

# Glamorgan Archives

## ~ POLICE RECORDS ~

### ACCESS TO POLICE RECORDS

Access to some police records is restricted as many of them contain sensitive information about individuals. It is advisable to contact the Record Office in advance of a visit, to ensure that the records can be made available for consultation in our public searchrooms.

### THE POLICE IN GLAMORGAN

The origins of the contemporary police force lie in the earlier administrative system of the parish. The constable was a parish officer appointed to maintain law and order and to arrest anyone found disturbing it.

Industrial development and the rapid growth in urban population meant that parish constables increasingly became unable to cope. In 1829 the Metropolitan Police Act was passed to aid law enforcement in the London area. Provision was then made in the Municipal Corporations Act, 1835, to enable boroughs to establish their own forces, and with the County Police Act of 1839, rural areas were able to follow suit.

In 1836 police forces were set up in the boroughs of Cardiff, Neath and Swansea; Merthyr Tydfil followed in 1908 when it was created a county borough. For the parts of the county not covered by the borough forces the Justices of the Peace in Quarter Sessions decided that a trial force should be set up. This consisted of six officers and one superintendent and initially covered only Miskin Lower and Caerphilly. Based on its success the decision was taken in 1841 to establish a new police force called the Glamorgan Constabulary to cover the whole of the county. The Neath borough police were amalgamated with the county force in 1947 but the other borough forces and the Glamorgan Constabulary continued side by side until they merged to form the South Wales Constabulary in 1969.

The borough forces were under the control of their council's Watch Committee. The Glamorgan Constabulary was at first administered by the Glamorgan Court of Quarter Sessions through its Police Committee. In 1889, with the creation of the Glamorgan County Council, this was replaced by the Standing Joint Committee comprising representatives of the Court and the Council.

### POLICE FORCE RECORDS

- The Glamorgan Constabulary
- Cardiff Borough Police
- Merthyr Tydfil Borough Police
- Neath Borough Police
- Swansea Borough Police
- South Wales Police

## The Glamorgan Constabulary

The Glamorgan Constabulary was the largest force in the former county. Initially it was divided into four districts which were reorganised in 1911 into eight divisions, each with its own headquarters.

- Quarter Sessions Police Committee minutes, 1843-1878 (Q/A/M/6)
- Standing Joint Committee minutes and reports, 1889-1969 (GC/SJ)
- Chief Constable's quarterly reports and returns, 1842-1889 (Q)
- Weekly pay lists, 1844-1863 (incomplete) (Q)
- *Personnel*: Swearing-in book, 1841-1892; Application forms and testimonials, c1863-1921; Registers of police, c1895-1955, 1955-1970 (DCON/1-3, 285/1)
- *Administration*: Orders and circulars, 1876-1969 (DCON/22-36, 274-278)
- Glamorgan Police Federation minutes, 1919-1969 (DCON/65-68, 282/3)
- Chief Constable Lionel Lindsay: diaries, 1899-1941 (incomplete), correspondence, copy letter book (DCON/74-82, 284/1)
- Officers' notebooks, c1846-1919 (DCON/167-198)
- Scrapbooks and newscuttings, c1910-1969 (DCON/210-219, 290)
  
- E R Baker's scrapbooks on the history of the Glamorgan Constabulary, compiled c1950-1969 (DCON/220)
- Police station plans, 1848-1951 (DCON/232-273)

## Cardiff Borough Police

- Watch Committee minutes, 1860-1873 (BC/C/18/1,19/1)
- Chief Constable's reports to Watch Committee, 1900-1969 (DCONC/1/1)
- Orders and circulars, 1875-1969 (DCONC/2)
- Registers of crimes, 1933-1940 (DCONC/3/1)
- Fingerprint and photographic registers, 1908-1933 (DCONC/3/2)
- Charge book, 1858-1859 (DCONC/3/3)
- Register of habitual criminals, 1882-1885, 1925 (DCONC/3/5)
- Inquest registers, 1892-1943 (DCONC/4/1)
- Newscuttings 1889-1966 (DCONC/5)
- Licensed premises plans, 1897-1965 (DCONC/6)
- Licensing: beer and ale houses, 1879-1965; dog racing, 1935-1961; moneylenders, 1927-1966 (DCONC/7/2-4)
- Registers of constables, 1862-1907 (DCONC/9/1/1,2)
- Inspectors and detectives' record sheets, c1889-1917 (DCONC/9/1/3)
- Register of appointments and resignations, 1894-1917 (DCONC/9/1/4)
- Volunteer Special Constabulary personal files, c1941-c1944 (DCONC/2/1-117)
- Personnel files (DCONC/11)

## **Merthyr Tydfil Borough Police**

Until 1908 Merthyr formed part of A division of the Glamorgan Constabulary.

- Chief Constable's reports to Watch Committee, 1908-1913, 1939-1942 (DCONMT/1)
- Annual Reports, 1946-1969 (DCONMT/2)
- Register of candidates, 1921-1969 (DCONMT/10/1)
- Registers of crimes, 1951-1969 (DCONMT/5)
- Registers of pedlars and of certificates, 1924-1972 (DCONMT/7)
- Register of alehouse licenses, 1960-1968 (DCONMT/8)
- Police station papers, 1957-1971 (DCONMT/9)
- Newscuttings, 1903-1966 (DCONMT/11/2)
- Personnel files, (DCONMT/12)

## **Neath Borough Police**

- Registers of constables, 1869-1903, 1872-1924 (DCON/136, 137)
- Pay books, 1873-1889, 1915, 1925-1940 (DCON/138-141)
- Rules, 1884 (DCON/145)
- Chief Constable's reports, 1905-1918 (DCON/143), 1923-1925 (DCONN/1)
- Scrapbook, 1896-1919 (DCONN/2)
- Pedlars' licences, 1888-1942 (DCON/142)
- Neath airport correspondence, 1927 (DCON/146)
- Police War Reserve, Women's Auxiliary Police Corps, Auxiliary Messenger Services files, 1939-1946 (DCONN/4)

## **Swansea Borough Police**

*Records of Swansea Borough Police are held by the West Glamorgan Archive Service, Swansea*

## **South Wales Police**

Photographs of individuals, groups and many aspects of police work and equipment from all the constituent forces, C19-20 (DSWPA/PH)

## **OTHER RECORDS RELATING TO THE POLICE FORCES IN THE GLAMORGAN RECORD OFFICE**

Additional information about the police can be found in the records of the Quarter Sessions, County Council and Borough Councils. This is because of the involvement of the local authorities in the administration of the police forces.

## INDEXES

Indexes to some of the records have been produced, in particular for personnel records and registers of constables. Indexes are available for the following documents and series:

### Glamorgan Constabulary

- Swearing-in book, 1841-1892 (DCON/1)
- Police application forms & testimonials, c.1863-1921 (DCON/2)
- Registers of police, c.1890 (DCON/3)
- Birthplace of members to 12 June 1923 (DCON/4)
- List of Pensioners (DCON/5)
- Personnel files, surname index available

### Borough forces

- Cardiff, personnel files, registers of constables
- Merthyr Tydfil personnel files

## USEFUL BOOKS HELD IN THE GLAMORGAN RECORD OFFICE LIBRARY

The following books and articles concerning the history of the police and crime are available for consultation in the Glamorgan Record Office library.

- David T. Hawkings, *Criminal Ancestors. A Guide to Historical Criminal Records in England and Wales*, 1996
- David J.V. Jones, *Crime in 19th Century Wales*, 1992
- David J.V. Jones, *Crime and Policing in the 20th Century: the South Wales Experience*, 1996
- E.R. Baker, 'The beginnings of the Glamorgan County Police Force' in *Glamorgan Historian*, volume 2, 1965
- Eira M. Smith, 'Merthyr Tydfil Borough Police, 1908-1938' in *Merthyr Historian*, volume 4, 1989
- Martin Stallion and David S. Wall, *The British Police Officer. Police Forces and Chief Officers, 1829-2000*