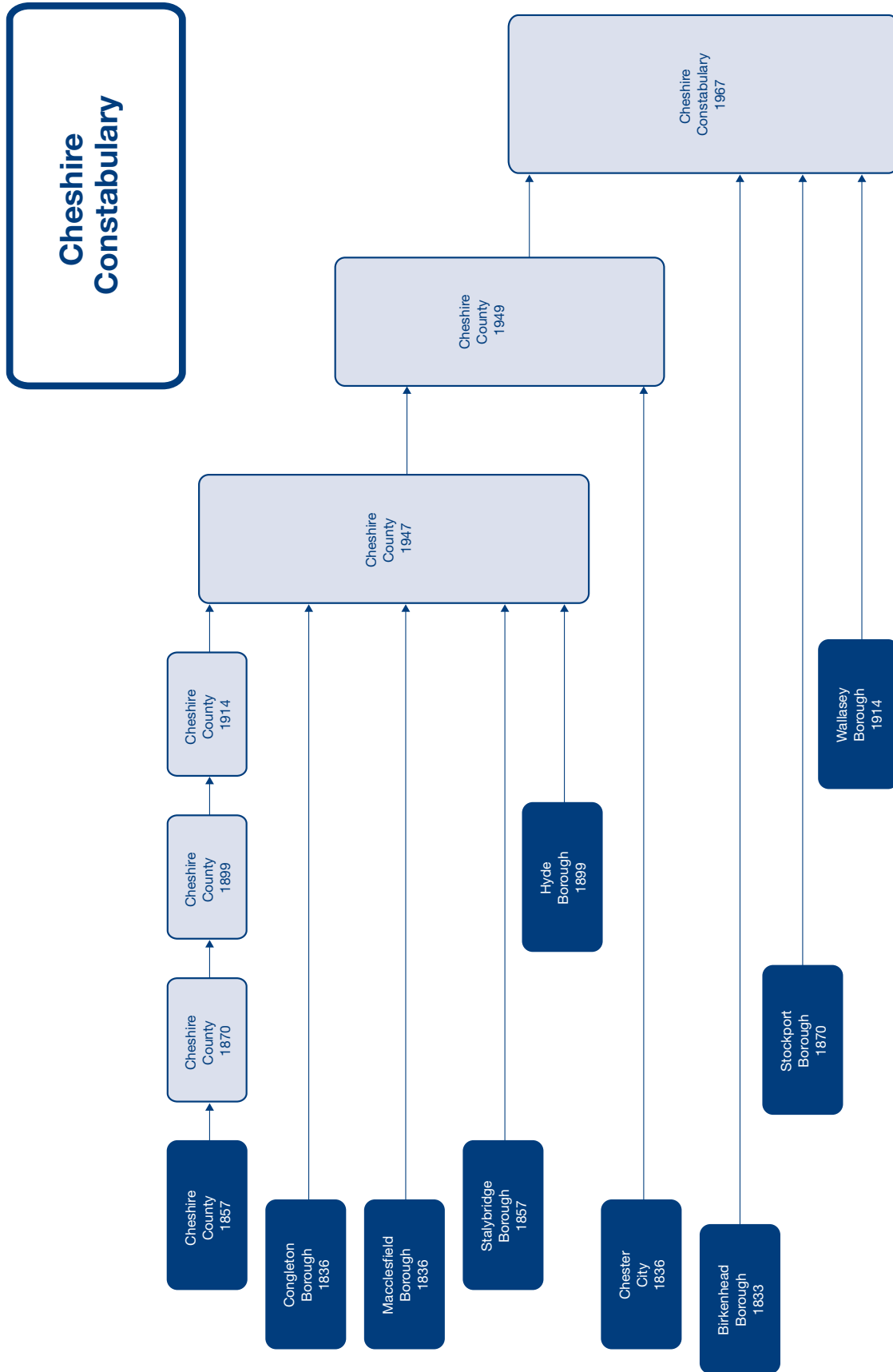




**Bedfordshire
Police**

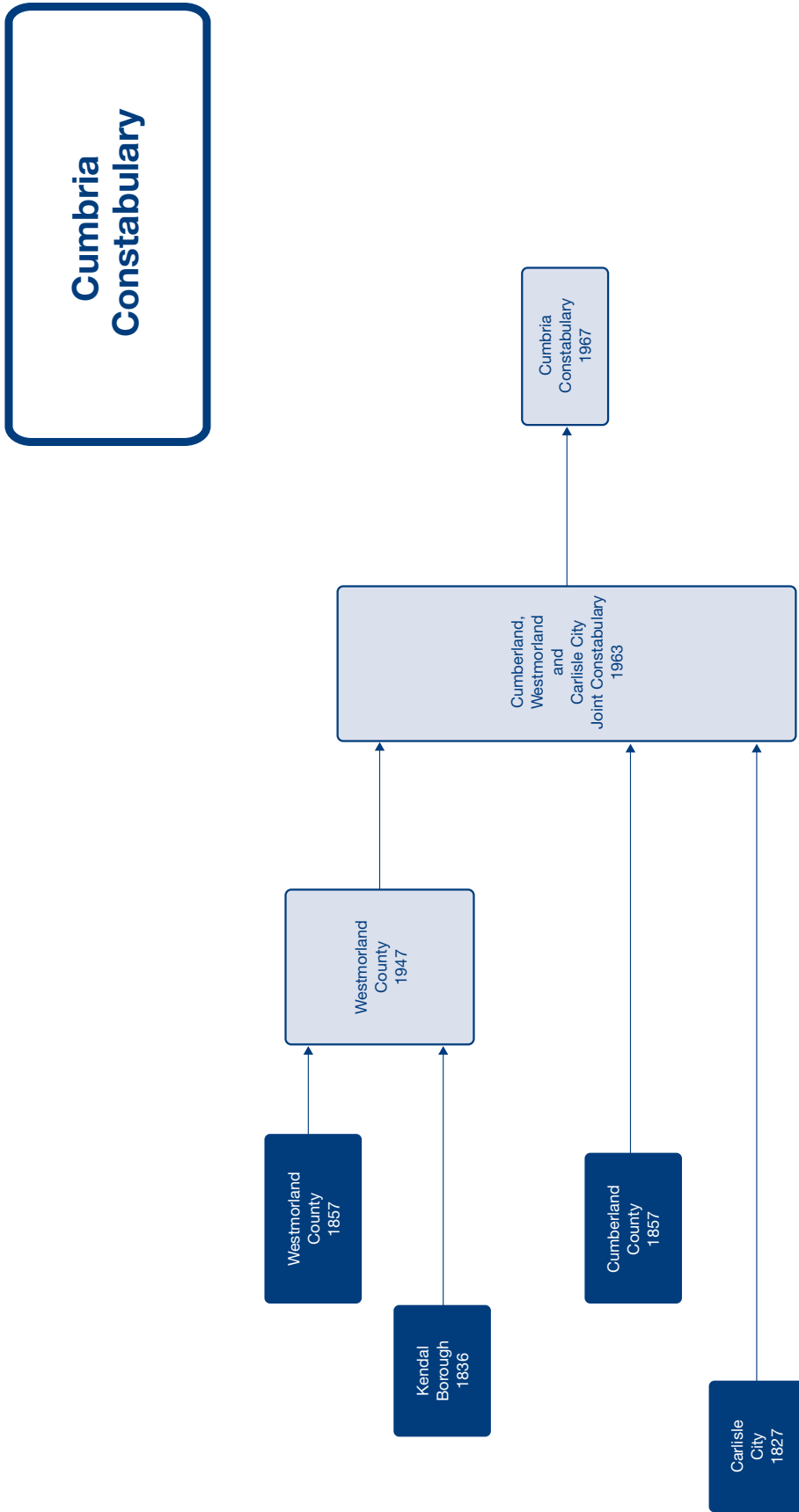


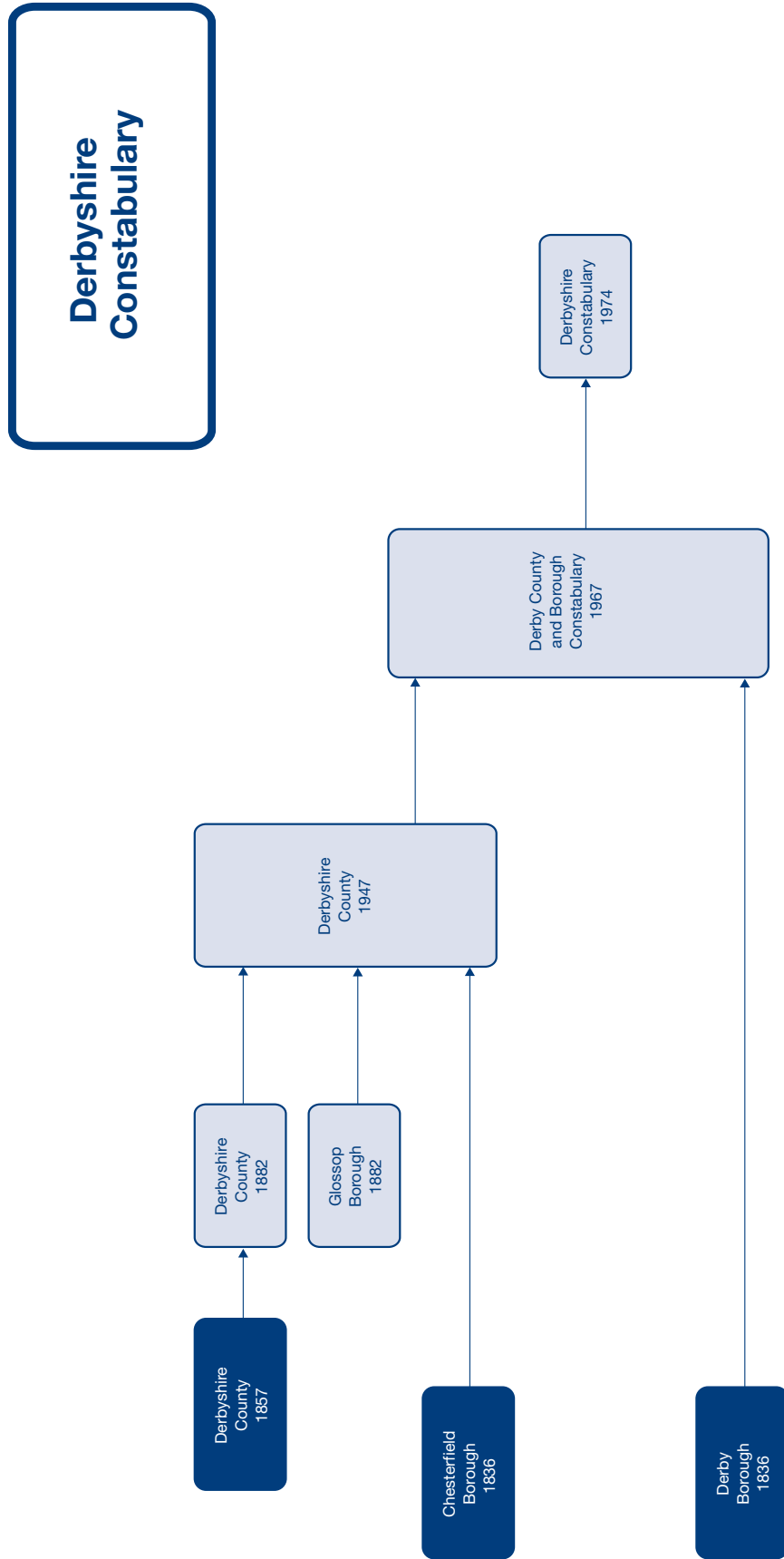
Cambridgeshire Constabulary

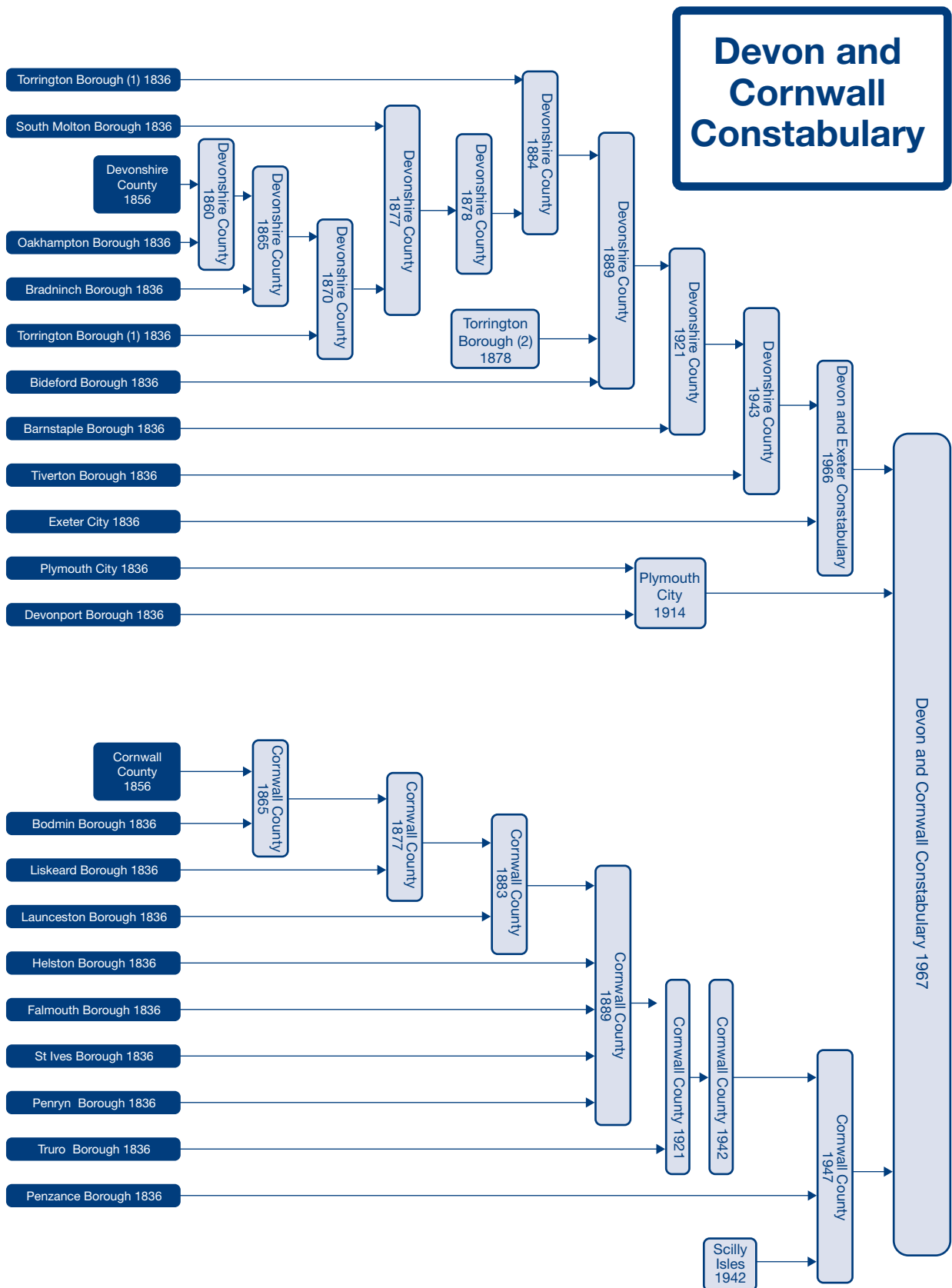


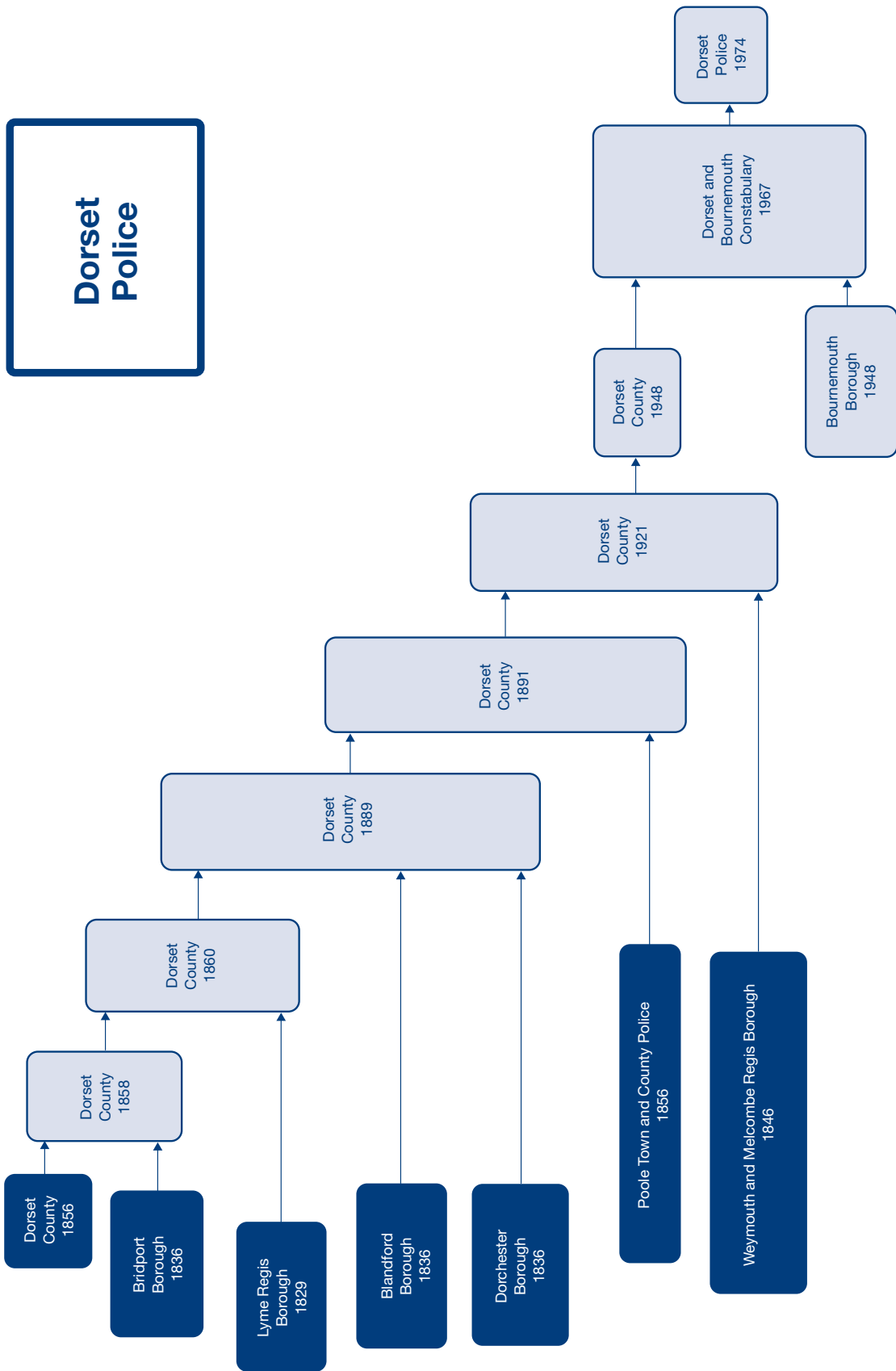
Cleveland Constabulary



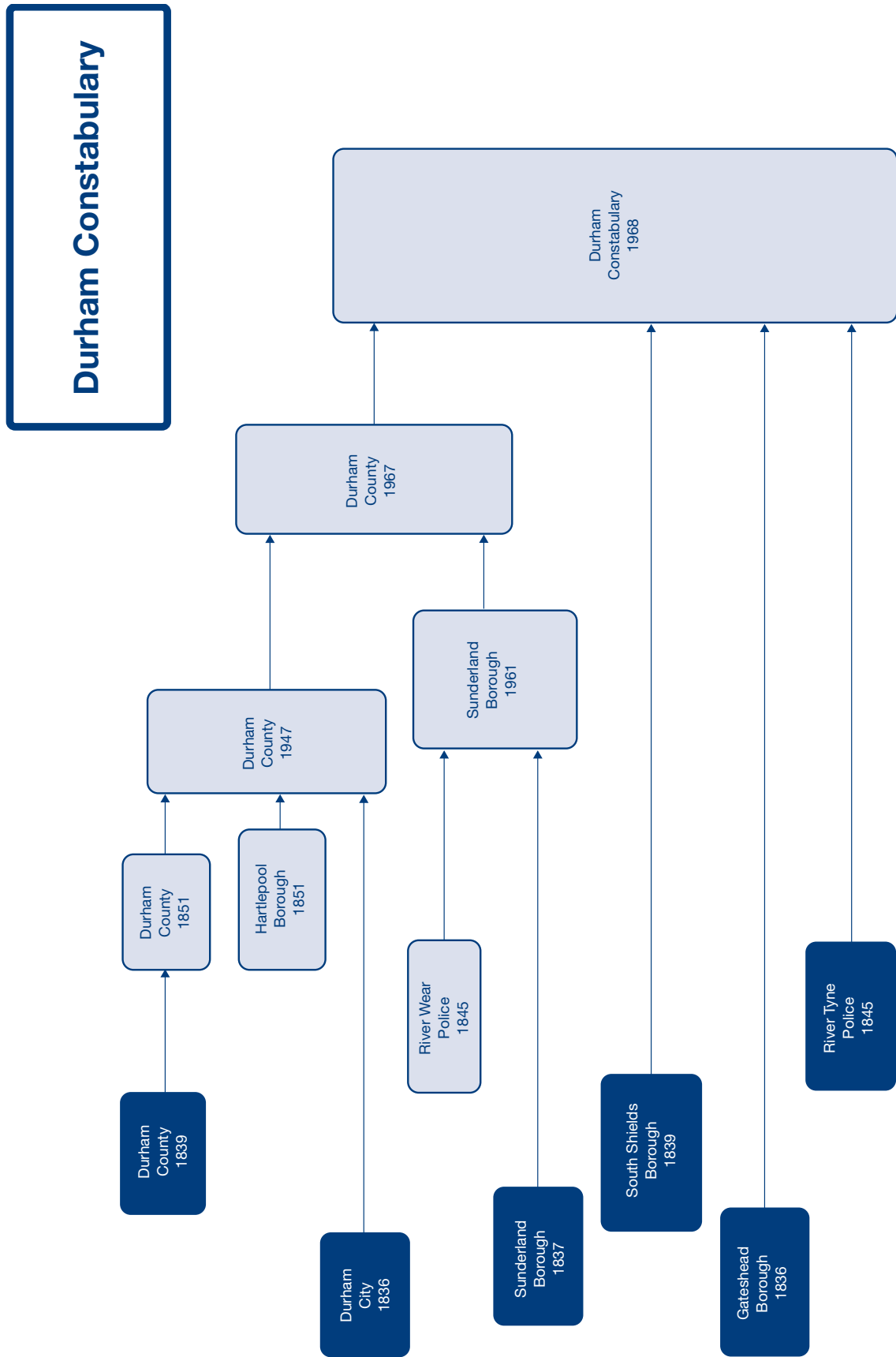


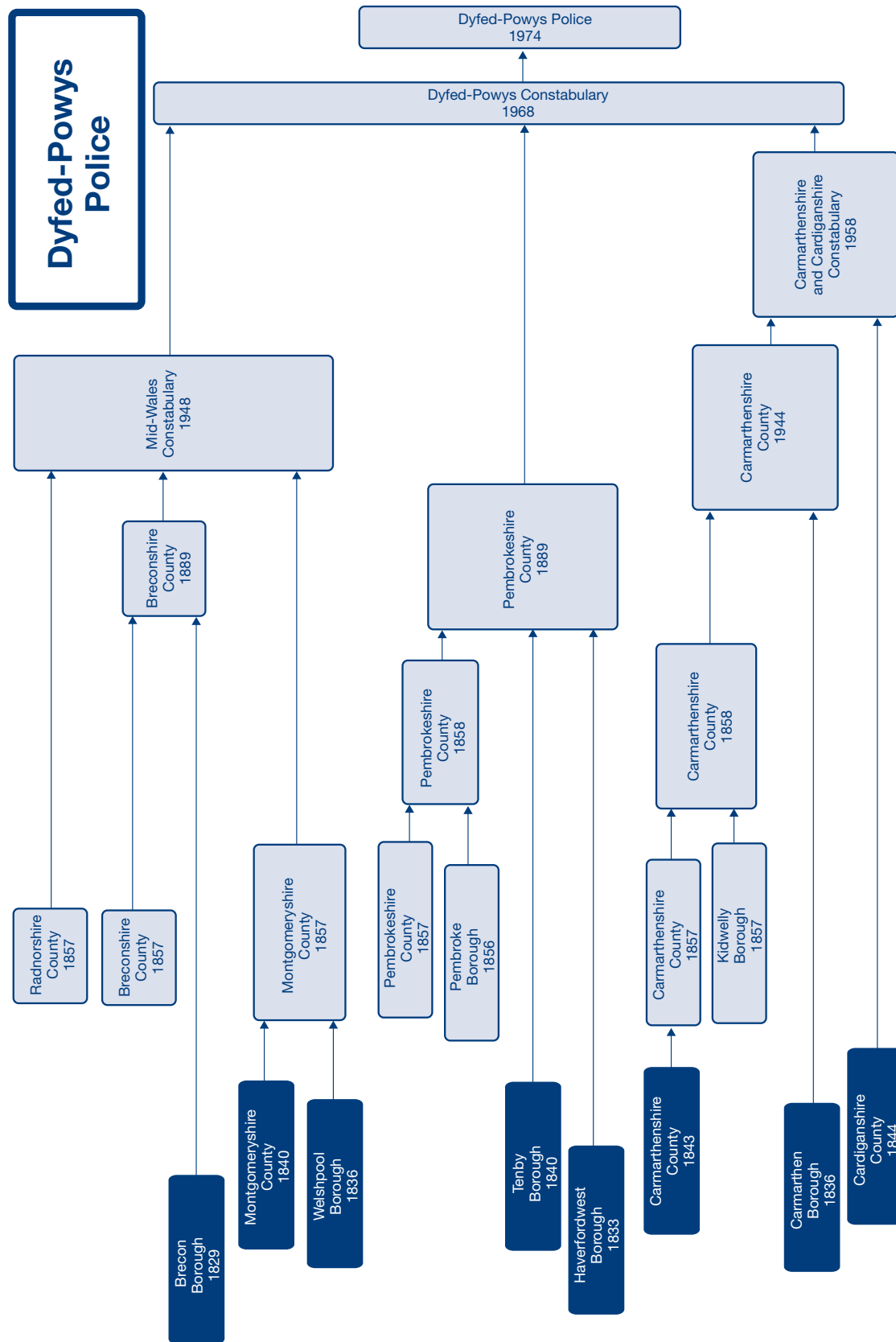


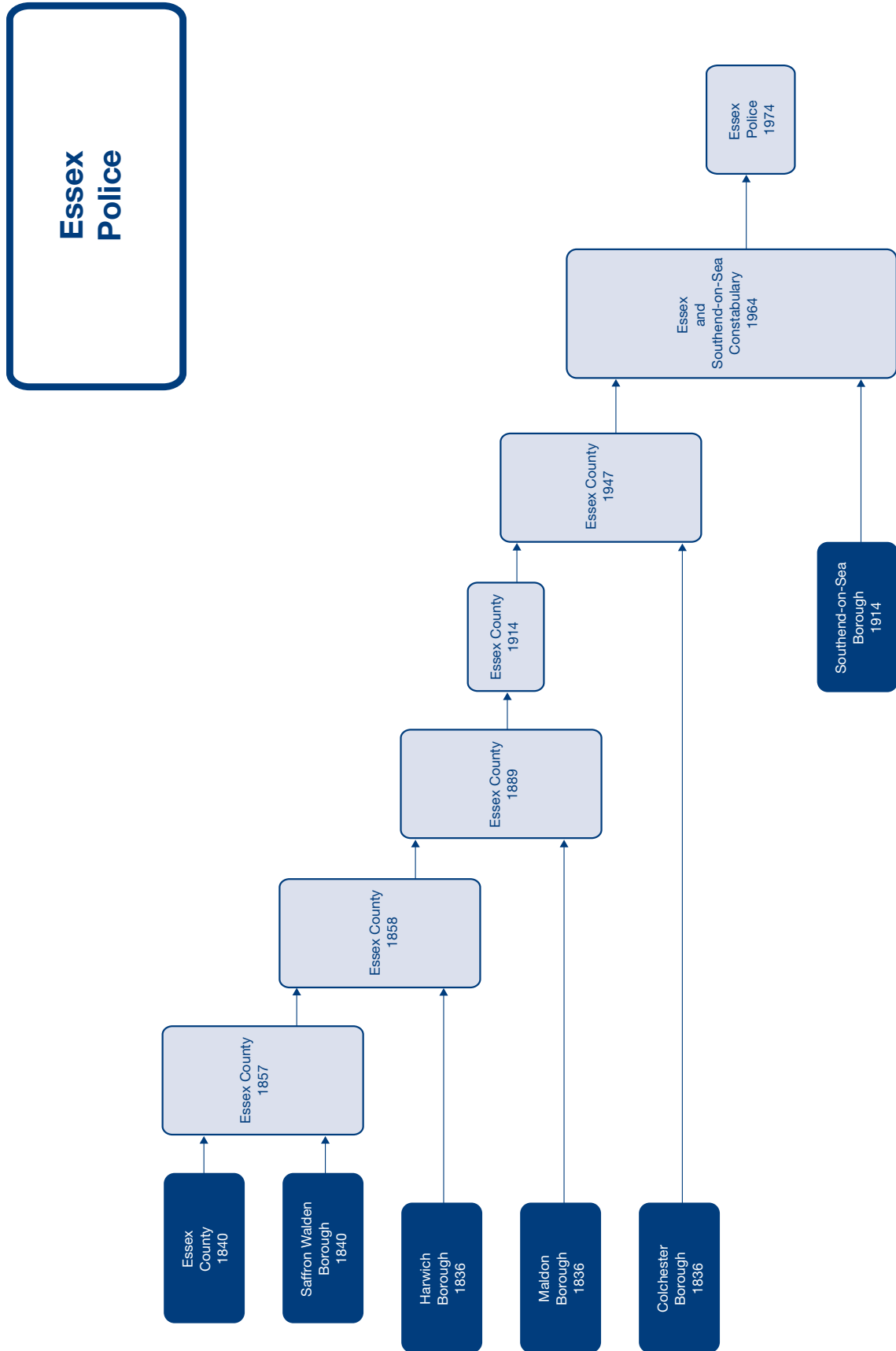


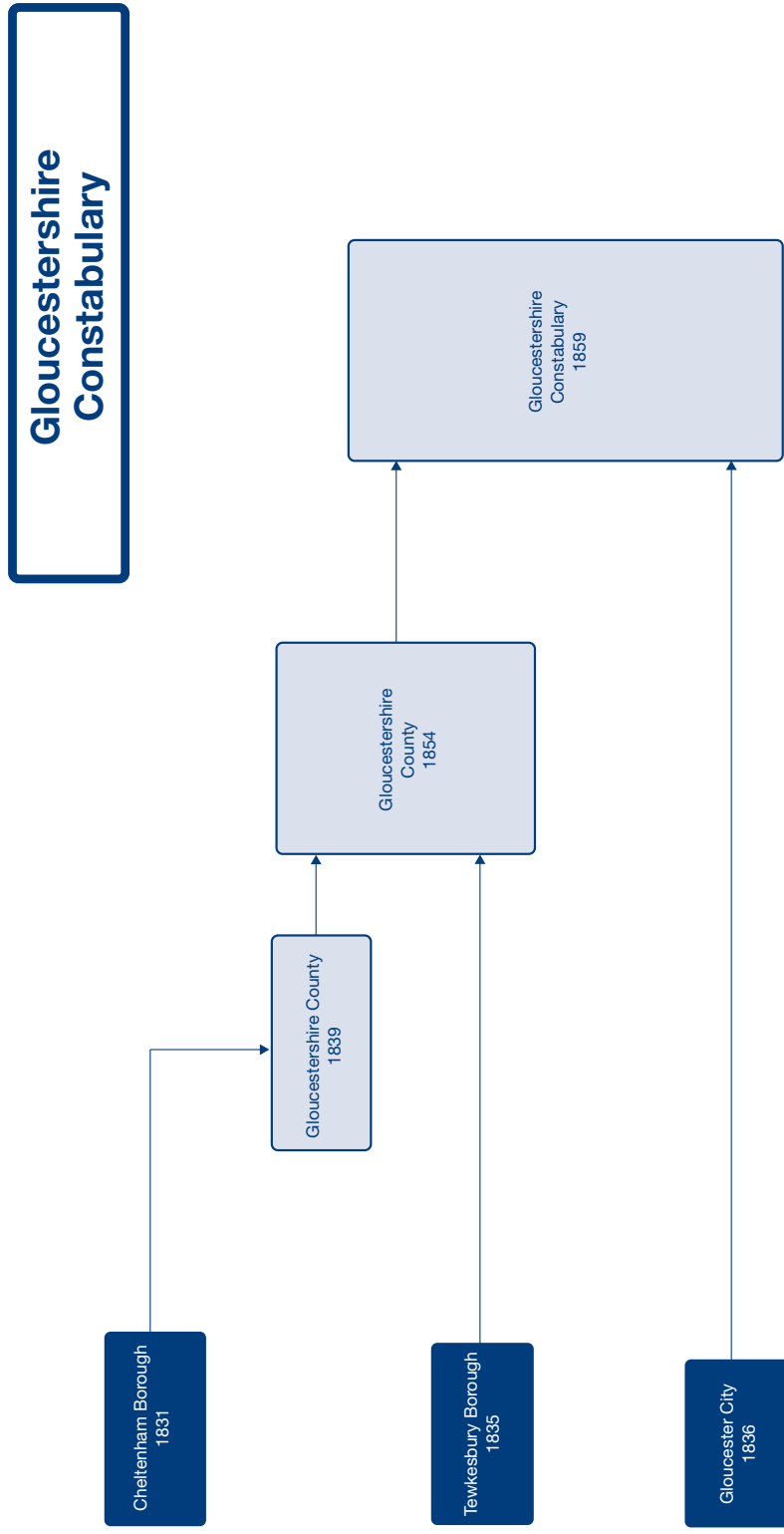


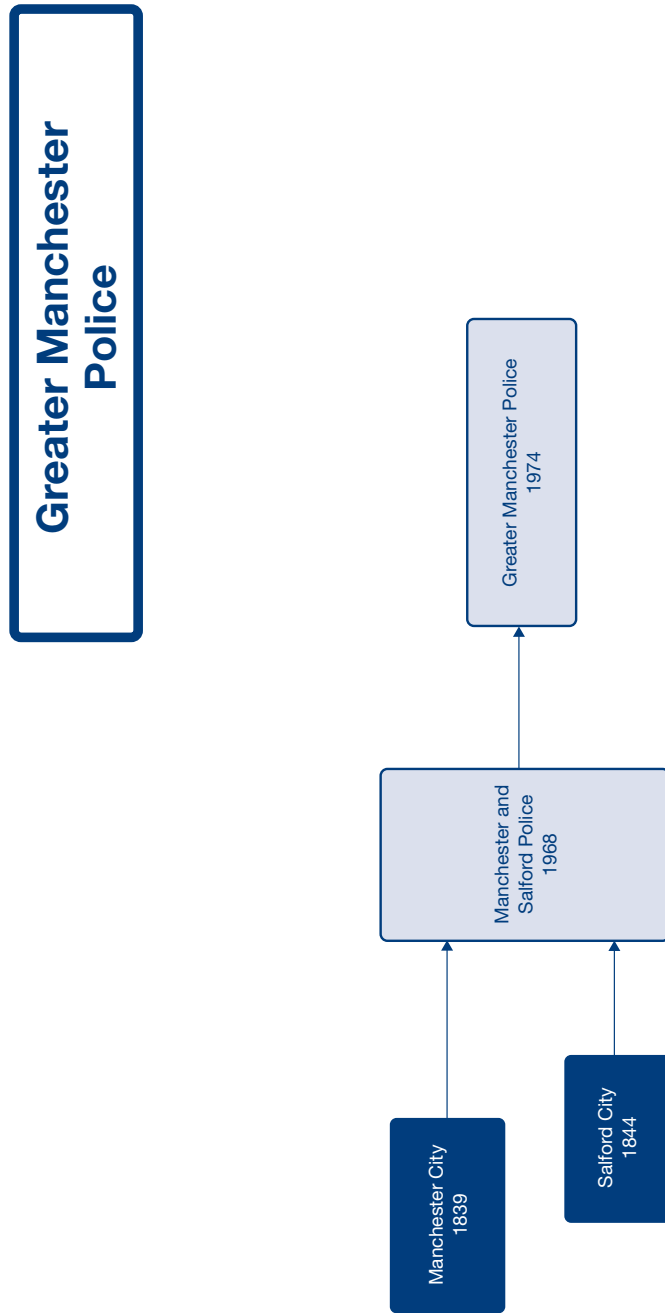
Dorset Police

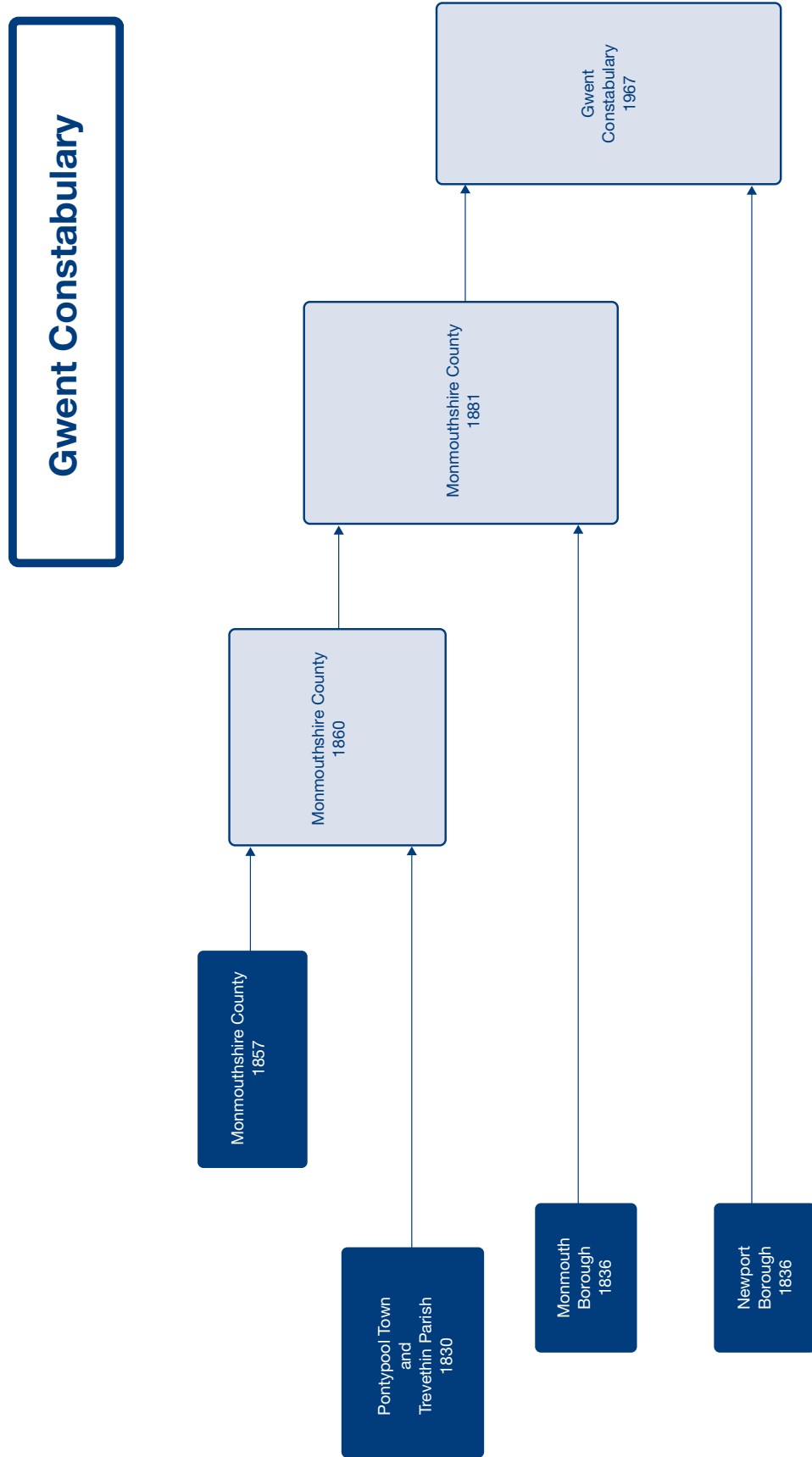


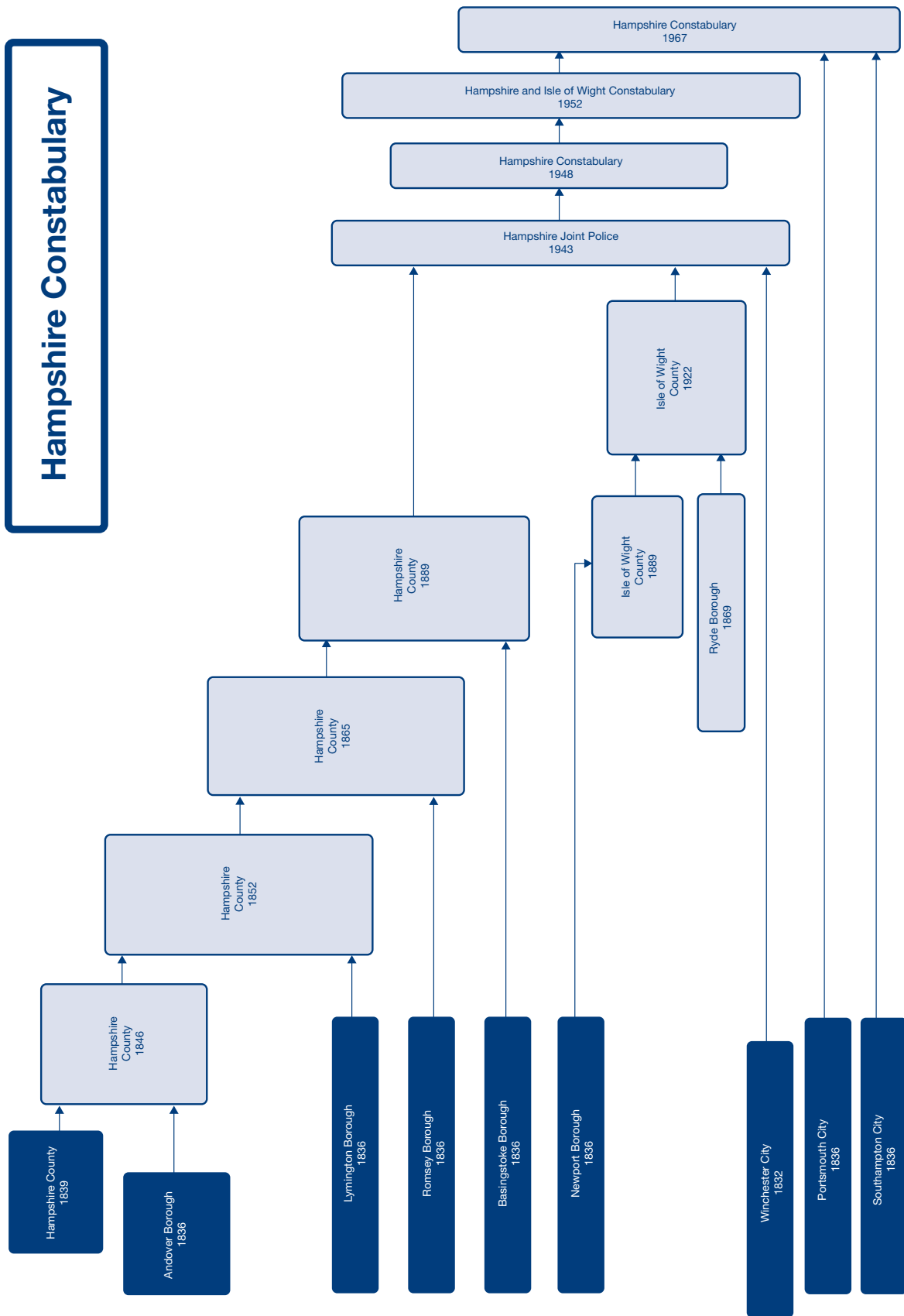


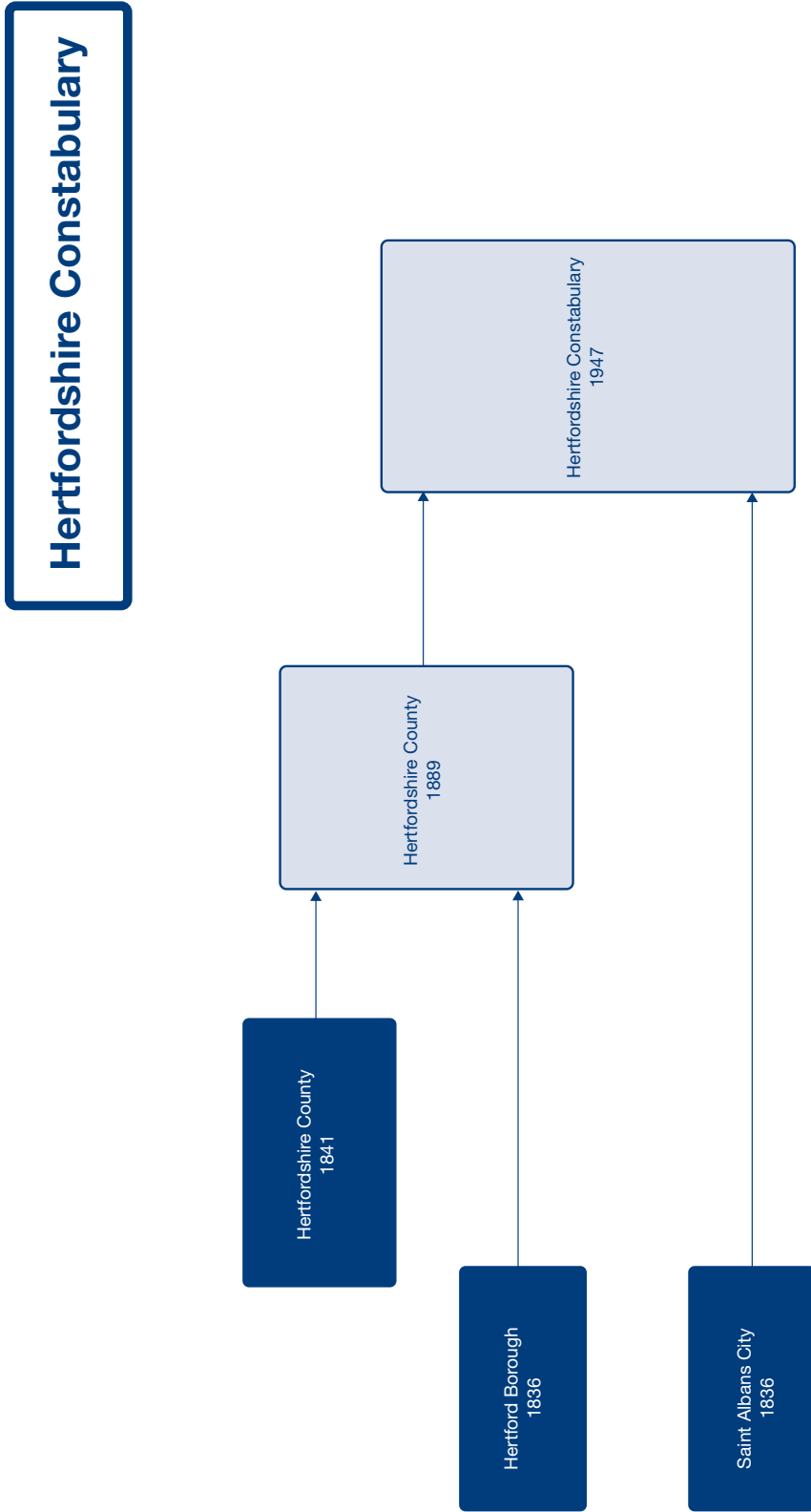


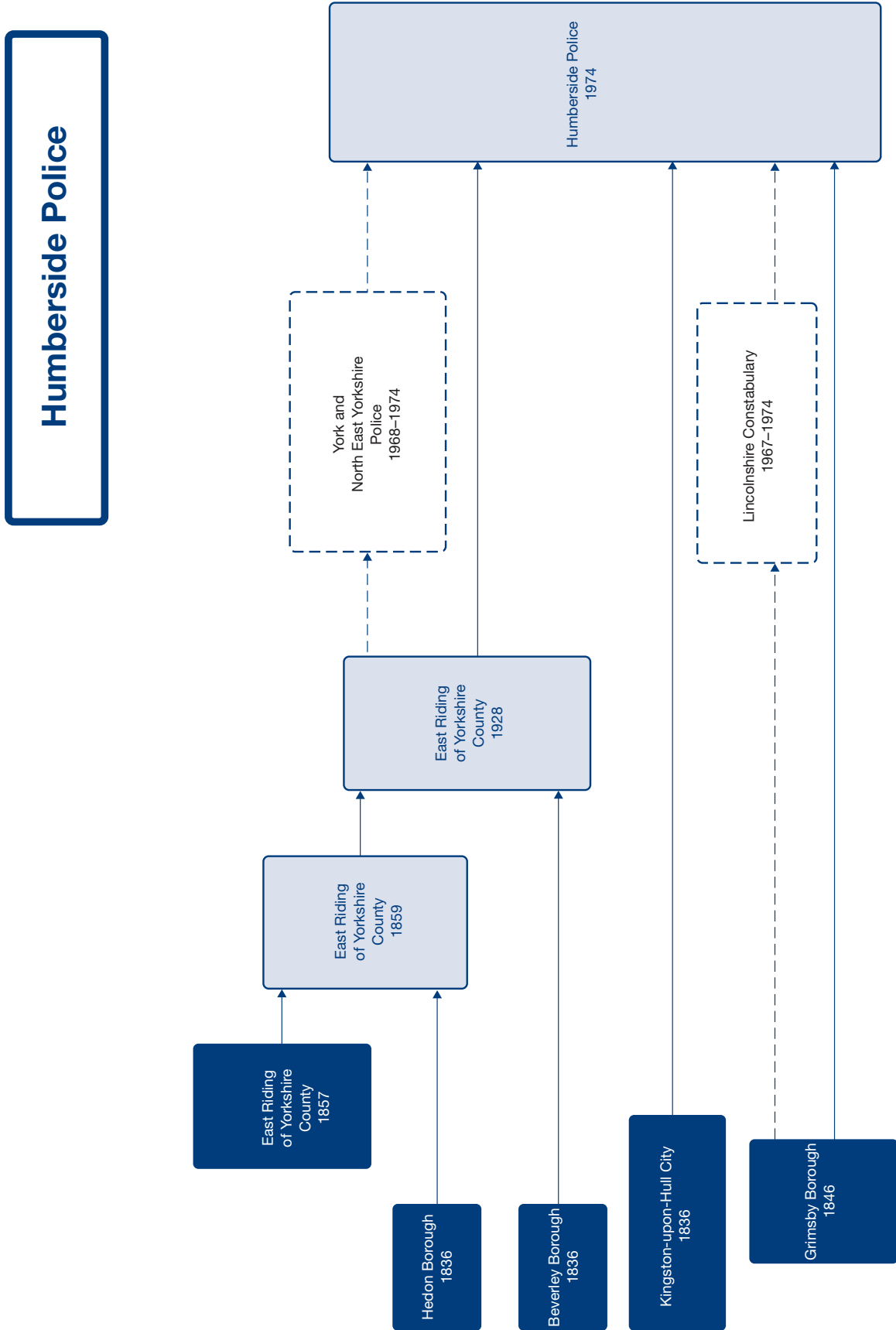




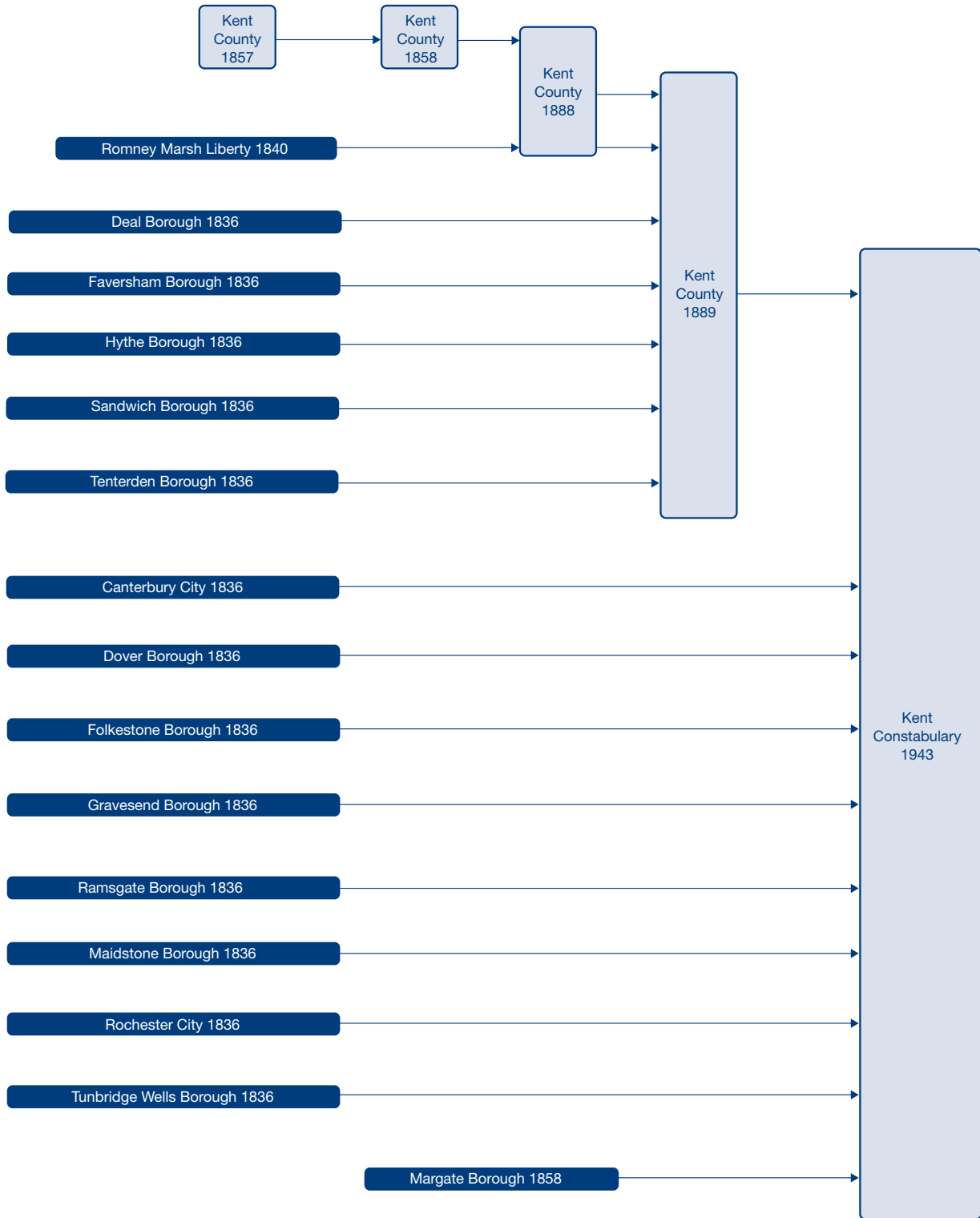




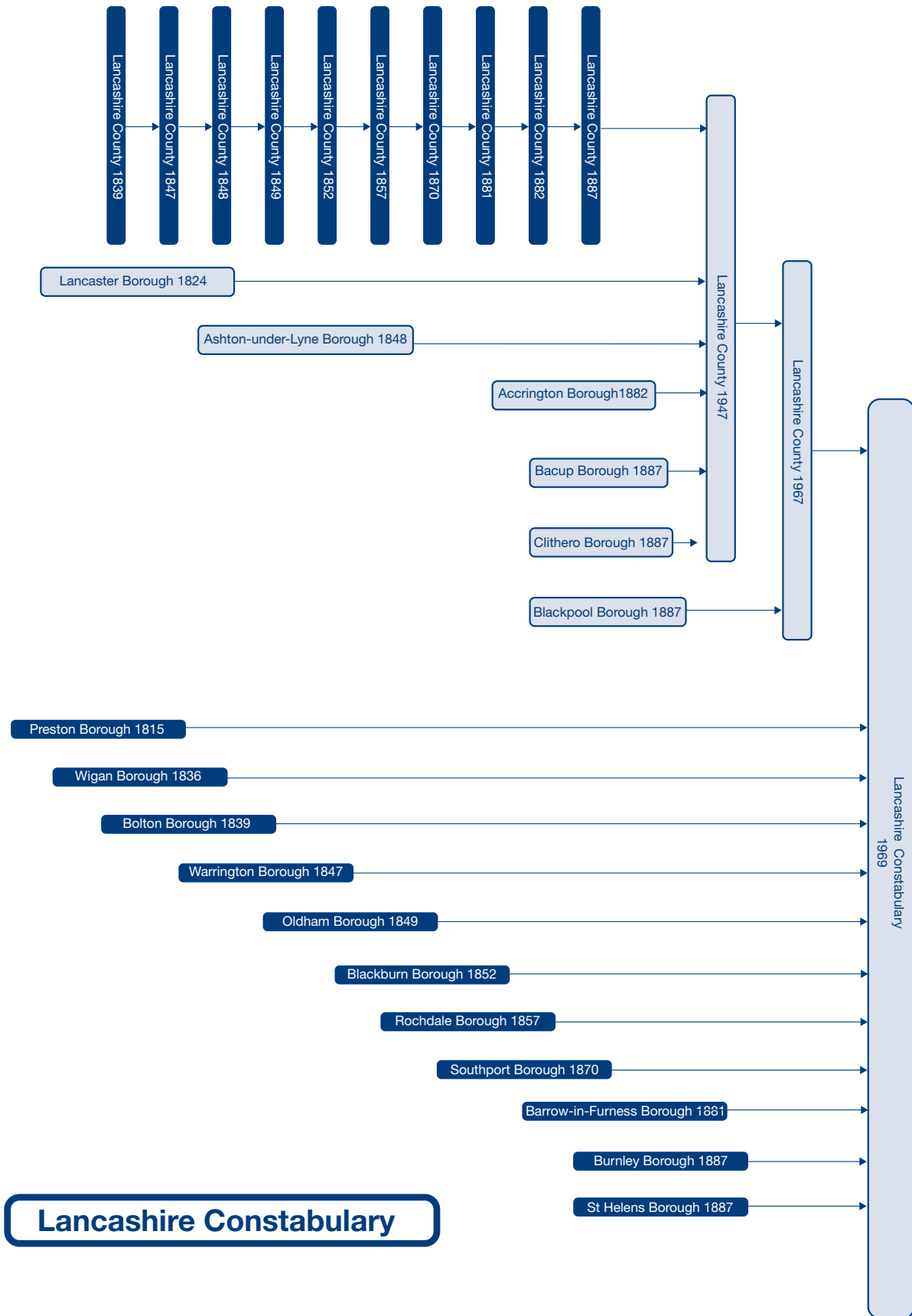


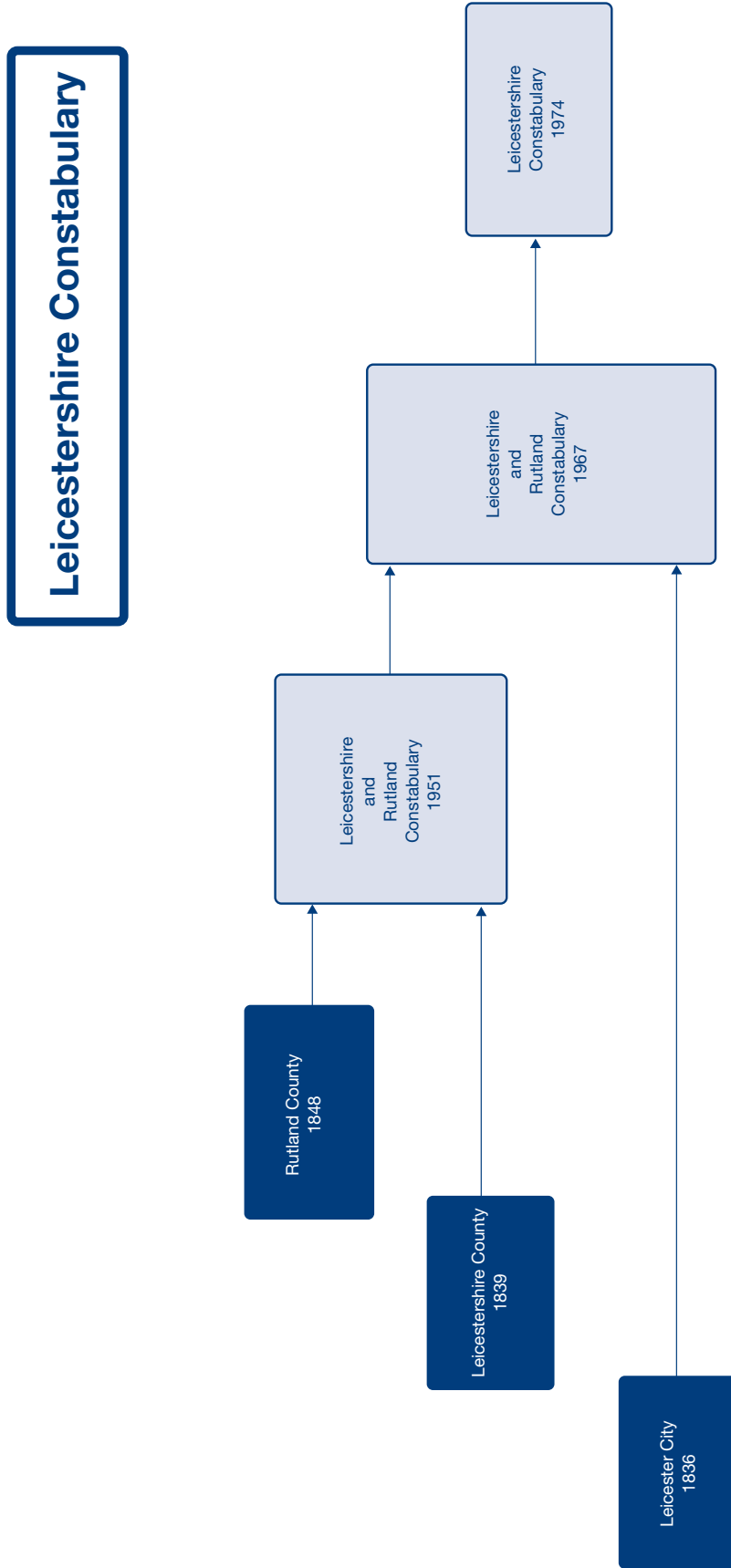


Kent Constabulary

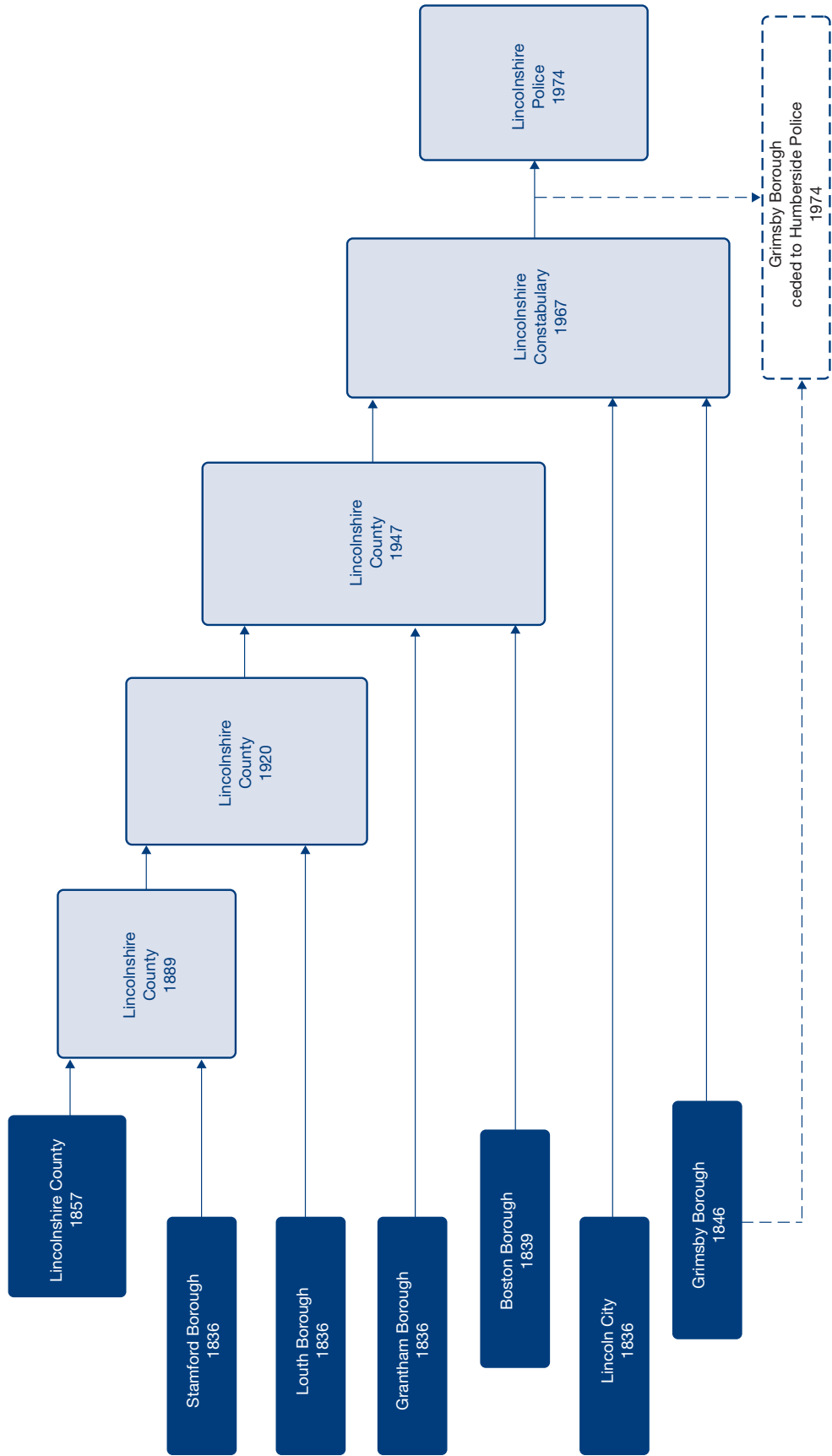


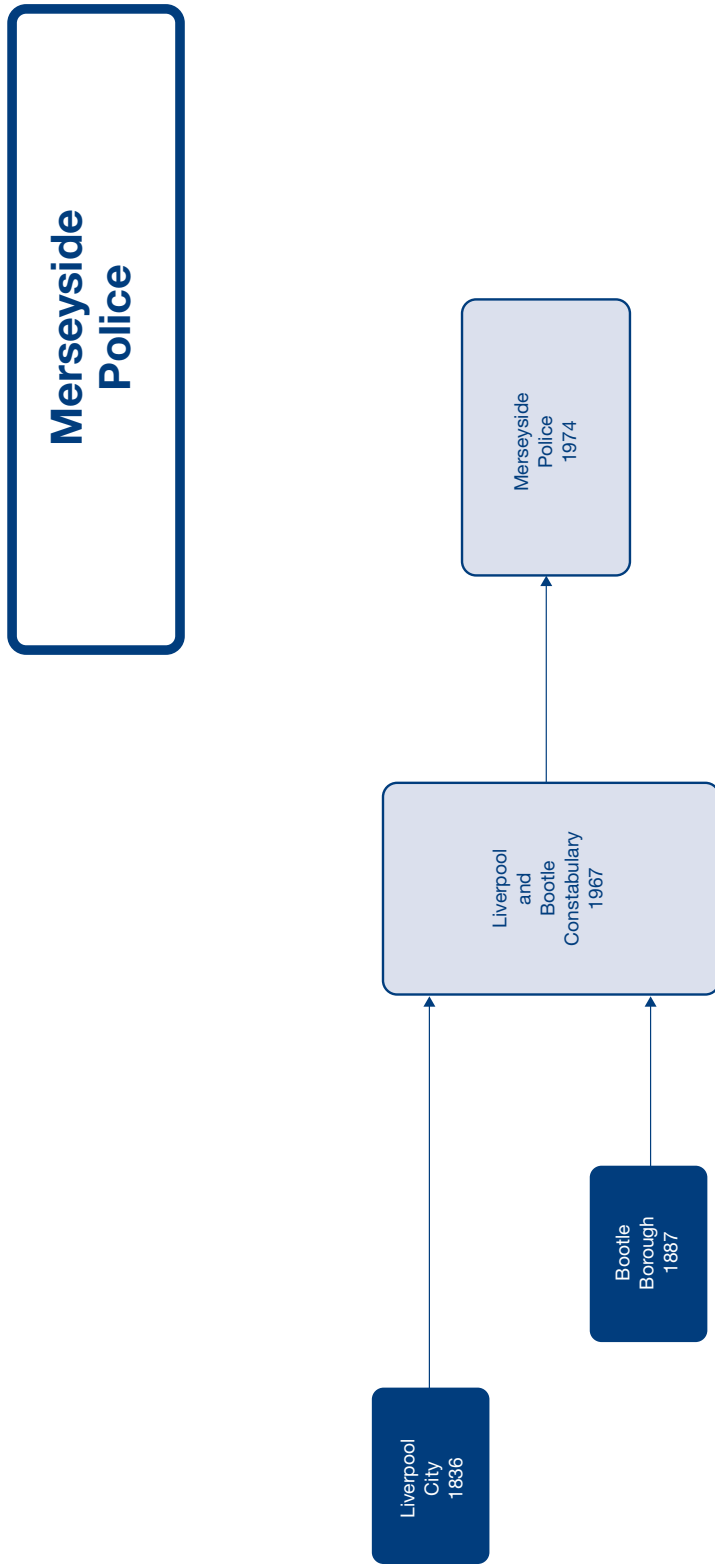
The history of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary – The first 150 years

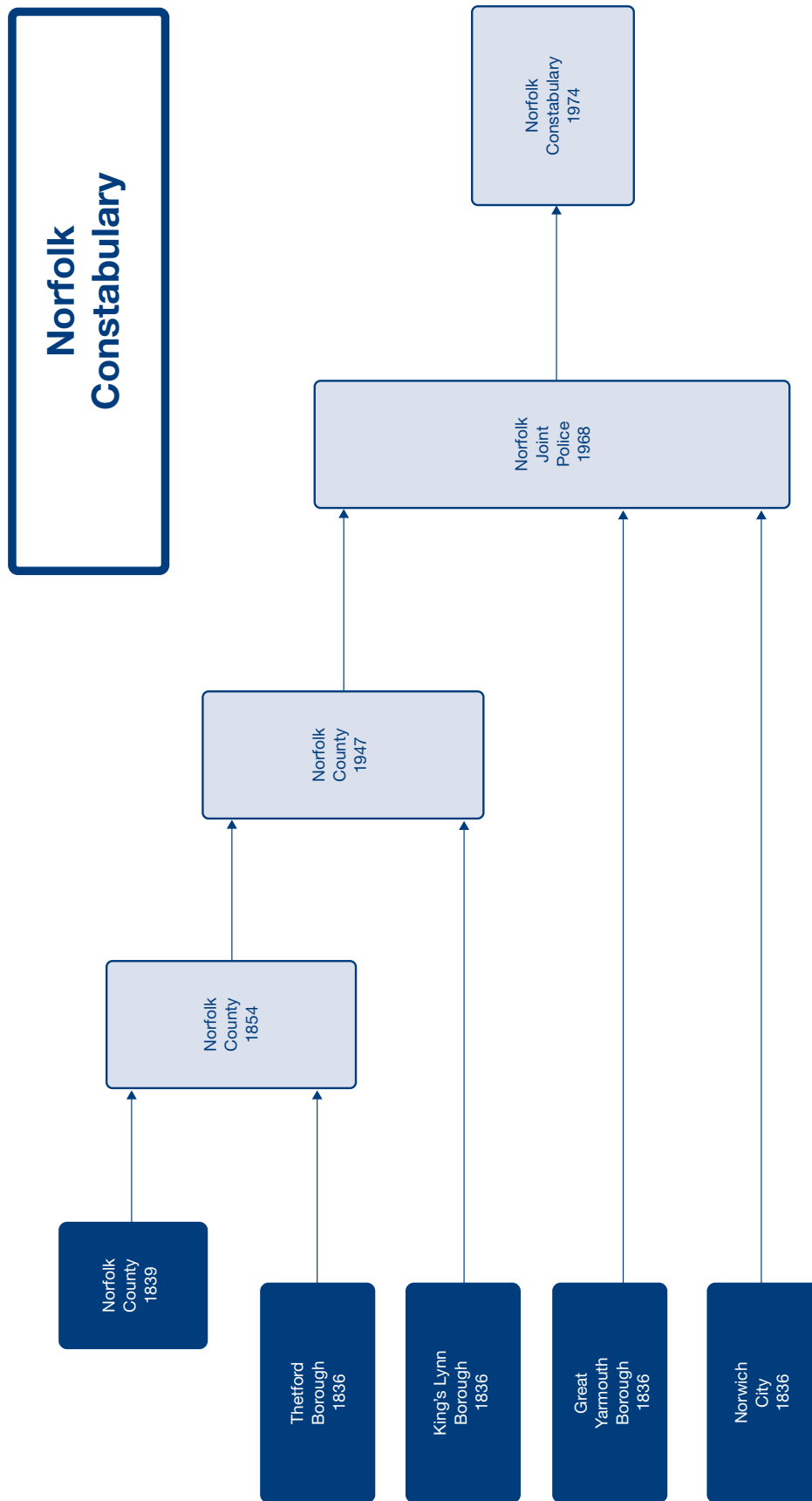


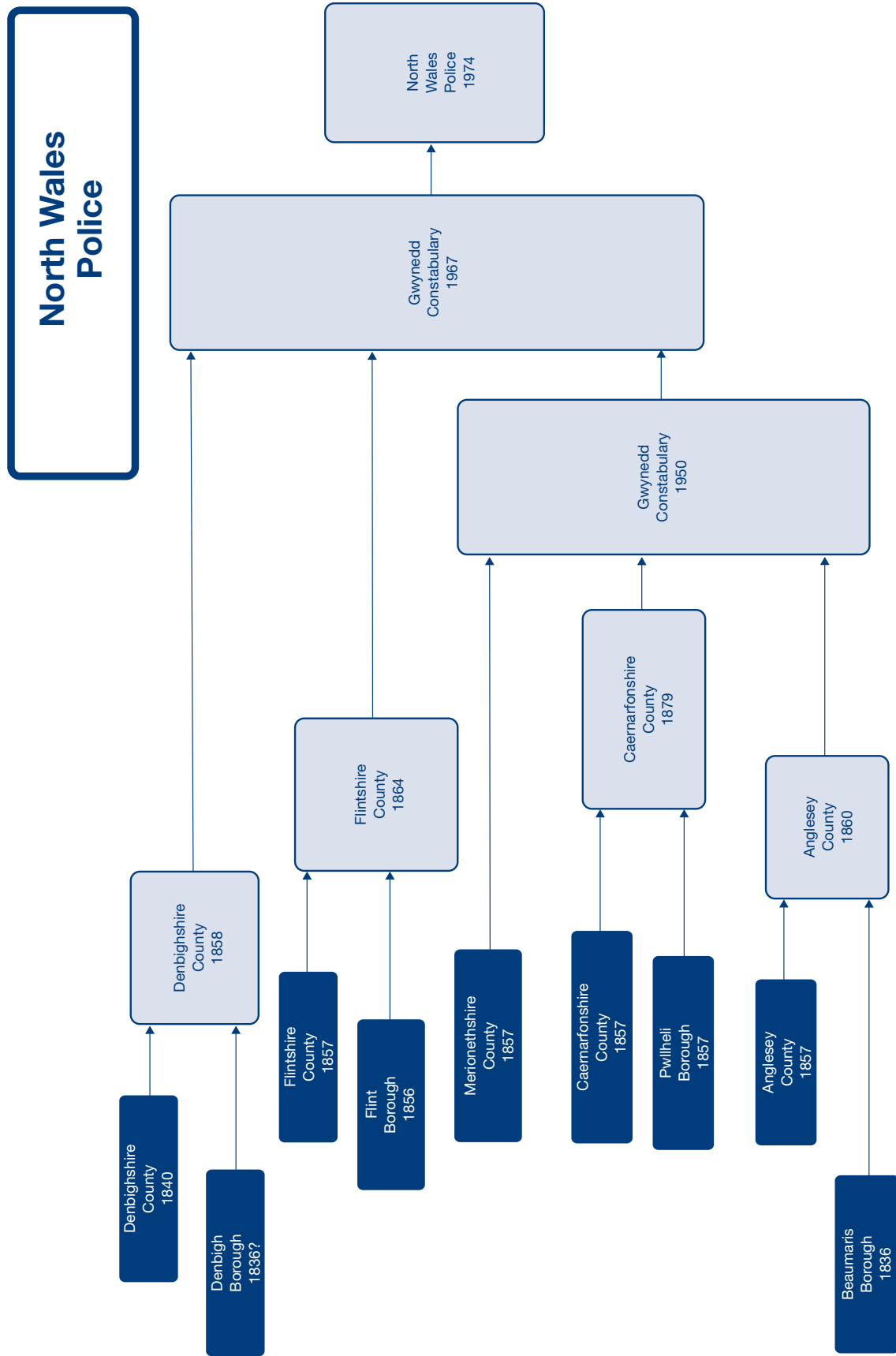


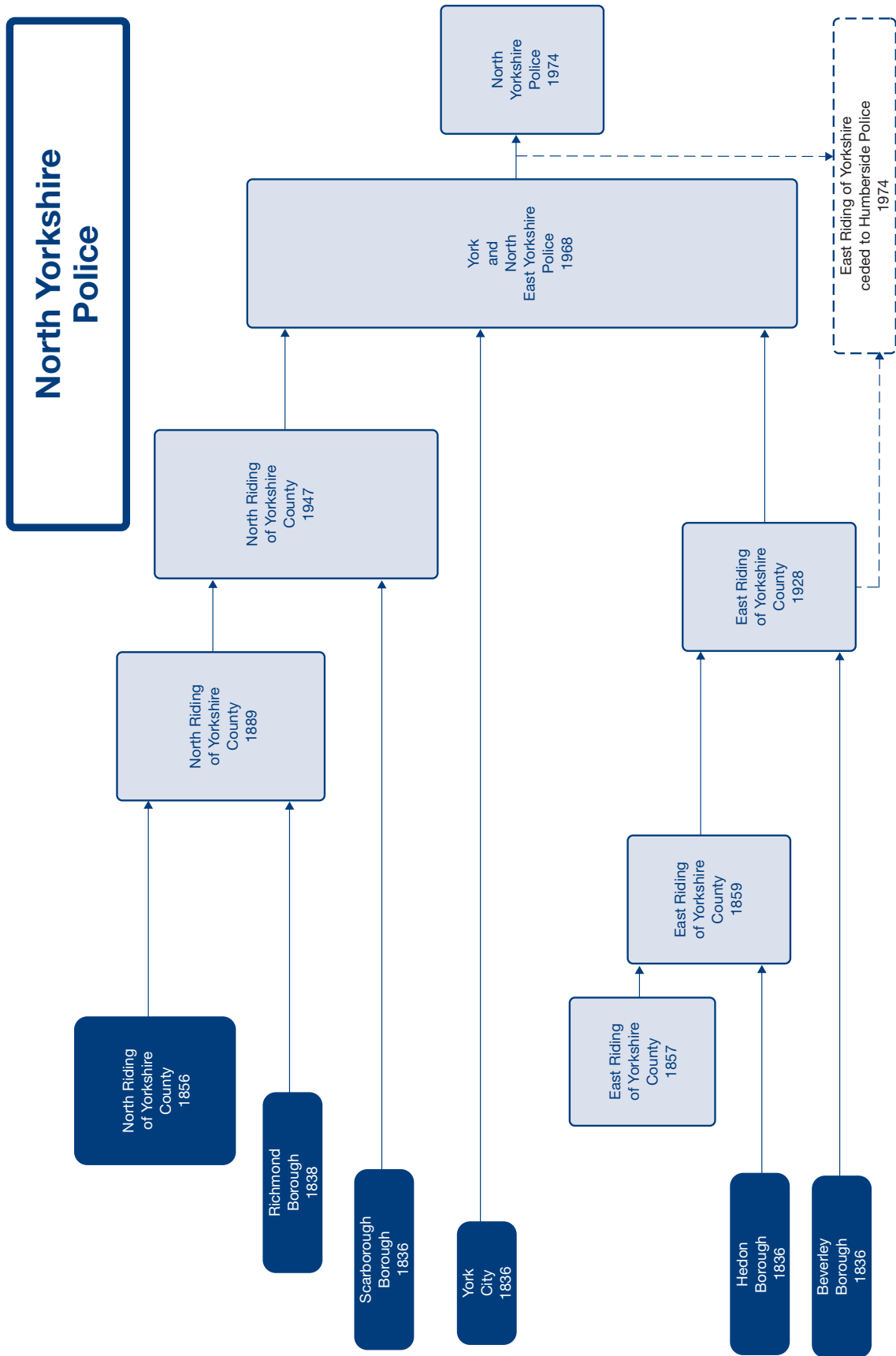
Lincolnshire Police

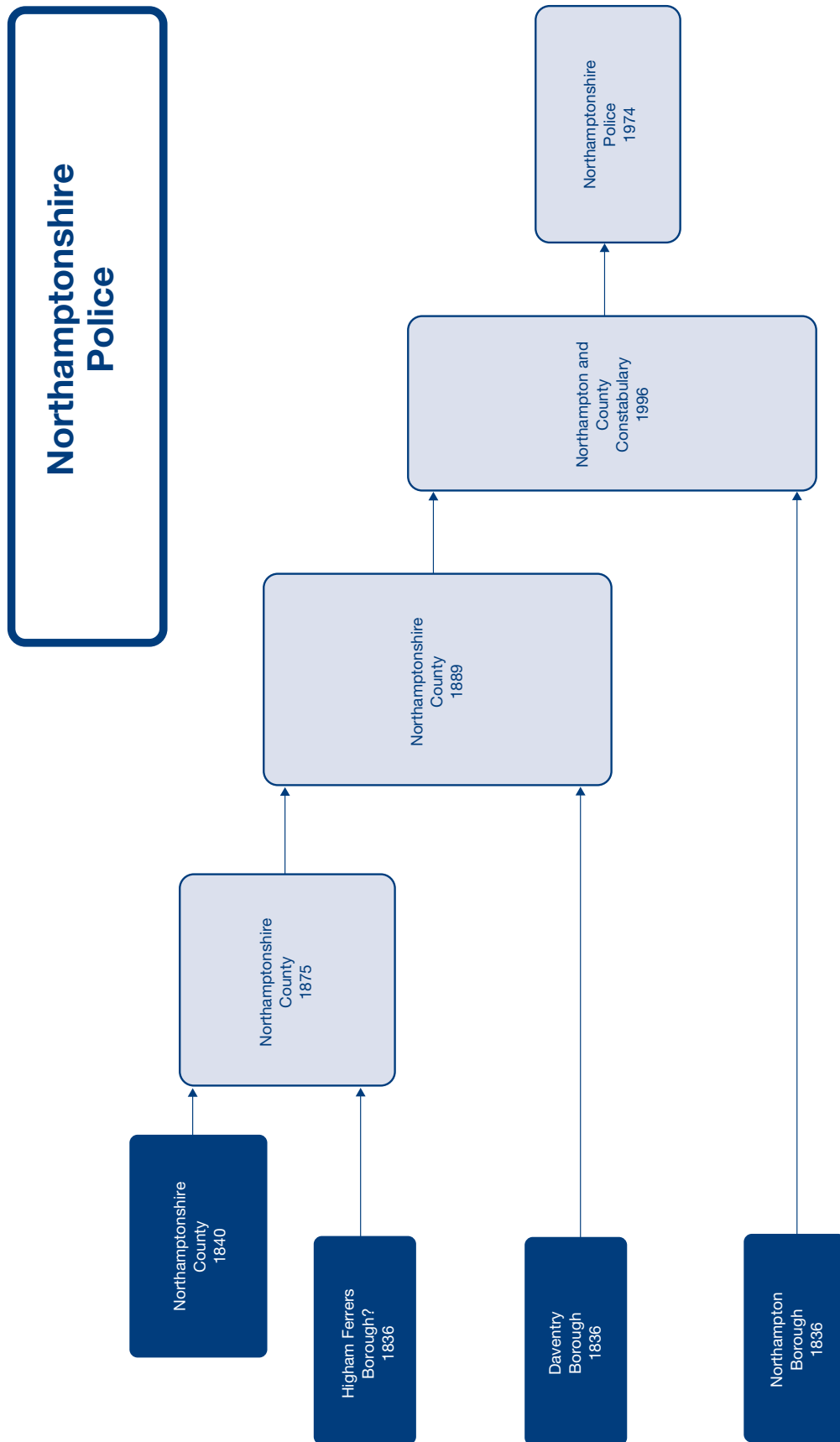


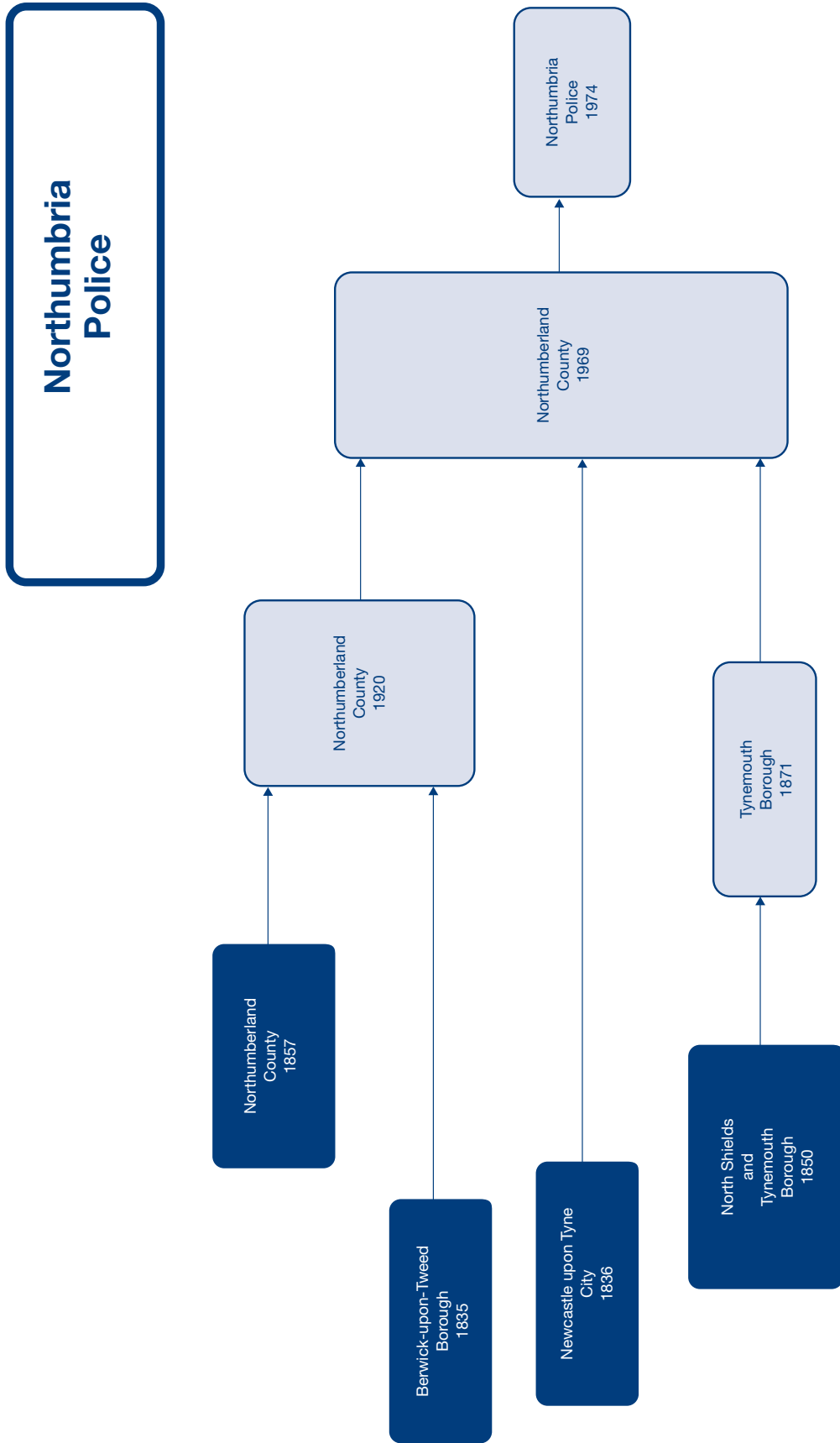


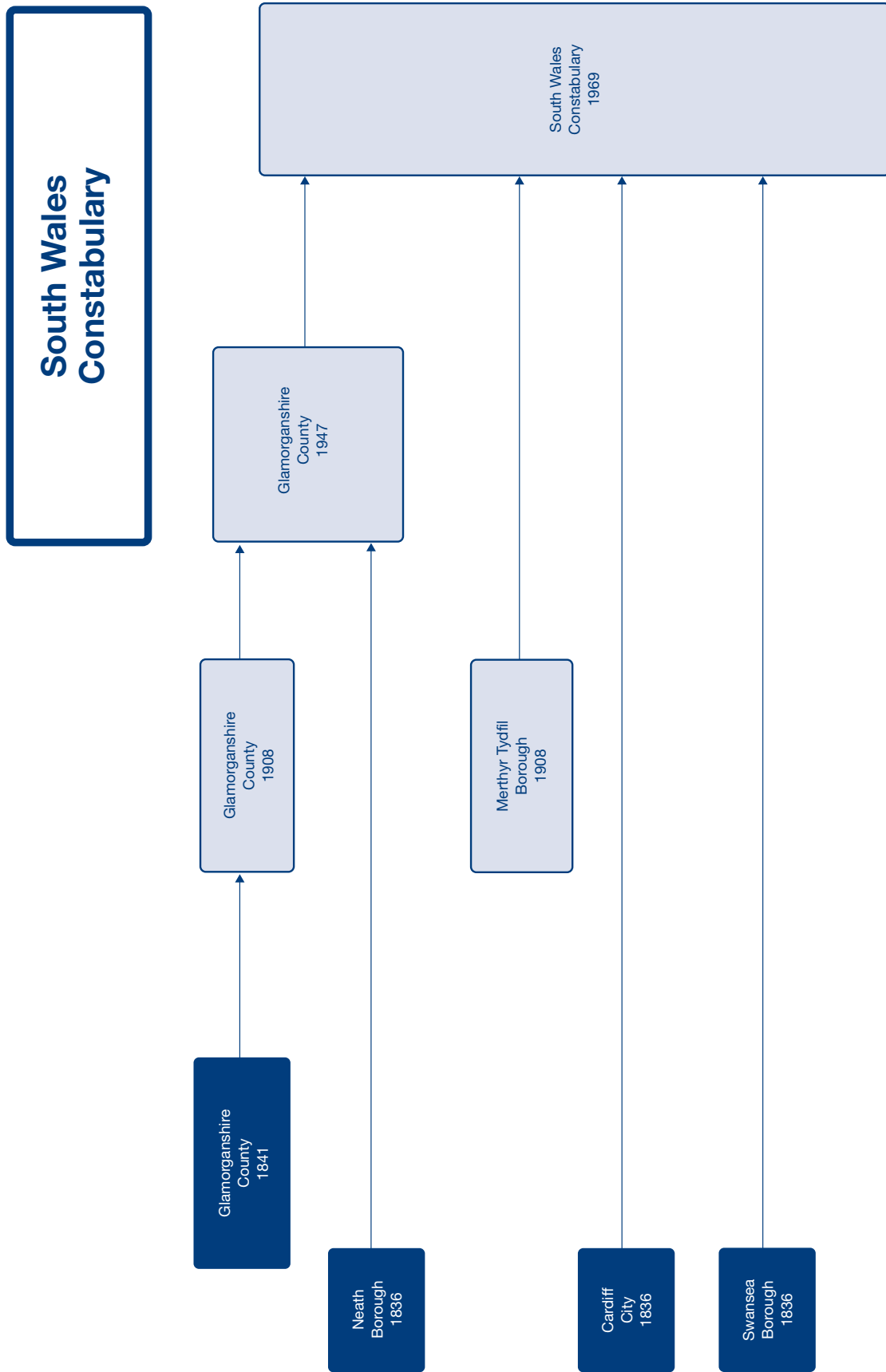


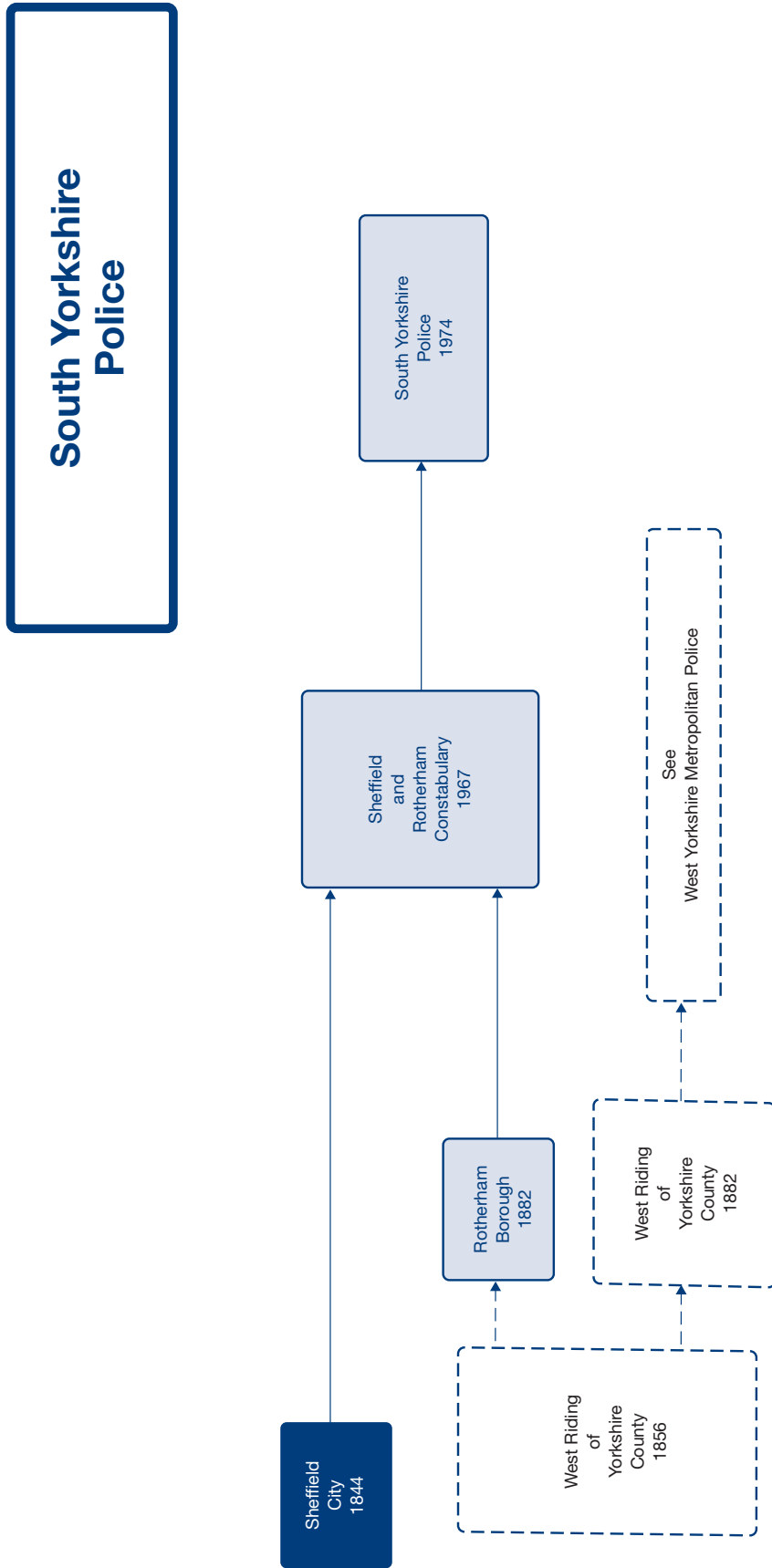


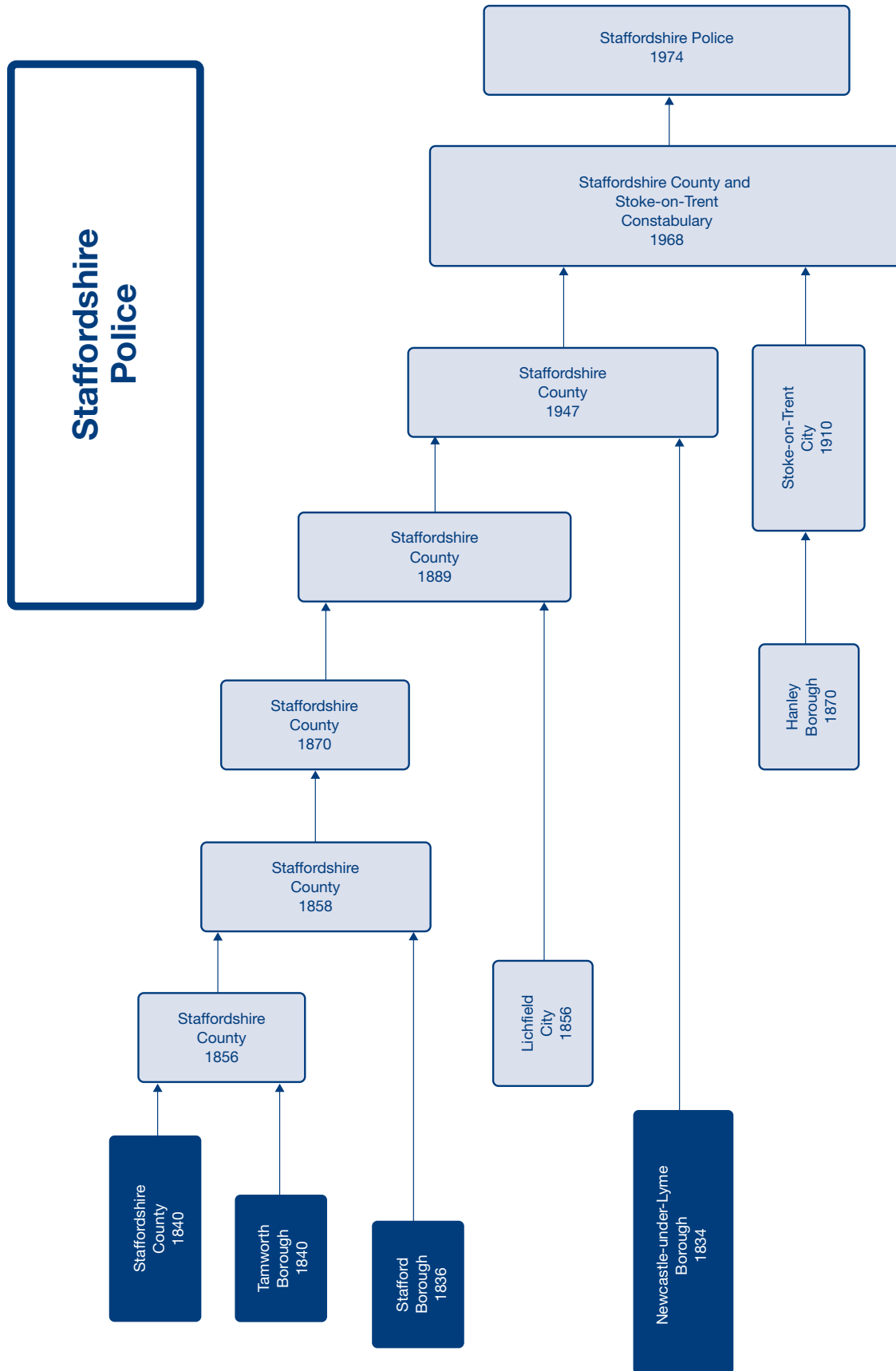


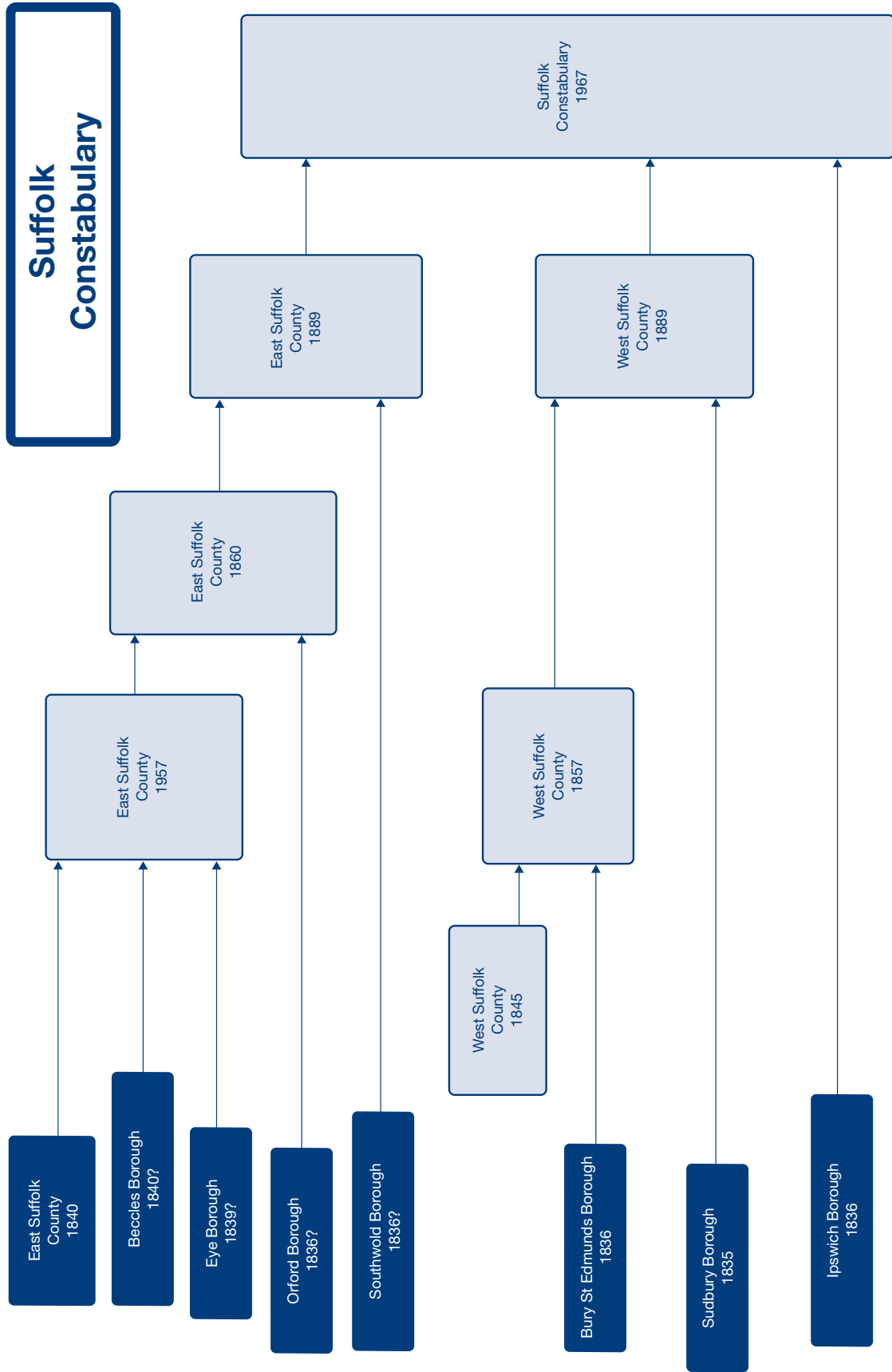


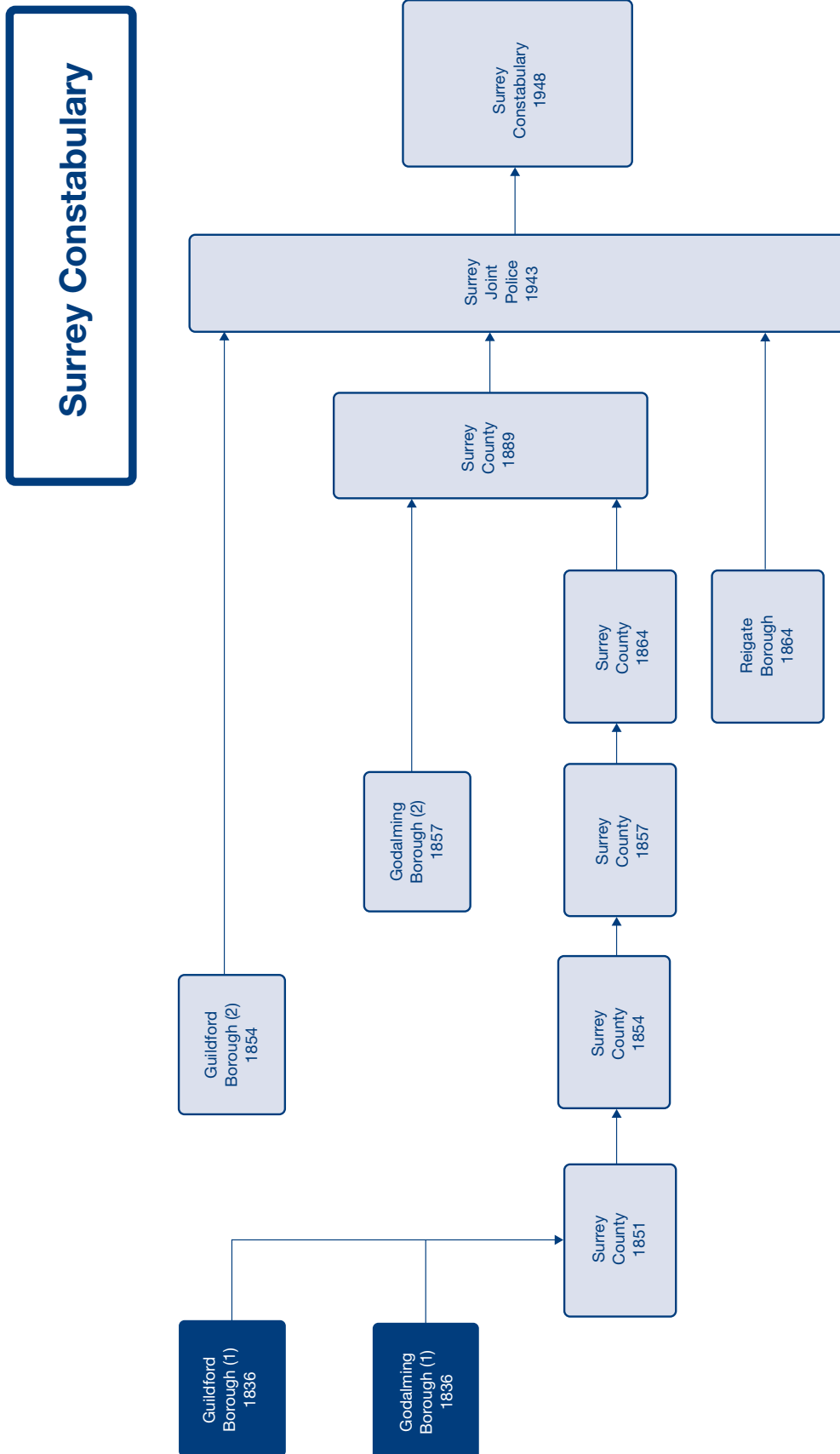


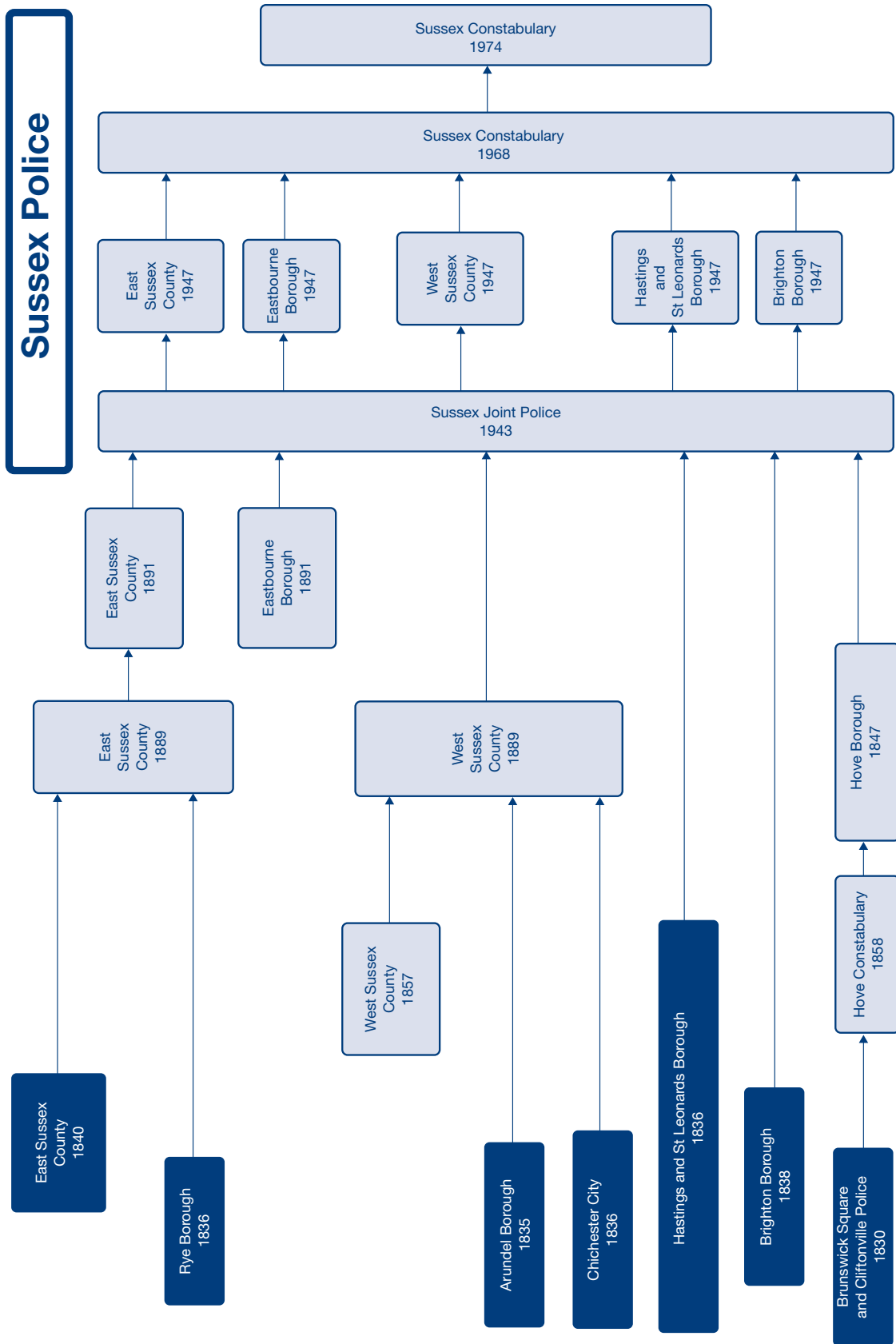


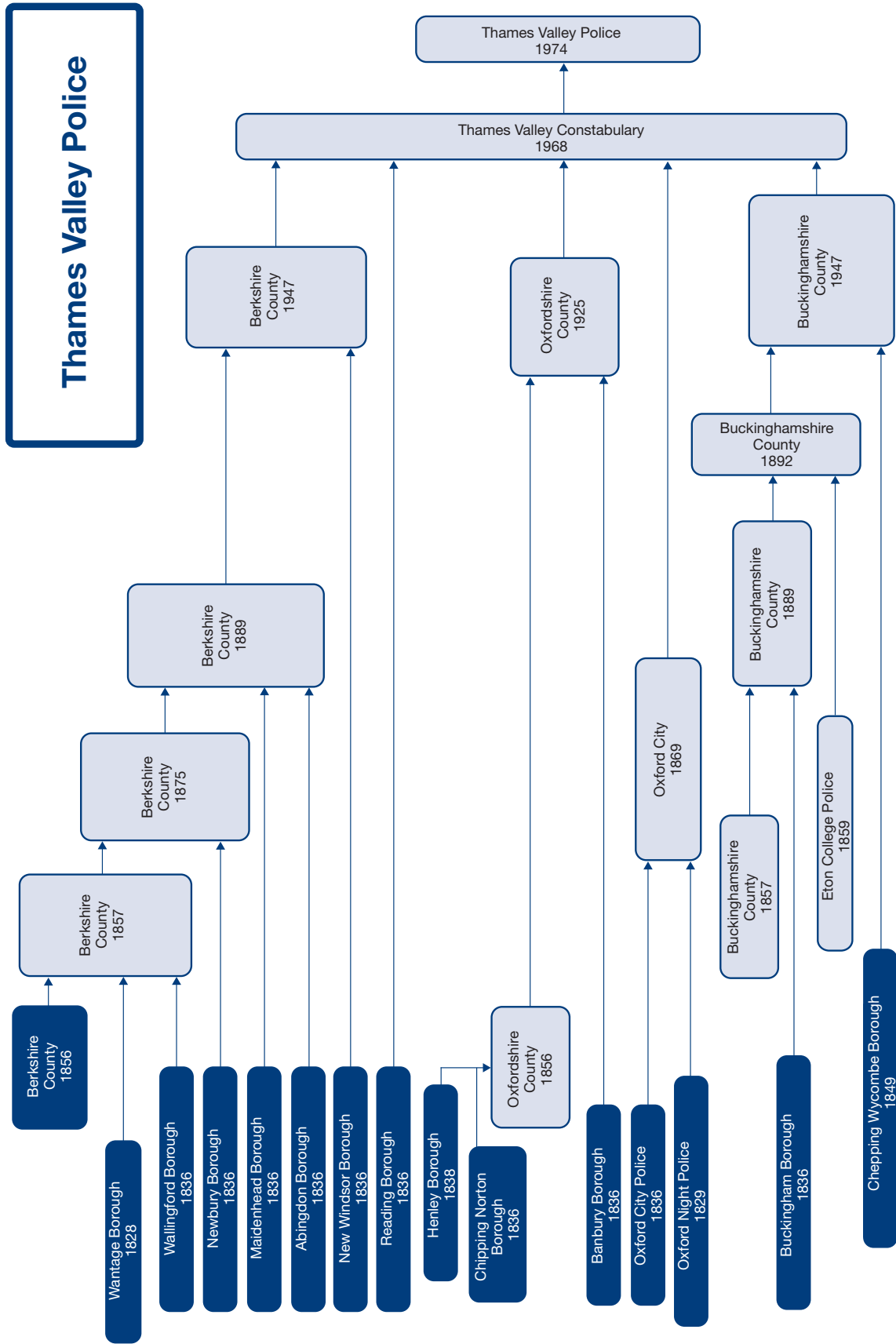


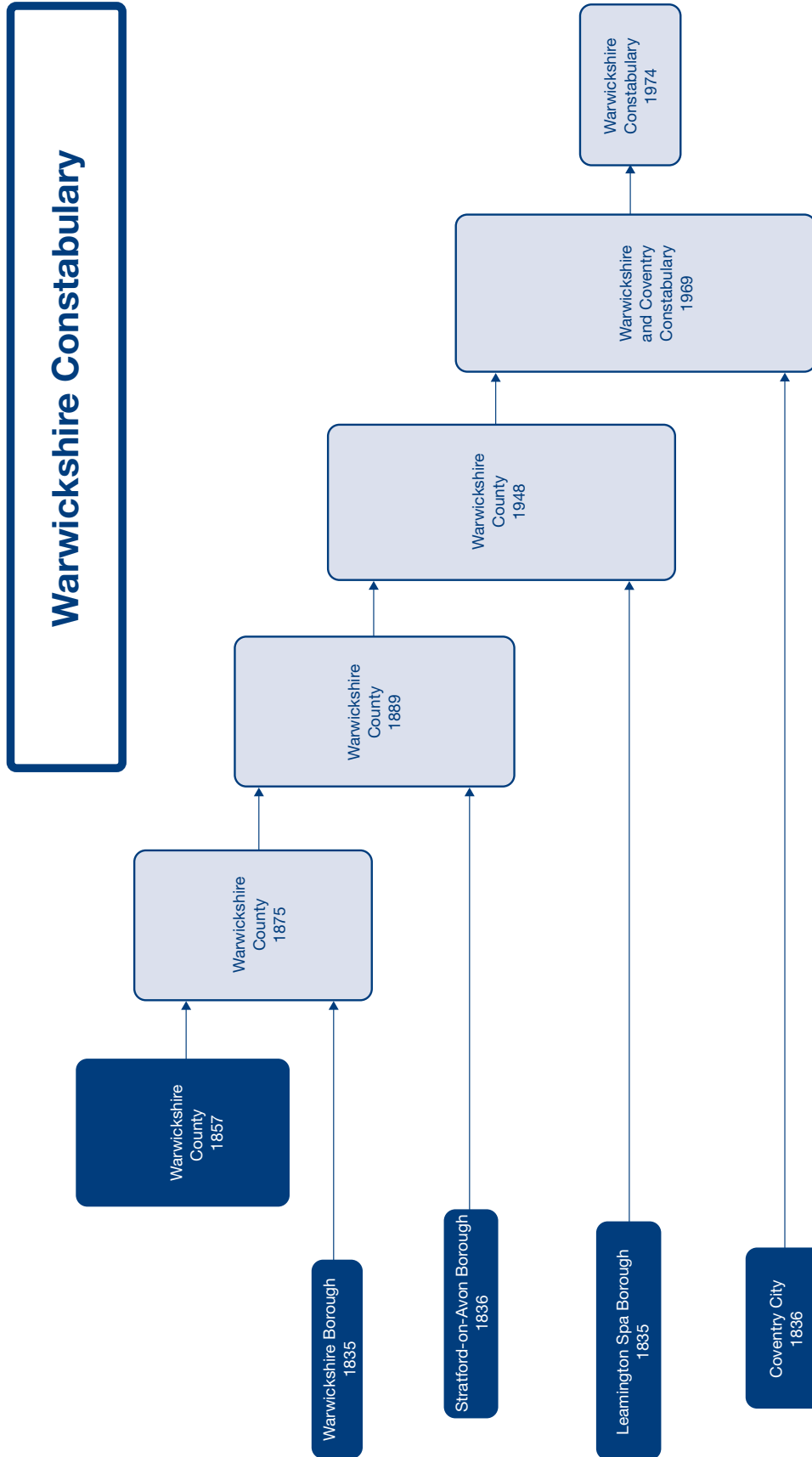


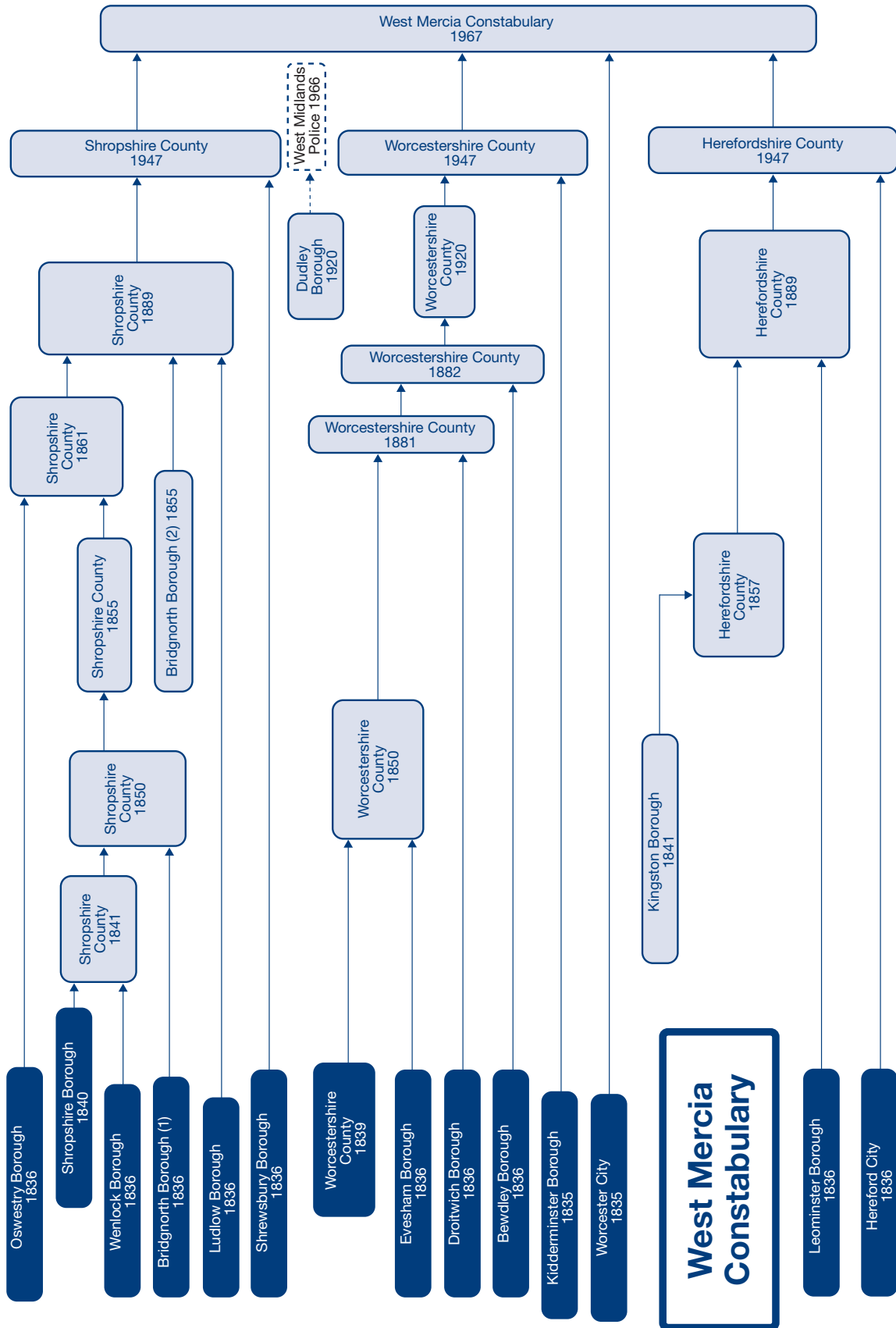


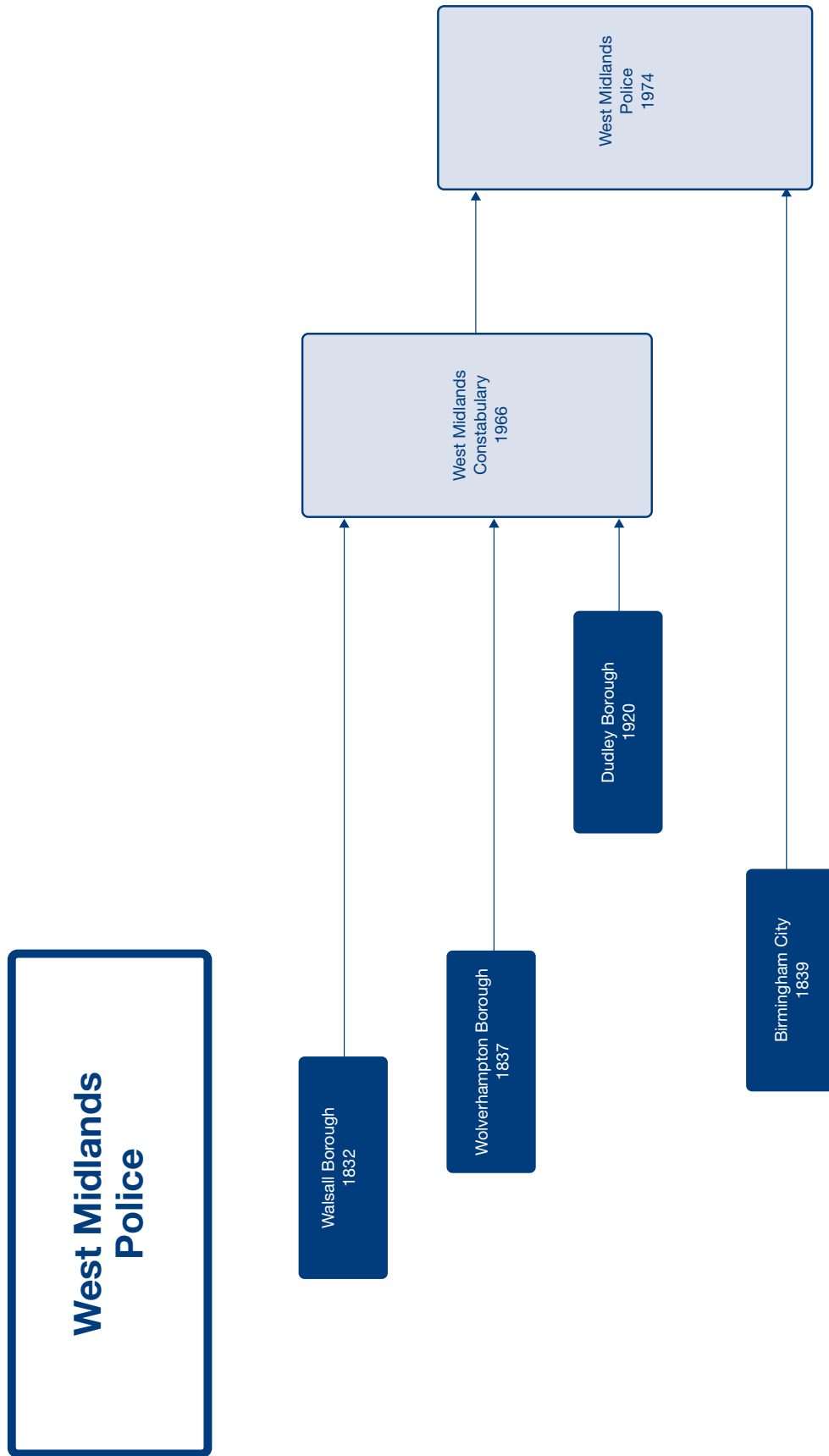


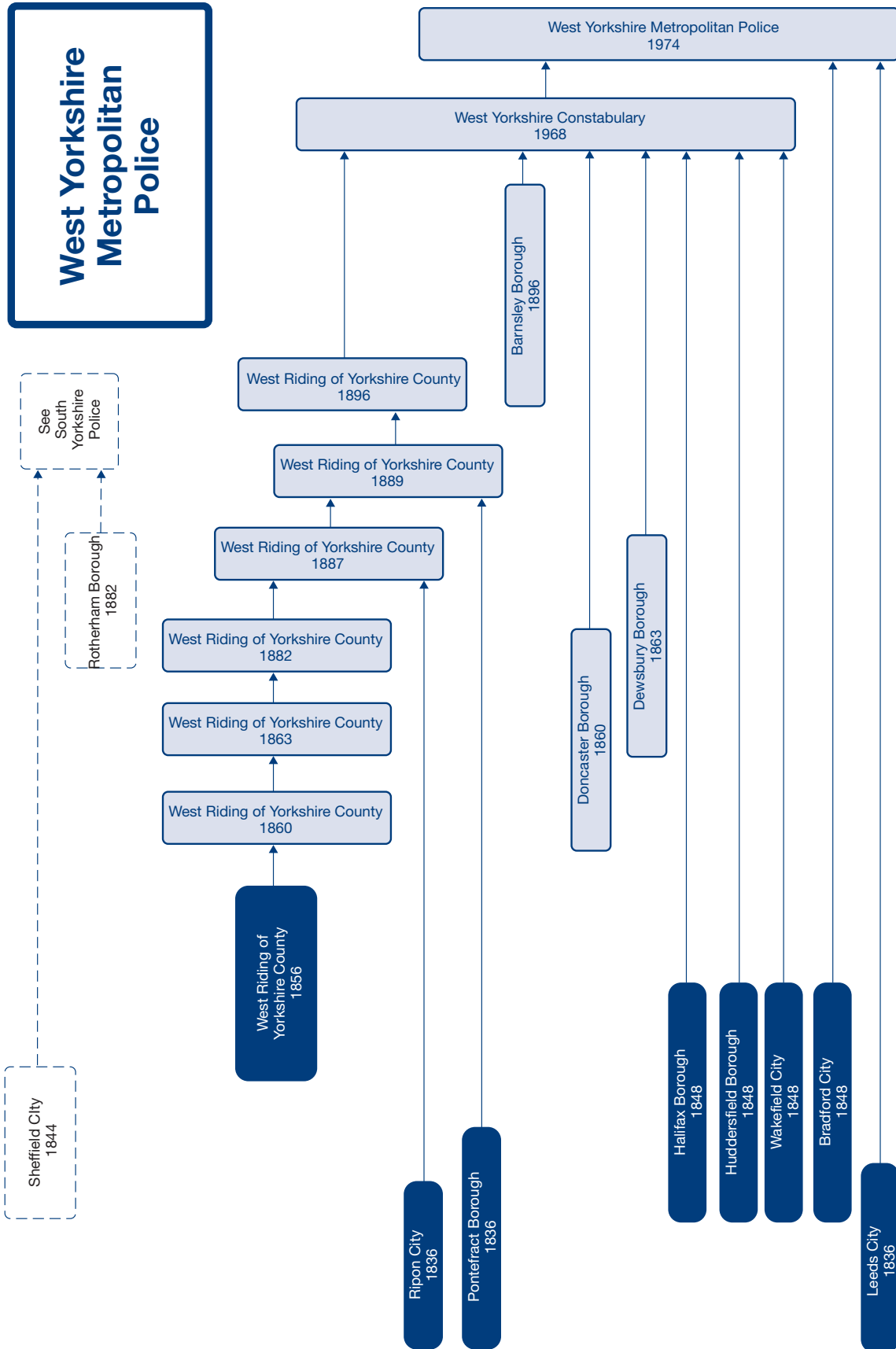


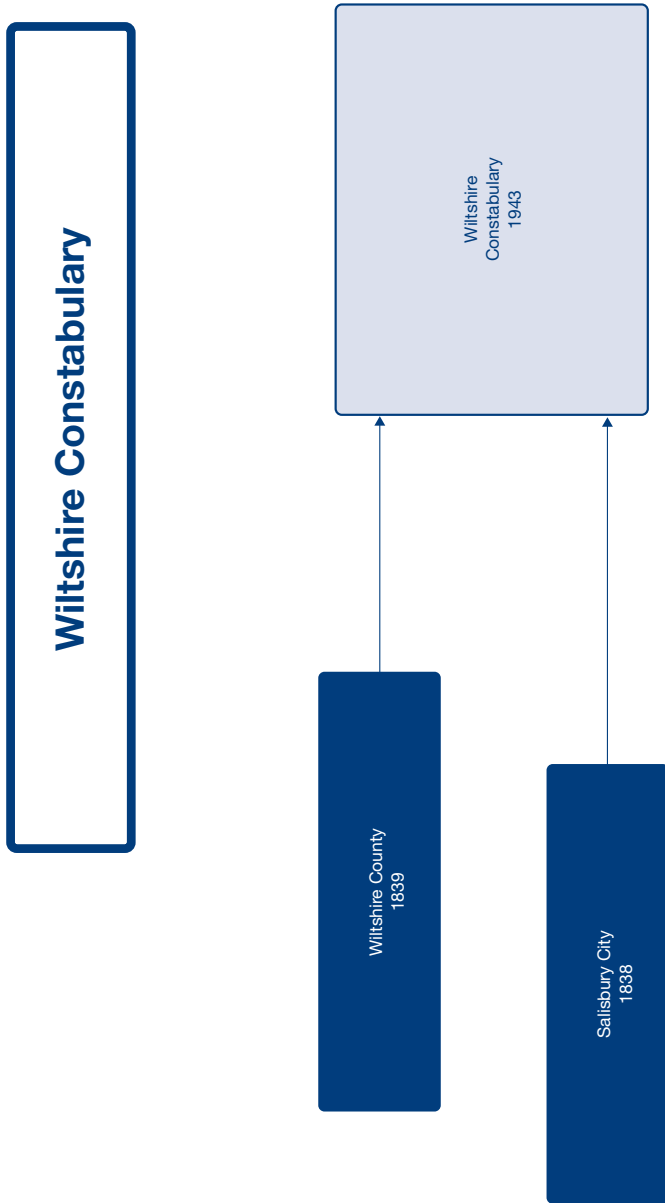












Annex 5

REFERENCE NOTES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ¹ T A Critchley, 1979, *A history of police in England and Wales*, London, p.62.
- ² T A Critchley, 1979, *A history of police in England and Wales*, London, p.69.
- ³ T A Critchley, 1979, *A history of police in England and Wales*, London, p.102.
- ⁴ T A Critchley, 1979, *A history of police in England and Wales*, London, p.98.
- ⁵ Parliamentary Papers, 1852/53, XXXVI, p.92.
- ⁶ Jeremy Bentham, 1748–1832: English philosopher and proponent of ‘utilitarianism’ – the greatest happiness for the greatest number as the foundation of morals and legislation.
- ⁷ B S Trinder (ed.), 1967, *A Victorian MP and his constituents: The correspondence of H W Tancred, 1841–1859*, Banbury Historical Society, Volume 8, pp.95–6, letters 126–7.
- ⁸ Richard Cowley, 1986, *Policing in Northamptonshire 1836–1986*, Studley, Warwickshire, p.12.
- ⁹ Clifford R Stanley, 1975, ‘A profile of General William Cartwright DL JP: Soldier, magistrate and Britain’s first HM Inspector of Constabulary, 1856–1869’, *Northamptonshire and Bedfordshire Life* (September), p.23.
- ¹⁰ Parliamentary Papers, 1875/352, XIII, p.367, minutes of evidence.
- ¹¹ Parliamentary Papers, 1852/53, XXVI, p.92.
- ¹² T A Critchley, 1979, *A history of police in England and Wales*, London, p.2.
- ¹³ Carolyn Steedman, 1984, *Policing the Victorian community: The formation of English provincial police forces, 1856–1880*, London, p.29.
- ¹⁴ Carolyn Steedman, 1984, *Policing the Victorian community: The formation of English provincial police forces, 1856–1880*, London, p.29.
- ¹⁵ Clifford R Stanley, 1975, ‘A profile of General William Cartwright DL JP: Soldier, magistrate and Britain’s first HM Inspector of Constabulary, 1856–1869’, *Northamptonshire and Bedfordshire Life* (September), p.24.
- ¹⁶ Carolyn Steedman, 1984, *Policing the Victorian community: The formation of English provincial police forces, 1856–1880*, London, pp.38 & 40.
- ¹⁷ Carolyn Steedman, 1984, *Policing the Victorian community: The formation of English provincial police forces, 1856–1880*, London, p.40.
- ¹⁸ Northamptonshire Record Office reference ZA 4091.
- ¹⁹ Bob Dobson, 1989, *Policing in Lancashire 1839–1989*, Blackpool, p.16.
- ²⁰ Bob Dobson, 1989, *Policing in Lancashire 1839–1989*, Blackpool, p.29.
- ²¹ Eric J Hewitt, 1979, *A History of policing in Manchester*, Manchester, p.58.
- ²² First annual report, 1856/57.
- ²³ Henry Parris, 1961, ‘The Home Office and the provincial police in England and Wales, 1856–1870’, *Public Law*, p.233.
- ²⁴ T A Critchley, 1979, *A history of police in England and Wales*, London, p.123.
- ²⁵ Henry Parris, 1961, ‘The Home Office and the provincial police in England and Wales, 1856–1870’, *Public Law*, p.231.
- ²⁶ Walter J Hutchings, 1957, *Out of the blue: A history of Devon Constabulary*, Torquay, p.49.
- ²⁷ Douglas J Elliott, 1984, *Policing Shropshire 1836–1967*, Studley, Warwickshire, pp.64–6.
- ²⁸ John Yearnshire, 1987, *Back on the borough beat: A brief illustrated history of Sunderland Borough Police Force*, Sunderland, p.16.
- ²⁹ Henry Parris, 1961, ‘The Home Office and the provincial police in England and Wales, 1856–1870’, *Public Law*, p.231.
- ³⁰ W C Maddox, 1981, *A history of the Radnorshire Constabulary*, Llandrindod Wells, p.12.
- ³¹ First annual report, 1856/57.
- ³² Henry Parris, 1961, ‘The Home Office and the provincial police in England and Wales, 1856–1870’, *Public Law*, pp.231–2.
- ³³ Henry Parris, 1961, ‘The Home Office and the provincial police in England and Wales, 1856–1870’, *Public Law*, p.238.
- ³⁴ J Owain Jones, 1963, *The History of the Caernarvonshire Constabulary, 1856–1950*, Caernarvon, p.42.
- ³⁵ T A Critchley, 1979, *A history of police in England and Wales*, London, p.241.
- ³⁶ Henry Parris, 1961, ‘The Home Office and the provincial police in England and Wales, 1856–1870’, *Public Law*, p.241.
- ³⁷ Parliamentary Papers, 1859/17 (Session 1), XXII, p.399.
- ³⁸ Henry Parris, 1961, ‘The Home Office and the provincial police in England and Wales, 1856–1870’, *Public Law*, p.248.
- ³⁹ John Yearnshire, 1987, *Back on the borough beat: A brief illustrated history of Sunderland Borough Police Force*, Sunderland, p.16.
- ⁴⁰ Henry Parris, 1961, ‘The Home Office and the provincial police in England and Wales, 1856–1870’, *Public Law*, p.242.
- ⁴¹ Stanley Savill, 1901, *The Police Service of England and Wales*, London, p.80.

- ⁴² Jenifer Hart, 1955, 'Reform of the borough police', *The English Historical Review* LXX (July), p.425.
- ⁴³ *Select Committee on Police Superannuation Funds*, Parliamentary Papers, 1877/158, XV, p.101, paragraph 7.
- ⁴⁴ Carolyn Steedman, 1984, *Policing the Victorian community: The formation of English provincial police forces, 1856–1880*, London, pp.109–12.
- ⁴⁵ E C Midwinter, 1976, *Victorian social reform*, London, p.36.
- ⁴⁶ Carolyn Steedman, 1984, *Policing the Victorian community: The formation of English provincial police forces, 1856–1880*, London, p.39.
- ⁴⁷ Carolyn Steedman, 1984, *Policing the Victorian community: The formation of English provincial police forces, 1856–1880*, London, p.16.
- ⁴⁸ Henry Parris, 1961, 'The Home Office and the provincial police in England and Wales, 1856–1870', *Public Law*, p.235.
- ⁴⁹ Henry Parris, 1961, 'The Home Office and the provincial police in England and Wales, 1856–1870', *Public Law*, p.236.
- ⁵⁰ Jill Pellew, 1982, *The Home Office 1848–1914: From clerks to bureaucrats*, London, p.147.
- ⁵¹ Jill Pellew, 1982, *The Home Office 1848–1914: From clerks to bureaucrats*, London, p.148.
- ⁵² Carolyn Steedman, 1984, *Policing the Victorian community: The formation of English provincial police forces, 1856–1880*, London, p.7.
- ⁵³ Henry Parris, 1961, 'The Home Office and the provincial police in England and Wales, 1856–1870', *Public Law*, p.243.
- ⁵⁴ Carolyn Steedman, 1984, *Policing the Victorian community: The formation of English provincial police forces, 1856–1880*, London, p.41.
- ⁵⁵ Richard Whitmore, 1984, *Victorian and Edwardian crime and punishment from old photographs*, London, introduction.
- ⁵⁶ Richard Ford, 1969, *They guarded Guildford: The history of the Guildford Borough Police Force, 1836–1947*, Guildford, p.19.
- ⁵⁷ *Oxford dictionary of national biography 1912–1921*, p.139.
- ⁵⁸ Robert Blake, 1978, *Disraeli*, London, p.665.
- ⁵⁹ Robert Blake, 1978, *Disraeli*, London, p.543.
- ⁶⁰ *Oxford dictionary of national biography 1912–1921*, p.139.
- ⁶¹ T A Critchley, 1979, *A history of police in England and Wales*, London, p.127.
- ⁶² *Select Committee on Police Superannuation Funds*, Parliamentary Papers, 1877/158, XV, p.101.
- ⁶³ T A Critchley, 1979, *A history of police in England and Wales*, London, p.130.
- ⁶⁴ T A Critchley, 1979, *A history of police in England and Wales*, London, p.130.
- ⁶⁵ T A Critchley, 1979, *A history of police in England and Wales*, London, p.130.
- ⁶⁶ Parliamentary Debates, 3rd series, CCCXXVII, column 1053.
- ⁶⁷ *Memorandum in explanation of the Police Bill 1890*, Parliamentary Papers, 1890/C6065, LIX, p.329.
- ⁶⁸ Stanley Savill, 1901, *The Police Service of England and Wales*, London, pp.258–62.
- ⁶⁹ Neville Poulson, Mike Rumble and Keith Smith, 1987, *Sussex police forces*, Midhurst, West Sussex, Chapter 4.
- ⁷⁰ Parliamentary Papers, 1897/207, XXXIX, p.1.
- ⁷¹ Jill Pellew, 1982, *The Home Office 1848–1914: From clerks to bureaucrats*, London, p.177.
- ⁷² Jenifer Hart, 1956, 'The County and Borough Police Act 1856', *Public Administration* XXXIV (winter), p.413.
- ⁷³ T A Critchley, 1979, *A history of police in England and Wales*, London, p.171.
- ⁷⁴ 10 Edward VII and 1 George V, Chapter 13.
- ⁷⁵ Jenifer Hart, 1951, *The British police*, London, p.39.
- ⁷⁶ A V Sellwood, 1978, *Police strike – 1919*, London, p.18.
- ⁷⁷ A V Sellwood, 1978, *Police strike – 1919*, London, p.18.
- ⁷⁸ Richard Cowley, 1984, 'Acts set the scene', *Police Review* (28 September).
- ⁷⁹ Desborough report, paragraph 18.
- ⁸⁰ Althesan Popkess, 1957, *Traffic control and road accident prevention*, London.
- ⁸¹ Juliet Gardiner and Neil Wenborn (eds), 1995, *The companion to British history*, London, p.331.
- ⁸² Inspectors' report, 1939–45, p.8.
- ⁸³ Hansard, 5th series, volume 410, p.2619.
- ⁸⁴ Oaksey Committee, 1949, *Report of the Committee on Police Conditions of Service* (Cmd 7674), part 1.
- ⁸⁵ Oaksey Committee, 1949, *Report of the Committee on Police Conditions of Service* (Cmd 7831), part 2.
- ⁸⁶ Martin Stallion and David Wall, 1999, *The British police: Police forces and chief officers, 1829–2000*, Bramshill, Hampshire, p.38.
- ⁸⁷ T A Critchley, 1979, *A history of police in England and Wales*, London.
- ⁸⁸ H Glennerster, 2000, *British social policy since 1945*, Oxford.
- ⁸⁹ G Marshall, 1978, 'Police accountability revisited' in D Butler and A Halsey, *Policy and politics*, London.
- ⁹⁰ Robert Reiner, 1991, *Chief Constables: Bobbies, bosses or bureaucrats?*, Oxford.
- ⁹¹ The Police (His Majesty's Inspectors of Constabulary) Act 1945.
- ⁹² Chief Inspector's report, 1963, p.8.

- ⁹³ Chief Inspector's report, 1966, p.3.
- ⁹⁴ Chief Inspector's report, 1970, p.4.
- ⁹⁵ Formerly the Police Research and Planning Branch.
- ⁹⁶ Home Office Circular 211/1978, *Juveniles: Co-operation between the police and other agencies*.
- ⁹⁷ Home Office Circular 114/83, *Manpower, effectiveness and efficiency in the Police Service*.
- ⁹⁸ Tim Newburn (ed.), 2003, *The handbook of policing*, Tavistock, p.615.
- ⁹⁹ Robert Reiner, 1991, *Chief Constables: Bobbies, bosses or bureaucrats?*, Oxford.
- ¹⁰⁰ Robert Reiner, 1991, *Chief Constables: Bobbies, bosses or bureaucrats?*, Oxford.
- ¹⁰¹ Friday 7 February to Saturday 8 February 1992.
- ¹⁰² *Police Review*, 16 October 1992, pp.1929–32.
- ¹⁰³ Chief Inspector's report, 1994/95.
- ¹⁰⁴ *Police*, November 1995, editorial.
- ¹⁰⁵ The first report to cover the financial year and so, in this transitional period, from 1 January 1994 to 31 March 1995.
- ¹⁰⁶ Audit Commission, 1991, *Reviewing the organisation of provincial police forces*, London.
- ¹⁰⁷ Audit Commission, 1993, *Helping with enquiries*, London (study of crime management).
- ¹⁰⁸ The best value regime was introduced by the Local Government Act 1999.
- ¹⁰⁹ Barry Loveday and Anna Reid, 2004, *Going local: Who should run Britain's police?*, London.
- ¹¹⁰ Beverly Alimo-Metcalf, 2004, *Promoting transformational leadership* (conference speech).
- ¹¹¹ HMIC, 2006, *The role of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary*, London. www.inspectorates.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic
- ¹¹² Home Office Circular 114/83, *Manpower, equipment and efficiency in the Police Service*.
- ¹¹³ <http://inspectorates.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/methodologies/baseline-introduction/?version=1>
- ¹¹⁴ Home Office Communication Directorate, 2003, *Streets ahead: A joint inspection of the street crime initiative*, London, p.147.
- ¹¹⁵ HMIC, 2005, *Closing the gap: A review of 'fitness for purpose' of the current structure of policing in England and Wales*, London.
- ¹¹⁶ These are: counter-terrorism and extremism; serious, organised and cross-border crime; civil contingencies and emergency planning; critical incident management; major crime (homicide); public order; and strategic roads policing.
- ¹¹⁷ Richard Whitmore, 1984, *Victorian and Edwardian crime and punishment from old photographs*, London, introduction.
- ¹¹⁸ HMIC, 2004, *Modernising the Police Service*, London.
- ¹¹⁹ HMIC, 1999, *Police integrity: Securing and maintaining public confidence*, London.
- ¹²⁰ HMIC, 2006, *Raising the standard*, London.
- ¹²¹ ACPO and DPA Corporate Communications, 2006, *Workforce modernisation: A synopsis*.
- ¹²² Home Office, Crown Prosecution Service and Department for Constitutional Affairs, 2005, *Inspection reform: Establishing an Inspectorate for Justice, Community Safety and Custody*, London.
- ¹²³ Barbara Denis de Vitre, 1929, 'Women police', *The Felican*, p.36.

