

## Historical Notes on the Police in Hetton and Easington Lane.

### 1841 Census

P.C. George Brasfor, Hetton: P.C. William Stephenson, South Hetton

### 1855 (Slater's Directory)

In charge of Houghton-le-Spring Division, Superintendent Thomas Johnson, Hetton

### 1881 Census

Cons. John Blair, Caroline Street, Hetton-le-Hole

Cons. William Dodsworth, 16 Railway Tce., Hetton-le-Hole

Cons. John Farrer, East Side, Hetton-le-Hole

Cons. Alfred Grant, 29 Downs Lane East, Hetton-le-Hole

Sgt. Richard Newbolt, Police Station, Hetton-le-Hole

Cons. Christer H. Stockburn, 86 High Moorsley, Moorsley

### 1885 Police Roll

**Hetton-le-Hole** Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class **William Cartwright**, b. Yorks, July 1841, 6' 0", Married, 6 children. Former Watcher (Game). Investigated Hetton Murder 1891. Retired 1892

**Hetton-le-Hole.** Cons 1<sup>st</sup> Class **John Blair**, b. Durham, January 1848, 5' 10", married, 4 children, Farmer. Later promoted Sergeant.

**Hetton-le-Hole** Cons. 1<sup>st</sup> Class **William Bellam**, b. Berwick 1846, 5'9", Married, 5 children, Riveter from Haverton Hill to Hetton-le-Hole (Investigated Hetton Murder 1891).

**Hetton Downs.** Cons. 1<sup>st</sup> Class **William Dodsworth**, b. Yorks 1851, 5' 9", Date of Entry 1874, Married, 3 children. Farm Servant. Died.

**Hetton Downs.** Cons. 1<sup>st</sup> Class. **Thomas Higginson**, b. Queens?, b. 1842, 6' 1" Date of Entry 1874, Married, 5 children, Labourer. From Tow Law, replaced Wm. Dodsworth.

**Hetton Colliery.** Cons. 1<sup>st</sup> Class **Alfred Grant**, b. Kent 1847, 5'10", Date of Entry 1873. Married. Labourer

**Hetton Downs.** Cons. 1<sup>st</sup> Class **Dan G Nichol**, b. Cumberland 1841, 5'11", Date of Entry 1870, Married. 5 children, Miller. Former Cumberland Constabulary.

**Hetton.** Cons. 1<sup>st</sup> Class **George Stephen**, b. Aberdeen 1855, 5'9", Date of Entry 1873 Married. Labourer

**Moorsley.** Cons. 1<sup>st</sup> Class **William Wright**, b. Hants 1844, 5'10", Date of Entry 1875, Married, 4 children, Labourer. Former Newcastle Police. Moved to West Herrington.

**Moorsley.** Cons 1<sup>st</sup> Class **John Wetherell**, b. Durham 1855, 5'9", Date of Entry 1881, Married. 4 children. From Murton Colliery to replace William Wright.

**Four Lane Ends.** Cons 1<sup>st</sup> Class **John Farrer**, b. Yorks 1856, 5'9", Date of Entry 1877, Married, 4 children, Farm Servant.

**Four Lane Ends.** Cons 1<sup>st</sup> Class **Joseph Tinkler**, b. Durham 1858, 5'9", Date of Entry 1879, Married, Brakeman. From Houghton to Four Lane Ends. Replace Farrer.

1891 Hetton Murder (Shooting)

**1901.** P.C. **Matthew Johnson**, Shotley Bridge to South Hetton. 1914 Kelly's Directory shows him still there.

**1917.** On 7.12.1917 P.C. 682 **James Redshaw**, stationed at Hetton Downs, stopped a runaway horse at Trimdon Grange for which act he was awarded 12/6 by the Chief Constable *for pluck and promptitude*.

**1918.** P.C.441 **James Elliott**, stationed at Moorsley, committed suicide at Moorsley on 21.8.1918. He had served in the Durham Constabulary for 23 years.

**1921.** On Christmas Day 1921, P.C. 602 **Matthew S. Blackburn**, stationed at hetton Downs, stopped a runaway horse at Hetton for which act he was awarded 12/6 by the Chief Constable *for pluck and promptitude*.

**1922.** On 11.2. 1922, P.C.674 **Herbert J. Wilkinson**, stationed at Hetton Downs, stopped a runaway horse at Hetton for which act he was awarded 12/6 by the Chief Constable *for pluck and promptitude*.

**1930.** Sgt **T Fowler**, Hetton-le-Hole.

**1931.** P.C. **Taylor**, Hetton.

**1937 Superintendent Harrison**, Hetton

Relationships between the local populace and the police were not always cosy and sweet. For decades the police in the Durham villages had been forced to carry out the rule of the coal owners during periods of strike and industrial strife. This included arresting miners for what would now be judged a non crime as well as carry out acts on families including eviction without notice. The law at the time was unclear regarding industrial action and particularly striking and as a consequence penalties were often both harsh and unjust.

The harshness of the owners, their disregard of equity, their tyrannical behaviour regarding evictions and the constant and ruthless victimisation of both individuals and groups made a lasting impression throughout the county. These activities placed on the constabulary from the 1830s through to the 20<sup>th</sup> century undue pressure as they had to carry out seemingly unjust acts in front of the whole community and this did nothing to improve their respectability and status within the realms of a difficult job.

The police were also subject to a degree of lawlessness within the villages , mostly fuelled by drink and drunkenness. Violence and disorder was in many locations, particularly when villages were growing during the middle decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century a symptom of normality among large numbers of the populace. Police were often short-handed and relied upon the knowledge accumulated within the villages to maintain a respectable level of crime and disorder. Improvements did however come about, particularly with the input from religion and the effectiveness of the churches which rapidly established themselves in the middle years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Support for the actions of the police were slow to develop in the communities but eventually this became the norm.

The police themselves relied heavily on an “esprit de corps”, helping each other out in times of crisis and becoming pro-active rather than reactive. Eventually the populace began to realise the value of a stable and incorruptible police force and support eventually sprang in their favour. The growth of the mining villages with their increasing beat sizes meant that numbers in the service greatly increased as the years passed and this also helped to stabilise many of the criminal actions which had prevailed in earlier years. Altogether the police had a taxing and difficult role which they invariably carried out with trust and demeanor.