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# **The police in Edinburgh during the Second World War: organisational aspects and operational demands**

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### Abstract

This study examines the City of Edinburgh Police and establishes that organisational and operational aspects during the Second World War were characterised by both continuity and change. These aspects were influenced by both the centralised direction of the war effort on the home front and by a specific combination of strategic police decisions and broader political, social, economic, and religious factors. These included the failure to implement a system for warning juvenile offenders; the desire to control vagrancy; the desire to control public disorder attendant to anti-Catholic sentiment; the extension of the spatial extent of the city; and financial constraints imposed by the town council. In this latter regard, the concept of 'reactive underestimation' is created and explored. That is the policy of imposing harsh conditions on the workforce until its stability was threatened. Utilising extensive and previously unseen primary sources, including reports by Special Branch, minutes of the Scottish Police Federation, and police officers' Service Records together with Rhodes' theory of 'power-dependence' the study examines the interplay between aspects of the police organisation as well as local policing within a macro-structural context. In doing so the study contributes to the 'relational' historiography of the 'new' police, the social history of police officers, and revisionist accounts of the home front.

The study establishes that, despite the introduction of the Defence Regulations giving the central state more control over local policing, the police authority was not marginalised in the governance of the police. Furthermore, as a consequence of the legacy of its creation, the Police Federation remained an ineffective mechanism of representation for rank-and-file officers. Given the context of the war there was even less of an imperative for central government to create an effective means of collective bargaining. The study also demonstrates that, whilst operational policing and consequently the profile of personnel had evolved since the late nineteenth century, both aspects changed dramatically in response to the war. The additional demands associated with policing the home front and the consequent recruitment of auxiliaries together with the release of younger regular officers to the armed services and industry and the retention of those who would otherwise have been superannuated, however, created a problem of capacity. As a consequence, the use of discretion at a strategic and tactical level was a significant feature, whilst aspects of core policing and the regulation of traffic were less effectively discharged.



## Contents

<i>List of figures</i>	ix
<i>List of tables</i>	xi
<i>Abbreviations</i>	xv
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xvi
<i>Dedication</i>	xvii
<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
• Literature survey	3
• Aims, structure, and themes	11
• Method and primary sources	18
<b>Part I: Organisational aspects</b>	
<b>2. The Regular Officers</b>	<b>27</b>
• Place of birth, previous occupation, and age of recruits	29
• Sickness	37
• Release of officers during the war	39
• Discipline	43
• Leaving the force	54
<b>3. The Police Authority</b>	<b>61</b>
• Overview of central government in the governance structure	63
• Overview of chief constables in the governance structure	66
• Edinburgh Town Council, the police authority, and power-interdependence	69
• The police authority, the Lord Provost, and power-interdependence	76
• The police authority, the chief constable, and power-interdependence	80
• The police authority, central government, and power-interdependence	83
• The Defence Regulations in practice	85
• The police authority, central government, and power-interdependence: the example of women police	86
<b>4. The Police Federation</b>	<b>93</b>
• The legacy of the creation of the Police Federation	94
• The personnel of the Federation in Edinburgh	98
• The rank-specific boards: power-dependence on the Joint Branch Board	102
• The Joint Branch Board	107
• Factional rifts at the national level	115
• The <i>zeitgeist</i> of dissatisfaction	119



## Part II: Operational demands

<b>5.</b>	<b>War-Related Policing</b>	<b>127</b>
	• Defence Security Policing: preamble	130
	• Policing subversion: communists and the Protestant Action Society	132
	• Policing subversion: the Campaign Pension League and pacifists	139
	• Policing subversion: Scottish Nationalists and other political groups	142
	• Policing identity fraud and the evasion of duty	146
	• Policing suspected sabotage and strikes	149
	• Policing the 'Lighting Restrictions' and aliens	153
	• Policing 'War Legislation' and military laws	158
<b>6.</b>	<b>Core Policing</b>	<b>163</b>
	• The legacy of interwar policing	164
	• Policing in relation to the protection of property	169
	• Policing in relation to the protection of life	182
	• Policing in relation to the maintenance of order	191
	• Policing in relation to civic regulation	203
<b>7.</b>	<b>Road Traffic Policing</b>	<b>209</b>
	• Policing in relation to enforcement	211
	• Policing in relation to responding to accidents	222
	• Policing in relation to road safety	228
	• The chief constable, the police authority, central government, and power-interdependence in practice	236
	• The chief constable, road safety policy communities, and power-interdependence in practice	239
<b>8.</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>245</b>
	<b>Appendices</b>	
	1. The Police War Instructions: contents of the preface and sections	255
	2. Content of Special Branch Reports	260
	3. Content of Intelligence Reports	261
	4. Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment: classification of crimes and offences	262
	5. Discipline Code	263
	6. Proportion of Pension Paid on Retirement	267
	7. Edinburgh Town Council Business Areas, 1855-1856	268
	8. Edinburgh Town Council Standing/Sub-Committees in the Second World War	269
	9. Scottish Police Federation Central Conferences Standing Orders	270
	<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>271</b>





## List of figures

5.1	Number of strikes, workers involved, and working days lost in Great Britain, 1933-1952	151
5.2	Number of crimes and offences related to the 'Lighting Restrictions' made known to the police in Edinburgh, 1939-1944	154
6.1	Number of shop and warehouse keys held by the police in Edinburgh, 1930-1948	174
6.2	Actual regular male constables as a percentage of the total actual regular police strength in Edinburgh, 1930-1948	175
6.3	Number of juveniles convicted for all crimes and offences in Edinburgh, 1935-1949	178
6.4	Crimes and offences related to 'Police Acts' made known to the police in Edinburgh, 1935-1949	205
7.1	Number of persons killed or injured in road traffic accidents in Edinburgh, 1926-1949	224
7.2	Number of death or injury accidents responded to by each male regular constable in Edinburgh, 1934-1938	225
7.3	Pedestrians killed as a percentage of all persons killed in road traffic accidents in Edinburgh, 1930-1939	230



## List of tables

2.1	Recruits by birthplace and decade of appointment	31
2.2	Recruits by birthplace in Scotland	32
2.3	Recruits by previous occupation and decade of appointment	34
2.4	Recruits by age and decade of appointment	36
2.5	Disciplinary offences in the pre-war era and during the Second World War	48
2.6	Disposal of disciplinary incidences in the pre-war era and during the Second World War (%)	50
2.7	Scale of pay for constables appointed after 30 September 1931	51
2.8	Cause of leaving the force during the Second World War and in the post-war era	56
4.1	Federation representatives by previous occupation	99
4.2	Federation office bearers during the Second World War	108
4.3	Joint Branch Board office bearers during the Second World War	109
4.4	Outstanding Federation issues	121
5.1	Reports by the Special Branch in Edinburgh and Summaries by the SHD	131
5.2	Aliens registered with the police and crimes and offences related to aliens in Edinburgh, 1935-1948	156
5.3	Crimes and offences related to 'War Legislation' and military laws in Edinburgh, 1935-1949	159
5.4	Total working population in the armed forces and auxiliary services in Great Britain, 1938-1945 (%)	159
6.1	Persons proceeded against at the instance of the police in Edinburgh, 1934-1944	168
6.2	Class II, 'Crimes Against Property with Violence', Class III, 'Crimes Against Property without Violence' and, Class IV, 'Malicious Injuries to Property' in Edinburgh, 1935-1949	170
6.3	Crimes and offences of: Theft by Housebreaking and Housebreaking with Intent to Steal; Theft by Opening Lockfast Places and Opening Lockfast Places with Intent to Steal; Theft; and Malicious Mischief in Edinburgh, 1935-1949	172
6.4	Juvenile offenders warned by the police in Edinburgh, 1947-1949	181
6.5	Class I, 'Crimes Against the Person' in Edinburgh, 1935-1949	184
6.6	Sexual Crimes and Offences; Assault; and Cruel and Unnatural Treatment of Children in Edinburgh, 1935-1949	186
6.7	Suicides and sudden deaths in Edinburgh, 1930-1949	190



6.8	Crimes and offences of and against: Vagrancy and Trespass; Intoxicating Liquor Laws; Breach of the Peace; Betting, Gaming, and Lotteries; and Prostitution in Edinburgh, 1935-1949	193
7.1	Vehicles registered and driving licences issued in Edinburgh, 1921-1939, 1946-1949	210
7.2	Crimes and offences related to 'Road Acts' in Edinburgh, 1930-1949	212
7.3	Disposal of offences by traffic department officers in Edinburgh, 1930-1944, 1946-1949	214
7.4	Motorised hackney carriage licences and motorised hackney carriage drivers' licences issued in Edinburgh, 1933-1949	221
7.5	Road traffic accidents in Britain, 1913-1935	223
7.6	Road fatalities in Britain and Edinburgh, 1938-1948	226
7.7	People killed and injured in road traffic and other accidents in Edinburgh, 1933-1947 (%)	233
7.8	People killed and injured in road accidents in Edinburgh, Leeds, Glasgow, and Scotland per 1000 population, in 1937 and 1938	233



## Abbreviations

AF	Anarchist Federation
AWOL	Absent Without Leave
CID	Criminal Investigation Department
CPGB	Communist Party of Great Britain
ECA	Edinburgh City Archives
HMICS	His/Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary for Scotland
ILP	Independent Labour Party
NRS	National Records of Scotland
PPU	Peace Pledge Union
SHD	Scottish Home Department
SNP	Scottish National Party
SPFE/G	Scottish Police Federation Edinburgh/Glasgow
TNA	The National Archives



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In memory of my mum:

**Marjorie Georgina Goodwin,**  
1924 – 1993;

and for my dad:

**Cecil Goodwin,**  
1920 – 2013.

They have no other monument.

‘History with its flickering lamp stumbles along the trail of the past,  
trying to reconstruct its scenes, to revive its echoes,  
and kindle with pale gleams the passion of former days’.<sup>1</sup>

Winston Churchill

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<sup>1</sup> Speech on the death of Neville Chamberlain, 12 November 1940.  
<http://www.winstonchurchill.org/resources/speeches/233-1940-the-finest-hour/104-neville-chamberlain>. Accessed 4 January 2016.

## 1

## Introduction

In a radio broadcast in 1941 Prime Minister Winston Churchill whilst honouring the work of the Civil Defence Services in the ‘formidable ordeal’ of the Second World War singled out the police: ‘... if I mention only one of these services here, namely the Police, it is because many tributes have been paid already to the others. But the Police have been in it everywhere all the time ...’<sup>1</sup>

On the home front the police in Edinburgh, as elsewhere in Britain, were required by the Police War Instructions issued by central government to undertake additional duties to the core functions of preventing crime and preserving the peace.<sup>2</sup> Many of the Defence Regulations made under the Emergency Powers (Defence) Act 1939 that were introduced throughout the emergency also required enforcement by the police.<sup>3</sup> As Chris Williams observed, central government in the context of total war ‘quickly found that police institutions were remarkably useful all purpose executive agencies for imposing the many controls that wartime mobilisation involved’.<sup>4</sup> At the same time, the existing system of police governance was supplanted. On the one hand, the Defence Regulations gave central government unprecedented power over local policing. The Secretary of State could, for example, direct chief constables in operational matters as well as order the amalgamation of forces. On the other, a regional form of government headed by a Regional Commissioner who would assume authority in the event of a breakdown of communications with central government was introduced.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> ‘Give us the Tools’ speech, 9 February 1941. [www.winstonchurchill.org/learn/speeches/speeches-of-winston-churchill/97-give-us-the-tools](http://www.winstonchurchill.org/learn/speeches/speeches-of-winston-churchill/97-give-us-the-tools). Accessed 25 March 2015.

<sup>2</sup> Historians have been unable to trace a copy of the Police War Instructions. Dixon’s unpublished work, which contains the most complete and detailed institutional overview of the police in the war, outlines the headings under which they were made to give an indication of their scope. Arthur L Dixon, "The Emergency Work of the Police Forces in the Second World War "(Unpublished 1963), 227-230. See Appendix ‘1’. For the primary role of the police in Scotland in the early twentieth century see *Police Manual for Scotland* (Glasgow: McCorquodale & Co. Ltd, 1931), 19.

<sup>3</sup> 2 & 3 Geo. 6, cap. 62 (1939). For a digest see E.R. Baker, *Emergency Law Summary* (London: The Police Review, 1943).

<sup>4</sup> Chris A Williams, "Introduction," in *Police and Policing in the Twentieth Century* ed. Chris A Williams (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011 ), xii.

<sup>5</sup> For terms of the Warrant see The National Records of Scotland (hereafter NRS) HH50/128, Letter from Regional Commissioner to Secretary of State for Scotland, 24 February 1941. Scheme ‘Y’, as it was known, had been used in response to the General Strike of 1926. See. Terence H O’Brien, *Civil Defence* (London: HMSO, 1955), 117.

The extent to which the war created a paradigm shift in policing from the pre-war era is, however, the subject of competing interpretation by those writing in largely broad terms in relation to the experience in England and Wales.<sup>6</sup> As Assistant-Under Secretary at the Police Division of the Home Office in the early part of the war Arthur Dixon appears well placed to make an observation. He wrote that police duties during the war were ‘merely extensions’ of those at other times.<sup>7</sup> T. A. Critchley, secretary to the 1960 Royal Commission on the police and subsequent member of the Police Division of the Home Office, agreed: ‘... the effect of the war was to shift the balance of police duties and diversify them rather than to change their essence’.<sup>8</sup> Yet Chief Constable of Oxfordshire during the war, Eric St. Johnston, recalled that many peacetime police duties ‘disappeared’, whilst the former police officer Roy Ingleton argued: ‘virtually overnight, the functions and responsibilities ... were widened and completely changed’.<sup>9</sup> In his oral history study of Leeds and Hull, Roger Donaldson, another former police officer, finds that policing during the war was a paradox: ‘the pressures were towards normality, whilst the conditions were abnormal, and whilst the nature of the job was changing considerably’.<sup>10</sup>

This thesis will examine the extent to which organisational and operational aspects of policing changed in Edinburgh as a consequence of the war. The impact of the war on operational policing varied throughout the UK. In broad terms, notwithstanding that they were less populous, smaller towns and county areas were less affected than major conurbations, especially those with key war-related industries or, as in Edinburgh in relation to the Firth of Forth, having a Protected Area. The police in Edinburgh during the war also had to deal with the aftermath of 15 air raids that

<sup>6</sup> ‘Policing’ here refers to the ‘range of functions’ undertaken by officers ‘within the bureaucratic institution of the police service’. See Michael Brogden, Tony Jefferson, and Sandra Walklate, *Introducing Policework* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1988), 2., Angela Bartie and Louise A. Jackson, “Youth Crime and Preventive Policing in Post-War Scotland (c. 1945-71),” *Twentieth Century British History* 22 no. 1 (2011): 81.

<sup>7</sup> Dixon, “The Emergency Work of the Police Forces,” 76.

<sup>8</sup> T. A. Critchley, *A History of Police in England and Wales 900-1966* (London: Constable, 1967), 232.

<sup>9</sup> Eric St. Johnston, *One Policeman's Story* (London: Rose, 1978), 56., Roy D. Ingleton, *The Gentlemen at War: Policing Britain 1939-45* (Maidstone: Cranborne, 1994), 1.

<sup>10</sup> Roger Donaldson, “Policing the War” (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Huddersfield, 1998), 16.

killed and injured 237 people and destroyed or damaged 2575 properties.<sup>11</sup> In terms of response this was, however, insignificant by comparison with the consequences of the air raids in Clydebank in March 1941, and more especially the Blitz and Baedeker raids in London and other English cities.<sup>12</sup>

In Scotland, the Scottish Home Department (hereafter SHD) instructed in 1940 that even under invasion conditions the police 'must remain available for the performance of normal ... duties'.<sup>13</sup> The extent to which the Second World War affected operational policing in areas such as the regulation of road traffic in Scotland has, however, escaped detailed study by historians. The degree of change to aspects of the police organisation, such as the police authority and the Police Federation, has also been neglected. In a similar vein, there are no social history profiles of the police officers that served in Scotland during the Second World War.

### Literature survey

The history of the police is a comparatively recent area of study.<sup>14</sup> The overwhelming majority of the published and unpublished sources on the police relate to England and Wales in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and the Metropolitan Police in particular on the basis that it is perceived as creating the model for the 'new' civilian municipal police throughout Britain.<sup>15</sup> 'One of the greatest gaps', as Clive Emsley found in 2005, remains 'the general lack of work on the history of crime and criminal justice in Scotland and Ireland'.<sup>16</sup> Most of the focus by historians in Scotland has been on Glasgow in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.<sup>17</sup> Despite being the capital and having a specific legacy of political, social,

<sup>11</sup> Edinburgh City Archives (hereafter ECA) ED006/1/11, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1945, 18-19.

<sup>12</sup> See, for example, Juliet Gardiner, *Wartime: Britain 1939-1945* (London: Review, 2005), 416.

<sup>13</sup> NRS HH55/864, Circular 3964, 25 May 1940. HH52/27/1, Circular 3732, 13 October 1939 advised that central government in Scotland should be referred to as the SHD.

<sup>14</sup> Chris A. Williams, *Police Control Systems in Britain, 1775-1975: From Parish Constable to National Computer* (Manchester Scholarship Online 2014), 2.

<sup>15</sup> For the different types of police see Clive Emsley, "A Typology of Nineteenth-Century Police," *Crime, History & Societies* 3 (1999).

<sup>16</sup> "Crime and Punishment: 10 Years of Research (1)," *Crime, History & Societies* 9, no. 1 (2005): 12.

<sup>17</sup> See, for example, Alistair Dinsmor, "Glasgow Police Pioneers," *Police History Society* 15 (2000)., Alastair L Goldsmith, "The Development of the City of Glasgow Police c.1800 - c.1939" (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Strathclyde, 2002)., David G. Barrie, *Police in the Age of Improvement: Police Development and the Civic Tradition in Scotland, 1775-1865* (Cullompton, UK; Portland, Or.: Willan, 2008)., "Patrick Colquhoun, the Scottish Enlightenment and Police Reform in Glasgow in the Late Eighteenth Century," *Crime, History & Societies* 12, no. 2 (2008).

economic, and religious factors that affected policing, detailed academic studies of Edinburgh are limited by comparison and none relates to the twentieth century.<sup>18</sup>

Notwithstanding an element of oversimplification and ‘arbitrariness in lumping together historians in different categories’, a variety of political, social, and economic theories underpin the historiography of the creation and development of ‘new’ police forces, and hence the objective of operational policing.<sup>19</sup> Put briefly, the ‘traditional’ or Whiggish canon, which originated largely in the early twentieth century, sees it in teleological terms. Reform was the consequence of the failure of pre-existing systems of police to cope with a rise in crime and disorder and a consensus as to the professional, rational, and impartial adoption of preventive policing to achieve the communal benefit of preventing crime and maintaining order. Charles Reith, for example, argued that the application of these principles during the Second World War would solve the ‘problem of recurring wars among the nations’ and secure the ‘observance of international laws’.<sup>20</sup>

By contrast, revisionist ‘Structural’ accounts, including Marxism, see developments in instrumental terms. The ‘new’ police were created to maintain surveillance and discipline labour in work and leisure to meet the demands of industrial capitalism. Mark Neocleous, for example, sees the police as one of the ‘supreme ... concepts ...

<sup>18</sup> See John McGowan, *Policing the Metropolis of Scotland: A History of the Police and Systems of Police in Edinburgh & Edinburghshire, 1770-1833* (Musselburgh: Turlough, 2011)., *A New Civic Order: The Contribution of the City of Edinburgh Police 1805-1812 with Reflections on Social and Public Order* (Musselburgh: Turlough, 2013). For a non-academic history relating to the police in Edinburgh see T. W. Archibald and Edinburgh and East of Scotland Military Collectors' Society, *A History of the Lothian and Borders Police* (Edinburgh: The Author in association with Edinburgh and East of Scotland Military Collectors' Society, 1990).

<sup>19</sup> David Taylor, *The New Police in Nineteenth-Century England: Crime, Conflict and Control*, *New frontiers in History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), 8n. For a synopsis of theories see Robert Reiner, *The Politics of the Police* (Brighton: Wheatsheaf, 1985), 9-46.

<sup>20</sup> Charles Reith, *Police Principles and the Problem of War* (London, 1940), vii-viii, 141-147., See also, for example, *The Police Idea: Its History and Evolution in England in the Eighteenth Century and After* (London; New York: Oxford University Press, 1938)., *British Police and the Democratic Ideal* (London; New York: Oxford University Press, 1943)., *A Short History of the British Police* (London; New York: Oxford University Press, 1948)., *The Blind Eye of History: A Study of the Origins of the Present Police Era* (London: Faber and Faber, 1952)., *A New Study of Police History* (Edinburgh, 1956)., W. L. Melville Lee, *A History of Police in England* (London: Methuen, 1901)., J. M. Hart, *The British Police* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1951)., Leon Radzinowicz, *A History of English Criminal Law and its Administration from 1750, Vol.3: Cross-currents in the Movement for the Reform of the Police* (London: Stevens, 1956)., *A History of English Criminal Law and its Administration from 1750, Vol.4: Grappling for Control* (London: Stevens, 1968)., David Ascoli, *The Queen's Peace the Origins and Development of the Metropolitan Police, 1829-1979* (London: H. Hamilton, 1979).

in the fabrications of a central component of bourgeois order, namely wage labour'.<sup>21</sup> In effect, the policeman was a 'domestic missionary' and 'represented the penetration and continual presence of central political authority throughout daily life'.<sup>22</sup> Although denying any ruling-class conspiracy, V. A. C. Gatrell argued that its effect was to create the 'Policeman State'.<sup>23</sup> Rather than consensus, writers see perennial hostility arising out of consequent intervention by the police in civil society.<sup>24</sup>

More recently, David Barrie has argued that both traditionalist and revisionist 'problem response' models fail to account for, among other things, local variation.<sup>25</sup> He adopts Kit Carson and Hilary Idzikowska's framework to examine the 'interplay between macro-structural forces and localised factors' in the pattern of development of the 'new' police in urban Scotland in the nineteenth century.<sup>26</sup> As will be seen, one of the defining features in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was increasing intervention by central government in municipal policing, through the acquisition of power through legislation. During the Second World War the additional powers granted by the Defence Regulations gave central government power to potentially determine local policing priorities. At the same time, however, Edinburgh had a specific legacy of political, social, economic and religious factors that affected policing during the war. The 'relational' approach therefore more readily fits the pattern of policing in Edinburgh in the Second World War. Thus, by

<sup>21</sup> Mark Neocleous, *The Fabrication of Social Order: A Critical Theory of Police Power* (London: Pluto Press, 2000), xii-xiii.

<sup>22</sup> Robert D Storch, "The Policeman as Domestic Missionary: Urban Discipline and Popular Culture in Northern England, 1850-80," *Journal of Social History* 9, no. 4 (1976): 481., Allen Silver, "The Demand for Order in Civil Society: A Review of Some Themes in the History of Urban Crime, Police, and Riot," in *The Police: Six Sociological Essays* ed. D. J. Bordua (New York; London: Wiley, 1967), 12-13.

<sup>23</sup> V. A. C Gatrell, "Crime, Authority and the Policeman-State," in *The Cambridge Social History of Britain, 1750-1950*, ed. F. M. L. Thompson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 257.

<sup>24</sup> See also, for example, Robert D Storch, "The Plague of Blue Locusts: Police Reform and Popular Resistance in Northern England 1840-57," *International Review of Social History* (1975), P. Cohen, "Policing the Working Class City," in *Capitalism and the Rule of Law: From Deviancy Theory to Marxism*, ed. Bob Fine, et al. (London: Hutchinson, 1979); David Philips, "A Just Measure of Crime, Authority, Hunters and Blue Locusts': The 'Revisionist' Social History of Crime and the Law in Britain 1780-1850," in *Social Control and the State: Historical and Comparative Essays*, ed. Stanley Cohen and Andrew T. Scull (Oxford: Robertson, 1983).

<sup>25</sup> David G. Barrie, "Britain's Oldest Police? A Political and Social History of Policing in Glasgow, 1779-1846" (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Strathclyde, 2000), 37-44.

<sup>26</sup> Kit Carson and Hilary Idzikowska, "The Social Production of Scottish Policing, 1795-1900," in *Policing and Prosecution in Britain 1750-1850*, ed. Douglas Hay and Francis G. Snyder (Oxford: Clarendon, 1989), 268.



considering the specifically local factors that determined operational and organisational aspects of policing within the macro context of the centralised direction of the war effort on the home front this thesis builds on Barrie's example.

Writers have largely neglected historical case studies of police governance. Robert Morris' study of the Metropolitan Police 1860-1920 examines administrative and political structures and concludes that the Home Secretary, as the police authority, settled for the appearance rather than the substance of effective control of the force.<sup>27</sup> In a similar vein, Shane Ewen analyses the interplay between police authorities in two English forces and central government 1870-1938 and concludes that neither dominated the decision making process. Ewen pointed out that few historians have attempted to combine empirical approaches with theory in the analyses of the relationship between local and central governments and utilise R. A. W. Rhodes' concept of 'power-dependence'.<sup>28</sup> For that reason this thesis will follow his example and utilise the concept in the analysis, particularly in relation to the police authority and Police Federation. As Arthur Marwick pointed out, however, this has to be balanced with the requirement to account for 'the actual messiness of history as it happens, and the need to write a reasonably readable and interesting narrative'.<sup>29</sup>

Rhodes draws on inter-organisational and corporatist theory to counter the mainstream assumption that the 'Westminster' model, based on parliamentary sovereignty, strong cabinet, and majority party control of the executive, should be the starting point for any examination of British government. Given that British central government is non-executant, and dependent on others to provide services there is, he argued, a need for a theory that acknowledges the differentiated nature of the polity. Furthermore, sub-central governments can either be compliant or exercise a high degree of local discretion. Rather than being linear, there is therefore a need to recognise diffuse and complex bases of power and, consequently, intergovernmental relations should be characterised by the notion of 'power-dependence'.

<sup>27</sup> Robert M Morris, "The Metropolitan Police and Government 1860-1920" (Unpublished PhD Thesis, Open University, 2004), 1.

<sup>28</sup> Shane Ewen, "Power and Administration in Two Midland Cities, c.1870-1938" (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Leicester, 2003), 9-10.

<sup>29</sup> Arthur Marwick, *War and Social Change in the Twentieth Century: A Comparative Study of Britain, France, Germany, Russia and the United States* (London: Macmillan, 1974), ix.

The model asserts the relative power of participants and the intricate pattern of interdependence where both the centre and periphery are dependent on each other for the constitutional-legal, hierarchical, financial, political, or informational resources required to achieve goals. The relative power potential is, moreover, evident through the process of interaction between the institutions involved, which is viewed as a 'game', where each side manoeuvres for advantage. As a consequence, there is no zero-sum game as assumed in the 'Westminster' model; rather, there is a positive-sum outcome. For Rhodes, the starting point of analysis is, therefore, policy networks or the 'cluster or complex of organisations connected to each other by resource dependencies and distinguished from other clusters or complexes by breaks in the structure of resource dependencies'.<sup>30</sup> The principal form of policy network is the 'policy community', such as a police authority, which is characterised by the existence of high quality interaction between a limited number of participants where membership values and outcomes persist over time together with a high degree of vertical interdependence with the local authority and central government, for example. Rhodes' emphasis on the macro-meso level of analysis in particular, focuses, therefore, on the extent to which policy networks shape policy processes and outcomes.<sup>31</sup>

Despite being the representative organisation for rank-and-file officers since 1919, studies of the Police Federation are also limited. As with the majority of the published history of the police, that which does exist is largely based on the experience in England.<sup>32</sup> Given the locus of the strike in 1918 that led to the creation of the Federation and the subsequent strikes in 1919, this is not unreasonable. Indeed, the historiography of the immediate context has attracted greater attention from historians and sociologists. Gerald Reynolds, Ron Bean, and Owen Jones, for

<sup>30</sup> R. A. W. Rhodes and David Marsh, "Policy Networks in British Politics: A Critique of Existing Approaches," in *Policy Networks in British Government*, ed. David Marsh and R. A. W. Rhodes (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 10-12.

<sup>31</sup> R. A. W. Rhodes, "Some Myths in Central-Local Relations," *Town Planning Review* 51 (1980): 277., *The National World of Local Government* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1986), 16-30., *Beyond Westminster and Whitehall the Sub-Central Governments of Britain* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1988), 7., *Understanding Governance: Policy Networks, Governance, Reflexivity and Accountability* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 1997), 5-9., *Control and Power in Central-Local Government Relations* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999), 77-80, 143.

<sup>32</sup> See, for example, Anthony Judge and Police Federation of England and Wales, *The First Fifty Years: The Story of the Police Federation* (London: Police Federation, 1968)., *The Force of Persuasion* (London: Police Federation, 1994).

example, variously focus on the strikes in London and Liverpool, whilst V. Allen and Robert Reiner examine police unionism.<sup>33</sup> More recently, Keith Laybourn and David Taylor have questioned the extent to which the creation of the Police Federation was a response to the threat of revolution.<sup>34</sup> With the exception of a commemorative brochure, there is, however, no in-depth historical study of the Federation in Scotland in any era.<sup>35</sup>

Social historians have done much in recent years to redress the institutional focus of much of the writing on the police.<sup>36</sup> By concentrating on social processes and questions of ‘culture and consciousness ... social structure ... [and] ... the material conditions of life ... of a social group or of a whole society’ they have reconstructed the meaning of historical experience for individuals.<sup>37</sup> Among other areas, they have compiled detailed occupational studies of officers from the point of recruitment through to leaving the force. Most of these profiles, however, relate to England in the period before the Second World War.<sup>38</sup> In the comparatively small number of studies relating to Scotland only Charles Withers and Alastair Goldsmith consider

<sup>33</sup> See, for example, Gerald William Reynolds and Anthony Judge, *The Night the Police Went on Strike* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1968)., Ron Bean, "Police Unrest, Unionisation and the 1919 Strike in Liverpool," *Journal of Contemporary History* 15, no. 4 (1980)., Owen Jones, "The 'Spirit of Petrograd' ? The 1918 and 1919 Police Strikes," *What Next?* , no. 31 (2007)., V. Allen, "The National Union of Police and Prison Officers," *The Economic History Review* XI, no. 1 (1958)., Robert Reiner, *The Blue-Coated Worker: A Sociological Study of Police Unionism*, Cambridge studies in sociology 10 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978)., Joanne Klein, "Blue-Collar Job, Blue-Collar Career: Policemen's Perplexing Struggle for a Voice in Birmingham, Liverpool, and Manchester, 1900-1919," *Crime, History & Societies* 6, no. 1 (2002).

<sup>34</sup> Keith Laybourn and David Taylor, *Policing in England and Wales, 1918-39: The Fed, Flying Squads and Forensics* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

<sup>35</sup> cf *Seventy-fifth Anniversary Brochure, 1919 - 1994* (Glasgow: The Scottish Police Federation 1994).

<sup>36</sup> See, for example, Michael Brogden, *On the Mersey Beat: Policing Liverpool Between the Wars* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991)., Shane Ewen, "Civic Identity, Pride and Police Leisure in Birmingham during the Inter-War Years," *International Journal of Regional and Local Studies Series* 2, no. 1 (2005)., Joanne Klein, *Invisible Men: The Daily Lives of Police Constables in Manchester, Birmingham and Liverpool, 1900-1939* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2010)., "Moving On, Men and the Changing Character of Interwar Working-Class Neighbourhoods: From the Files of the Manchester and Liverpool City Police," *Journal of Social History* 38, no. 2 (2004)., Haia Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman: A Social History of a Labour Force in Metropolitan London, 1829-1914* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002).

<sup>37</sup> "Editorial," *Social History* 1, no. 1 (1976).

<sup>38</sup> See also Clive Emsley and Mark Clapson, "Recruiting the English Policeman C. 1840-1940," *Policing and Society* 3 (1994)., Mark Clapson and Clive Emsley, "Street, Beat and Respectability: The Culture and Self-Image of the late Victorian and Edwardian Urban Policeman," *Criminal Justice History* 16 (2002).

the aspect of personnel in detail.<sup>39</sup> David Smale's examination of the background, careers, and lifestyles of the officers in the Scottish Borders in the nineteenth century remains the most developed.<sup>40</sup> As Emsley concluded: 'much more work needs to be done on the origins of the different kinds of policemen'.<sup>41</sup>

Whilst these writers have also reconstructed some operational activity, detailed studies relating to the regulation of road traffic are limited, despite it being the exponential policing requirement throughout Britain from the creation of the 'new' police. As before, these largely relate to the experience in England in the period before or after the Second World War.<sup>42</sup> Laybourn's recent study of road traffic policing in Britain from the late nineteenth to the late twentieth centuries, for example, dedicated a mere handful of pages to the war period.<sup>43</sup> At the beginning of the twenty-first century historians from a sociological perspective began to consider the interconnections that created the system of 'automobility'. Policing was examined solely in relation to its contribution to create the 'lock in' to that system.<sup>44</sup> In this regard, Laybourn has argued that the 'police were not committed to the almost inevitable dominance of the motorist'; rather, they 'negotiated the use of the highways' and thus adopted a 'nuanced, independent and neutral stance' in an attempt to create a safer environment for all road users.<sup>45</sup> Yet, as with many other aspects of policing there is no extant detailed study of Scotland in general, and Edinburgh in particular in the 1930s and 1940s in this regard.

<sup>39</sup> Charles W.J. Withers, "'The Long Arm of the Law': Migration of Highland-Born Policemen to Glasgow, 1826-1891," *The Local Historian* 18, no. 3 (1988), Goldsmith, "The Development of the City of Glasgow Police," 115-123.

<sup>40</sup> David Martin Smale, "The Development of the New Police in the Scottish Borders c. 1840-1890" (Unpublished PhD Thesis, Open University, 2007), 218-290.

<sup>41</sup> Clive Emsley, "The Policeman as Worker: A Comparative Survey c. 1800-1940," *International Review of Social History* 45 (2000): 93, note 20.

<sup>42</sup> See, for example, "'Mother, What Did Policemen Do When There Weren't Any Motors?' The Law, The Police and the Regulation of Motor Traffic in England, 1900-1939," *The Historical Journal* 36, no. 2 (1993), Joanne Klein, "Traffic, Telephones and Police Boxes: The Deterioration of Beat Policing in Birmingham, Liverpool and Manchester Between the World Wars," in *Policing Interwar Europe: Continuity, Change and Crisis, 1918-40* ed. Gerald Blaney and Cañada Blanch Centre for Contemporary Spanish Studies (Basingstoke; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), Shane Ewen, "Policing, Planning and the Regulation of Traffic in Post-War Leicester," *Midland History* 28 (2003).

<sup>43</sup> Keith Laybourn, *The Battle for the Roads of Britain: Police, Motorists and the Law, c.1890s to 1970s* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).

<sup>44</sup> See, for example, John Urry, "The 'System' of Automobility," *Theory, Culture & Society* 21, no. 4 (2004), Jennifer Bonham, "Transport: Disciplining the Body that Travels," in *Against Automobility*, ed. Steffen Böhm, et al. (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), Simon Gunn, "People and the Car: The Expansion of Automobility in Urban Britain, C. 1955-70," *Social History* 38, no. 2 (2013).

<sup>45</sup> Laybourn, *The Battle for the Roads*, 36.

A word is also needed here about changing historical perspectives on the wartime home front. During the Second World War the mobilisation of the people across the UK created a pervasive perception that, as J. B. Priestley told his listeners in a radio broadcast in September 1940, they were ‘all in it’ on the home front: ‘we’re not really civilians any longer but a mixed lot of soldiers – machine-minding soldiers, milkmen and postmen soldiers, housewife and mother soldiers – and what a gallant corps that is – and even broadcasting soldiers’.<sup>46</sup> The Spitfire pilot Richard Hilary contemporarily observed that ‘it was as much the war of the unemployed labourer as of the Duke of Westminster’.<sup>47</sup> The notion that these people played their part in a ‘people’s war’ which was the ‘greatest spectacle of mass heroism in history’, especially during the Blitz, which began in September 1940, has become a dominant part of the national memory.<sup>48</sup> Since the 1960s, however, revisionist historians have questioned the extent to which this view is sustainable. To varying degrees these writers have identified, for example, an increase in crime, juvenile delinquency, and blackmarketeering, as well as the continuity of pre-war divisions and conflicts over class, gender, and race.<sup>49</sup> At the same time, as Robert Mackay has pointed out, a body of work exists which has ‘served to buttress the traditional standpoint’. In his study of civilian morale he concluded that, although the discreditable features identified by revisionist historians in the ‘people’s war’ were ‘indisputably present’, they were not ‘on such a scale as to invalidate the orthodox picture’. In effect, the question to which revisionist aspects are an ‘over-correction’ is one of degree.<sup>50</sup> We will return to some of these issues in the conclusion.

<sup>46</sup> J. B. Priestley, *Postscripts* (London, 1940), 68-69.

<sup>47</sup> Richard Hilary, *The Last Enemy* (London: Macmillan, 1943), 208.

<sup>48</sup> Ritchie Calder, *The Lesson of London* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1941), 62.

<sup>49</sup> See, for example, Angus Calder, *The People's War: Britain, 1939-45* (London: Cape, 1969)., Mark Roodhouse, "Popular Morality and the Black Market in Britain, 1939-55," in *Food and Conflict in Europe in the Age of the Two World Wars*, ed. Frank Trentmann and Flemming Just (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006)., Stuart Hylton, *Their Darkest Hour: The Hidden History of the Home Front, 1939-1945* (Stroud: Sutton, 2003)., Harold L. Smith, *Britain in the Second World War: A Social History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996)., David Smith, "Official Responses to Juvenile Delinquency in Scotland During the Second World War," *Twentieth Century British History* 18, no. 1 (2007)., Jose Harris, "War and Social History: Britain and the Home Front during the Second World War," in *The World War Two Reader*, ed. Gordon Martel (New York; London: Routledge, 2004)., Edward Smithies, *Crime in Wartime: A Social History of Crime in World War II* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1982)., Donald Serrell Thomas, *An Underworld at War: Spivs, Deserters, Racketeers and Civilians in the Second World War* (London: J. Murray, 2003).

<sup>50</sup> Robert Mackay, *Half the Battle: Civilian Morale in Britain during the Second World War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), 8-9, 248.

### **Aims, structure, and themes**

The principal aim of this study is to address the empirical gap in relation to the history of the police in Scotland, specifically Edinburgh in the Second World War. In particular, analysing the extent to which organisational and operational aspects of policing changed in response to the war. However, whilst it is easy to identify historical change it is harder to describe and explain.<sup>51</sup> The thesis will, therefore, examine the extent to which change was determined by local exigencies within the context of the centralised direction of the war effort on the home front. Put simply, the thesis demonstrates the nuances in the hypothesis that writers who argue that there was little or no change in policing and those find that there was a paradigm shift are both correct with regard to organisational aspects and operational demands in Edinburgh. A profile of the regular officers who served during the war will also be constructed. By combining Rhodes' theory with empirical historical research the thesis thus contributes to 'relational' historiography, social history, and revisionist accounts of the home front.

The main body of the thesis is therefore divided between a consideration of organisational aspects and operational demands. Chapter two provides a profile of the 820 regular officers who served in the police in Edinburgh during the war. As much of the thesis relates to an analysis of operational policing, this ascertains something of the nature of those who performed these duties. Thus, the profile considers the place of origin, previous occupation, and age of recruits as well as sickness levels, discipline, and the reasons for leaving the police to identify any change that occurred as a consequence of the war. It also establishes the wartime phenomenon of the release of officers to the armed services and industry, which had a detrimental effect on operational capacity.

The police authority is analysed in chapter three, in particular the interdependence of power between central government, local government, and the chief constable in the governance of the force. Given the centralised direction of the war and the potential for the Secretary of State for Scotland to direct operational police matters, the chapter considers whether there was a shift in the balance of power. Finally, so far

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<sup>51</sup> Williams, *Police Control Systems*, 2.



as organisational matters are concerned, chapter four examines the Police Federation. In particular, it considers the interdependence of power between the various representative boards and the degree to which its form and function established in 1919 circumscribed its effectiveness in the 1930s and 1940s.

In 1941 Hermann Mannheim predicted that, on the basis of the experience in the Great War, there would be ‘an enormous outbreak of lawlessness’ during the current war.<sup>52</sup> Chapter five examines some of the duties undertaken by the police as part of the war on the home front, many of which were included in the Police War Instructions, and considers whether they represented a new requirement or were an intensification of pre-existing functions. Chapter six analyses activity in relation to the core police functions of the protection of life and property, the maintenance of order, and civic regulation, whilst chapter seven considers policing in relation to the regulation of road traffic. Both these chapters examine the extent to which the pattern of policing during the war was different from the immediate pre- and post-war eras as a consequence of the requirement to undertake war-related functions as well as factors associated with personnel. The final chapter will draw together the findings of the study.

A number of interlinked themes recur in the analysis of the ‘new’ police in Edinburgh. Some that determined aspects of policing during the war were the consequence of a specific political, social, economic, and religious legacy. Thus, whilst much of the prosecution of the war on the home front was subject to centralised direction and control, the resultant pattern of police enforcement was ‘local and particular’.<sup>53</sup>

It is necessary at this point to provide a brief profile of the City of Edinburgh at this time. On the eve of the Second World War, Edinburgh occupied an area of fifty square miles. The extent of the city had trebled in size in 1920 as a consequence of the boundary extension that included the Burgh of Leith and the districts of Colinton,

<sup>52</sup> Hermann Mannheim, *War and Crime* (London: Watts, 1941), 129.

<sup>53</sup> Mark Roodhouse, *Black Market Britain, 1939-1955* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 145.

Corstorphine, Cramond, and Liberton in the County of Midlothian.<sup>54</sup> The population had also been increasing since the 1920s as a trend of migration was replaced by immigration from outside. By 1939 the number of people in the city had grown by over 10 per cent from 1922 to reach a figure of 471,987.

A 1946 civic survey concluded that Edinburgh, by comparison with Glasgow and Manchester, was not an 'industrial city'.<sup>55</sup> Indeed, the concentration in Edinburgh in the early twentieth century of the professions was 'unparalleled elsewhere in urban Britain'. Yet manufacturing and industry were significant aspects of the local economy. Between the mid-nineteenth and mid-twentieth centuries about half of the male workforce was employed in the industrial sector. Nonetheless, in the half century before the Great War, Edinburgh was 'not a heavy industrial city dominated by a single industry' and there were 'very few large plants'. Industrial employment was spread over a number of businesses, in particular printing. One consequence, according to Richard Rodger, was that this created 'diversity in the socio-spatial structure'.<sup>56</sup> In effect, there was less social segregation than occurred elsewhere.

In the early 1920s, however, parts of the old town were deliberately but partially depopulated because the housing was overcrowded and lacked basic sanitary provision. Some were decanted to new lower-income, lower-density housing schemes that were built between 1924 and 1939 in rural and agricultural areas.<sup>57</sup> Charles McKean has argued that the scheme in Niddrie, in particular, created, in practice, an 'enormous single-class ghetto'.<sup>58</sup> At the same time, increasing numbers of bungalows and villa-type houses were being constructed in the peripheries for the more affluent. In any event, given that there was less probability of noise being heard in these areas compared to older parts of the city, there was less deterrent to

<sup>54</sup> See 10 & 11 Geo. 5, cap. 97 (1920). In consequence, 173 officers from Leith Burgh Police and 20 from Midlothian Constabulary were transferred and together with the officers of Edinburgh City Police became part of the force renamed the City of Edinburgh Police. cf. ECA SL1/1/369, Minutes of the Town Council, 25 October 1920, 776; SL1/1/370, 17 November 1920, 31-32. Seventy of these 193 officers subsequently served in Edinburgh during the Second World War.

<sup>55</sup> Patrick Abercrombie and Derek Plumstead, *A Civic Survey and Plan for the City and Royal Burgh of Edinburgh* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1949), 18, 22, 85, 87.

<sup>56</sup> Richard Rodger, "Landscapes of Capital: Industry and the Built Environment in Edinburgh, 1750-1920," in *Edinburgh: The Making of a Capital City* ed. Brian Edwards and Paul Jenkins (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005), 86-89.

<sup>57</sup> Abercrombie and Plumstead, *A Civic Survey*, 15, 18.

<sup>58</sup> Charles McKean, *Edinburgh: Portrait of a City* (London Century 1991), 211, 217.



those seeking to break into either class of housing. The ability of the police to discharge their core role of prevention was further hampered by the fact that many of the new developments had little in the way of street lighting. As will be seen, the legacy of suburbanisation affected policing during the war.

Two of the defining features of the police authority in the interwar period, most notably in relation to the policing of road traffic, as Paul Laxton and Rodger identified especially in relation to Edinburgh in the nineteenth century, was 'short-term financial expediency' and 'administrative paralysis'.<sup>59</sup> In effect, in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the police authority frustrated some of the strategic planning by the chief constable and others involved in municipal affairs, notwithstanding that they were increasingly regarded as the experts.

Closely related is what might reasonably be conceptualised as the 'reactive underestimation' that chief officers and those concerned with the governance of the 'new' police adopted in relation to rank-and-file officers. That is the deliberate policy of paying the lowest possible wage and imposing harsh conditions up until the point where disaffection threatened the stability and hence capacity of the workforce to a sufficient degree that concessions became imperative. As Critchley noted in relation to the 1940s and 1950s, the level of police pay was the 'biggest single factor in limiting the availability of sufficient manpower to conduct a successful fight against crime'.<sup>60</sup> The history of the police in the twentieth century was characterised by a cycle of committees of inquiry established in response to crises. The attitude of 'reactive underestimation' was a reflection of the deliberate employment policies adopted by police authorities immediately after the creation of the 'new' police forces in the early nineteenth century where police management sought to recruit the unskilled and semi-skilled in the belief that they would be more amenable to discipline and thereby create a stable workforce.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>59</sup> Paul Laxton, Richard Rodger, and Henry Duncan Littlejohn, *Insanitary City: Henry Littlejohn and the Condition of Edinburgh* (Lancaster: Carnegie Publishing Ltd, 2013), 68, 91.

<sup>60</sup> Critchley, *A History of Police in England and Wales*, 248-249.

<sup>61</sup> See, for example, Goldsmith, "The Development of the City of Glasgow Police," 119-121., Emsley and Clapson, "Recruiting the English Policeman," 269-271.

Another prominent factor more specific to Edinburgh was a fierce anti-Catholic sentiment, which was driven, in large measure, by Protestant/Presbyterian sectarianism.<sup>62</sup> Riots broke out in the city as well as Glasgow in 1779, for example, at the repeal of the penal laws. In the 1930s anti-Catholic disturbances in Edinburgh reached, according to one writer, a 'high point'.<sup>63</sup> In a similar vein, the legacy of the desire to control vagrancy determined aspects of operational policing during the war. Many of the local police initiatives in Scotland in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were based on a fear of the impact of the indigent, given the lack of adequate poor-relief in Scotland compared to England. Indeed, part of the impetus behind the 1805 Act in Edinburgh was a desire to suppress vagrancy.<sup>64</sup> The issue was still considered significant in the 1930s with the police conducting a bi-annual census of migratory poor, which was reported to the town council and the Secretary of State for Scotland.

In addition to those factors associated with the political, social, economic, and religious milieu, some themes, such as the problem of capacity, related more specifically to the police organisation. In the early decades of the twentieth century the responsibility of the police throughout Britain for a range of social services and in particular the regulation of traffic increased exponentially. Forces were required to absorb the additional demand largely without a commensurate increase in strength. By 1928 the Royal Commission on Police Powers and Procedure in England and Wales warned that the police might become overburdened.<sup>65</sup> In Edinburgh, police boxes were introduced between 1931 and 1933 to extend beats. This was also a response to suburbanisation. As Williams argued, the development of lower density housing in the early twentieth century created spaces that were hard to patrol on foot and police boxes were 'taken up systematically to fill that gap'.<sup>66</sup> The police authority in Edinburgh, however, saw this as an opportunity to reduce the strength of the force to save money, which exacerbated the problem of capacity.

<sup>62</sup> Panikos Panayi, *Racial Violence in Britain, 1840-1950* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1993), 137.

<sup>63</sup> Joseph M Bradley, "Catholic Distinctiveness: A Need to be Different?," in *Scotland's Shame?: Bigotry and Sectarianism in Modern Scotland* ed. T. M. Devine (Edinburgh: Mainstream, 2000), 160-161.

<sup>64</sup> Carson and Idzikowska, "The Social Production of Scottish Policing," 281., McGowan, *Policing the Metropolis of Scotland*, 97-98.

<sup>65</sup> Report of the Royal Commission on Police Powers and Procedure. Cmd 3297, 1929, 82.

<sup>66</sup> Williams, *Police Control Systems*, 131.

Closely related is the theme of discretion. As Laurence Lustgarten identified, discretion is one of the concepts 'central to nearly all literature concerning the police'.<sup>67</sup> Faced with competing demands officers were selective in the enforcement of crimes and offences. Although inherently difficult to gauge the extent to which it was used, the doctrine of constabulary independence was well established by the 1930s.<sup>68</sup> As Lustgarten put it: 'Substantive vagueness of the law and limited resources ... [created] ... enormous discretion at the lowest and highest levels for the police.'<sup>69</sup> At the strategic level discretion in operational matters was part of the increasing professionalism and autonomy of chief constables in the governance structure. During the period under consideration there were two chief constables in Edinburgh: Roderick Ross, who retired in 1935, held the office for 35 years; William Morren became chief constable on the retirement of Ross and remained in post until 1955.<sup>70</sup> As will be noted, especially in relation to the regulation of traffic, the character of policing was determined by the chief constable's perception of the police role.

At the tactical level, Scottish officers were instructed to have 'regard to the nature of the crime, the surrounding circumstances, and the condition of the character of the accuser and the accused'.<sup>71</sup> Michael Chatterton has pointed to the paradox of the extent of autonomous power exercised by constables compared to their position in the hierarchy of the police.<sup>72</sup> Robert Colquhoun, the wartime police detective in Glasgow, recalled that this amounted in practice to working by a 'rule of thumb'.<sup>73</sup> Donaldson found that during the Second World War officers adopted a 'blind-eye' attitude. As one recalled: 'You only dealt with matters you were forced to. You

<sup>67</sup> Laurence Lustgarten, *The Governance of Police* (London: Sweet & Maxwell, 1986), 10.

<sup>68</sup> See, for example, Chris A. Williams, "Britain's Police Forces: Forever Removed from Democratic Control?," (2003), [www-histpol.hist.cam.ac.uk/papers/policy-paper-16.html](http://www-histpol.hist.cam.ac.uk/papers/policy-paper-16.html). Accessed 1 November 2011.

<sup>69</sup> Lustgarten, *The Governance of Police*, 22.

<sup>70</sup> Martin Stallion and David Wall, *The British Police: Police Forces and Chief Officers, 1829-2012*, 2nd ed. (Bramshill: Police History Society, 2011), 101.

<sup>71</sup> *Police Manual for Scotland*, 11.

<sup>72</sup> Michael R Chatterton, "The Supervision of Patrol Work under the Fixed Points System," in *The British Police* ed. Simon Holdaway (London: Edward Arnold, 1979), 83.

<sup>73</sup> Robert Vernon Colquhoun, *Life Begins at Midnight* (London 1962), 156.

didn't go looking for things.'<sup>74</sup> In effect, there was and remains a dichotomy in policing between the 'law in books and the law on the streets'.<sup>75</sup>

A number of interlinked themes also recur in relation to the tactics used by the police. From the outset, the 'new' police was premised on overt and proactive preventative policing. The 1931 *Manual* for Scottish officers exhorted them to 'exercise such vigilance and activity as to make it almost impossible for any one to commit crimes or offences without observation and detection'.<sup>76</sup> The bedrock of this system in Edinburgh, until at least the 1980s, was beat patrol by an officer in uniform. At the same time, since at least the early twentieth century, plain-clothes officers in Scotland maintained covert surveillance on, for example, political and protest groups.<sup>77</sup> In addition, police activity was and remains reactive. As the wartime City Prosecutor in Edinburgh, James Mill, advised in 1944, it was also a duty of the police to detect and investigate crimes and offences after they had occurred.<sup>78</sup> Furthermore, as noted, the police in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were increasingly required to respond to the demand created by the regulation of traffic. The distinction between national and local policing objectives is additionally worthy of note here. For example, although central government subvention covered half of total police costs, the Royal Commission on Transport found in 1929 that some local authorities considered the requirement to fund half the cost of the regulation of traffic unjust on the grounds that local ratepayers derived little or no benefit.<sup>79</sup> In a similar vein, much of the police activity outlined in the Police War Instructions was intended to support the prosecution of the war on the home front. Thus, whilst much of core policing was intended to have an effect locally, some police activity by municipal forces was directed towards national objectives.

<sup>74</sup> Donaldson, "Policing the War," 172.

<sup>75</sup> Chris A. Williams, "Police Governance: Community, Policing, and Justice in the Modern UK," *Taiwan in Comparative Perspective* 3 (2011): 51.

<sup>76</sup> *Police Manual for Scotland*, 33.

<sup>77</sup> Paul Gordon, *Policing Scotland* (Glasgow: Scottish Council for Civil Liberties, 1980), 50-54. 'Surveillance' here means 'watching individuals to ensure they do not do something'. See Edward Higgs, *The Information State in England: The Central Collection of Information on Citizens Since 1500* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 11.

<sup>78</sup> James Mill, *The Scottish Police: An Outline of their Powers and Duties* (Edinburgh: W. Green & Son Ltd., 1944), 43.

<sup>79</sup> First Report of the Royal Commission on Transport. Cmd 3365, 1929, 22.

A number of themes also arise specifically out of war conditions, in particular the paradox of the blackout. On the one hand, enforcing the ‘Lighting Restrictions’ was a major preoccupation for the police. On the other, it made preventative policing more difficult. In this respect it was closely interlinked with the legacy of suburbanisation. In the first weeks after its imposition *The Scotsman* reported that the police in Edinburgh had ‘been severely handicapped by the darkness’. A few weeks later it noted that the city had been ‘hit by a black-out crime “wave” ... shops were looted [of] bicycles, tinned foods, jewellery, clothing and, other sundry articles’.<sup>80</sup> In a similar manner, the *Police Review* advised that police work, especially ‘in relation to traffic control’, had become more arduous.<sup>81</sup> This and the other themes and questions will be examined in the thesis.

### **Method and primary sources**

Drawing on Rhodes’ theory of ‘power-dependence’, empirical analysis has been used to develop the hypothesis from a ‘relational’ perspective that organisational and operational aspects of policing in Edinburgh during the Second World War represented both continuity and change. The thesis draws on a wide range of sources from a variety of archives covering the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries, but especially between 1930 and 1949 to provide detailed parenthesis for the period between 3 September 1939 (when Britain declared war on Germany) and 2 September 1945 (when Japan surrendered). Some have never or rarely been used in historical studies.

Privileged access was, for example, given to the Minute Books of the Scottish Police Federation which contain a record of the meetings and membership of the local and national representative boards between 1919 and 1945.<sup>82</sup> The extent to which these can be considered a comprehensive record of activity needs to be treated with caution however. In places, the minutes are brief to the extent that it is difficult to discern what the issue relates to. In the early record this might be the consequence of an uncertainty as to what to record, given that rank-and-file police officers had never

<sup>80</sup> *The Scotsman*, 18 September 1939, 5; 2 October 1939, 5.

<sup>81</sup> *Police Review*, 3 May 1940, 337.

<sup>82</sup> Scottish Police Federation (hereafter SPF), Edinburgh (hereafter E): Minutes of Constable’s, Sergeants, Inspectors and, Joint Branch Boards; Glasgow (hereafter G): Minutes of Joint Central Committee.

had an official representative forum from the creation of the ‘new’ police until 1919. Later, part of the explanation might be related to a degree of stability in membership, particularly office bearers, who could provide a level of expertise and continuity, which are characteristic of policy networks and can negate the need for a more detailed record. Furthermore, the correspondence that informed meetings has not survived in the Federation’s archive and is only rarely and briefly excerpted into the minutes. Thus, it is impossible to determine fully how successful the Federation was in representing its members. Nonetheless, the archive provides the opportunity to construct for the first time something of a detailed picture of the working of the Scottish Police Federation at both local and national level.

The thesis also draws on the *Police Review*. At its first meeting in 1919 the Joint Branch Board of the Police Federation in Edinburgh recognised the journal as its official organ.<sup>83</sup> Similarly, at the first Scottish Central Conference of the Federation a few days later, the press were excluded with the exception of representatives of the *Police Review*. In this, the Federation in Scotland was clearly following the thoughts of representatives in England and Wales. The *Police Review and Parade Gossip*, which appeared in 1893, was one of a number of publications that sought to challenge the portrayal of the ‘new’ policeman as a ‘bumbling Dogberry’. However, its reports must be viewed with some caution. As well as fostering the idea of a brotherhood of policing, it had an explicit political purpose in seeking to improve the conditions of the police service by propaganda and ‘securing avenues through which the attention of Parliament could be called’ to grievances.<sup>84</sup>

Access was also gained to reports by force Special Branches and their summary compiled by the SHD made between 1940 and 1945 under a number of headings (see Appendix ‘2’) relating to aspects of policing classified as secret.<sup>85</sup> These therefore remain closed or exempt from release to the public. Following a request to the Scottish Government, however, they were redacted to a small degree and supervised access was permitted for academic purposes. The degree to which they are a

<sup>83</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Joint Branch Board, 15 December 1919, 3.

<sup>84</sup> *Police Review*, 5 December 1919, 532; 12 December 1919, 541; 2 January 1920, 2-5. Clive Emsley, *The English Police: A Political and Social History*, 2nd ed. (London: Longman, 1996), 101., *The Great British Bobby: A History of British Policing from the 18th Century to the Present* (London: Quercus, 2009), 172.

<sup>85</sup> NRS HH55/50/1-61/1.

comprehensive account of police activity likewise needs to be treated with caution however. Some Scottish chief constables were clearly unhappy about the requirement and consistently did not submit a report.<sup>86</sup> The explanation is undoubtedly related to the fact that, although in existence in Britain since the nineteenth century, some Scottish police forces did not have a Special Branch in mid-1940. Fear of secret police and *agents provocateur* had been a feature of the creation and development of the 'new' police in Britain.<sup>87</sup> The 1928 Royal Commission on Police Powers and Procedure in England and Wales regarded such methods as 'alien to our habits'.<sup>88</sup> In July 1940 the SHD asked Scottish police forces that had not already done so to assign experienced detectives to undertake enquiries of a 'particularly secret nature'.<sup>89</sup> Thus, notwithstanding that a Special Branch had been created in Edinburgh in February 1939 in response to the prospect of war, and Morren consistently submitted returns, a question remains as to whether the reports by Special Branches were selective if there was a pervasive uneasiness about their existence.

Furthermore, in addition to the redaction in 2012, cases that the Security Service, MI5, considered matters of special secrecy were specifically omitted from reports by police forces during the Second World War. The MI5 Regional Security Officer in Scotland also exercised a measure of editorial control over the précis compiled by the SHD. In a memorandum from the SHD in September 1942 the Regional Security Officer was requested to 'vet' the draft summary 'as usual'.<sup>90</sup> For all that, the content was clearly negotiated during the interaction between the SHD and Regional Security Officer. In May 1944, for example, the Regional Security Officer took issue with the conclusions reached in two items and although one was subsequently redacted, the SHD declined to alter the other.<sup>91</sup> Notwithstanding, the reports do

<sup>86</sup> Scottish chief constables proposed to discuss the matter sometime in late 1940. In a response, the SHD pointed out that the scheme had been operating in England and Wales for some time, which was clearly intended to pressurise Scottish chief constables to remain in-step. See NRS HH48/66/1, Circular 4270, 6 December 1940.

<sup>87</sup> Bernard Porter, *The Origins of Britain's Political Police*, Warwick Working Papers in Social History no.3 (University of Warwick, 1985), 8.

<sup>88</sup> Cmd 3297, 40.

<sup>89</sup> NRS HH52/28, Circular 4053, 1 July 1940.

<sup>90</sup> NRS HH55/54/1, Memo from McDonnell to Perfect, 8 September 1942.

<sup>91</sup> NRS HH55/58/1, Letter from Perfect to Christie, 5 May 1944.



provide detail on an aspect of policing during the war that has largely been otherwise unavailable.

Use is also made of circulars issued by the SHD. Within the model of governance as it had evolved by the early twentieth century, circulars issued by central government were, as Reiner found principally in relation to the English experience, viewed by chief constables as 'virtually mandatory'.<sup>92</sup> During the war the SHD issued something in the region of 2,500 circulars.<sup>93</sup> Whilst some were directed at other parts of the war on the home front, a great many were addressed to all or some Scottish police forces and many, if not most, had organisational or operational implications.

Reports submitted by chief constables relating to 'Home Intelligence', 1940-45, and their summary compiled by SHD have also been utilised.<sup>94</sup> Although the reports were intended to include the public perspective of war conditions some entries clearly reflect the personal opinion of the chief constable which raises a questions over the degree to which they can be considered accurate. Indeed, T. H. O'Brien noted that agencies compiling such reports during the war were 'influenced to a peculiar degree by individual judgements ... and frequently took different views about the elements to be included in their compound and reached different results'.<sup>95</sup> In this sense, reports might reflect what Taylor calls 'supply-side policies' rather than incidence.<sup>96</sup> Notwithstanding this, and whilst many of the headings under which the reports were made had little to do with policing as it had evolved by the

<sup>92</sup> Robert Reiner, *Chief Constables: Bobbies, Bosses, or Bureaucrats?* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 274.

<sup>93</sup> See principally NRS HH48/66/1-3, 52/27-33, 55/864.

<sup>94</sup> NRS HH55/13, 17-42. The content and frequency of the requirement for reports was amended throughout the war by the SHD. See Appendix '3'. Edinburgh daily and incidental reports were made 1940-46; Fortnightly 1939-42; Four-weekly 1942-45; Quarterly 1945-52. For detail on the creation of the Home Intelligence department and the collation of reports see Paul Addison and Jeremy A. Crang, *Listening to Britain: Home Intelligence Reports on Britain's Finest Hour, May to September 1940* (London: Bodley Head, 2010), xi-xvii. Donnelly has identified a long continuity in the collection of information by the police in Scotland on behalf of the central state. Daniel Donnelly, *Municipal Policing in Scotland* (Dundee: Dundee University Press, 2008), 116-144.

<sup>95</sup> O'Brien, *Civil Defence* 295.

<sup>96</sup> Howard Taylor, "Rationing Crime: The Political Economy of Criminal Statistics since the 1850s," *The Economic History Review, New Series* 51, no. 3 (1998): 571. For a critique see Robert. M Morris, "Lies, Damned Lies and Criminal Statistics: Reinterpreting the Criminal Statistics in England and Wales," *Crime, History & Societies* 5, no. 1 (2001).



first half of the twentieth century, they provide evidence of police activity during the war that is otherwise unavailable.

The thesis also draws on the annual reports by the chief constable to the town council on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment in Edinburgh between 1930 and 1949.<sup>97</sup> Whilst subordinates undoubtedly compiled the reports, the chief constable at the very least approved the content. In that sense the views and opinions expressed were endorsed and can be reasonably be said to be those of the two chief constables in the period under consideration, Ross and Morren. Although the reports for the war period are brief by comparison with those of the pre- and post-war eras they continued to provide statistics relating to crimes and offences made known to the police and those where one or more persons were arrested or cited (see Appendix '4' for an example of the classification of crimes and offences). An in-depth analysis of patterns of crime is, however, beyond the scope of this thesis and the statistics will be assessed only insofar as what they might reveal in broad terms about operational policing.

In cases where the offence only becomes 'known' at the point of detection, the number made known to the police and cases where one or more persons were arrested or cited are generally identical or very approximate. Crimes and offences against Betting, Gaming, and Lotteries, for example, largely arose as a consequence of proactive activity by police officers. In effect, all crimes and offences made known to the police resulted in a case where one or more persons were arrested or cited. For consistency in such cases, tables and figures in the thesis will be based on the number of crimes and offences made known to the police. In addition to the crude numbers many of the tables include a percentage or index to give a better sense of temporal change and to permit a comparison to be made between series.<sup>98</sup> Year-on-year comparison about the implied nature of policing needs to be treated with caution however. In places figures in the reports by the chief constable to the town council have been aggregated incorrectly. Furthermore, the way that crimes were categorised and aggregated changed over time. In addition, prior to 1936, only those

<sup>97</sup> ECA ED006/1/9-12.

<sup>98</sup> Percentages and indices given in tables have, where necessary, been rounded to the nearest decimal point.

deemed 'serious' were included in the reports. Cases where the police had arrested or cited someone who was not brought before a court might also have been excluded. Nonetheless, the statistics are essential for an understanding of police activity, particularly in relation to the core roles and the regulation of road traffic.

The thesis also utilises the Service Record for regular officers who served in Edinburgh in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries.<sup>99</sup> As specified in the 1920 Regulations these contain: the officer's name and collar number; date and place of birth; date of appointment and retirement; age at appointment and previous occupation; advancements in pay or promotion; and details of discipline and sickness.<sup>100</sup> Williams has argued that as well as being part of a bureaucracy in a Weberian sense, police forces kept such records for the purposes of 'legitimising and enabling the exercise of surveillance and control' of officers.<sup>101</sup> By comparing the date of appointment and date of retirement given in the Service Record, 820 officers have been identified as having served during the Second World War. It is unknown, however, whether the collection is complete. The reports by Morren to the town council identify a mean of some 703 regular officers between 1939 and 1945, which suggests that the profile constructed from the 820 records will be representative of most, if not all, those who served during the war. Conclusions drawn solely from the Service Records need to be treated with some caution however. Some entries have been recorded inconsistently. In other aspects information given in the chief constable's annual reports point to omissions in relation to the entries in officers' Service Records. Given the likelihood of some administrative chaos during the war this is understandable. Statistics derived from the Service Records should therefore be considered as indicative rather than precise.

As a picture of operational police officers this is, however, partial. During the war a number of auxiliaries were recruited to the City of Edinburgh Police to supplement regular officers in light of the additional wartime demands and to replace those regular officers who had been released to the armed services and industry. There

<sup>99</sup> ECA ED006/13/1-22.

<sup>100</sup> S.R.&O. (No. 2113), regulation 43 (1920). The Private Record(s) containing the officer's address and details of wife and children, which were considered 'confidential', were also in use in Edinburgh in early 1939 but have not been traced. See NRS HH55/399, Minutes of 13<sup>th</sup> Scottish Police Council, 24 March 1939, 8-9.

<sup>101</sup> Williams, *Police Control Systems*, 93.

were, for example, a mean of 212 First Police Reserve officers, consisting of retired regular officers, as well as Police War Reserve officers serving in each year of the war. Furthermore, as will be seen in chapter three, eight members of the Women's Auxiliary Police Service were sworn-in and given the powers of regular officers in late 1943. There were also an unknown number of whole-time and part-time Special Constables. No Service Records relating to these auxiliaries have been found however. Thus, a picture of at least one-third of the actual operational strength of the force in Edinburgh during the war remains obscured.

Among the other principal primary sources the thesis draws on the minutes of the town council and the Lord Provost's Committee between 1938 and 1945.<sup>102</sup> To provide historical context, these are supplemented by the minutes of the General Commissioners, 1805-1856, the Watching and Lodging Houses Committee, 1852-1856, and the town council, 1856.<sup>103</sup> Together these provide details of the membership of committees and a record of issues surrounding the administration of the police establishment and are the official, and in most cases certified, record of proceedings. Yet they are only a partial record of what actually occurred. The detail of the interaction that clearly occurred between councillors is largely absent. Given the drive for national unity during the Second World War, this might have been the consequence of an attempt to disguise the existence of divisions that, as will be seen, clearly existed over some issues.

Some of the social dynamic is evident in contemporary newspapers. The thesis draws on *The Scotsman*, the *Edinburgh Evening News*, and the *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch*, principally between 1939 and 1945. Among other things, they report on the activities of the town council. Although the public gallery in the council chambers was closed for security reasons from the beginning of the war until mid-1943, it appears that reporters witnessed meetings of the town council and some committees. A question remains over the extent to which newspaper reports during the war were accurate however. Stephen Vella observed that the 'socio-political, economic and ideological structures from which news stories arise remain crucially

<sup>102</sup> ECA SL1/389-395., SL25/2/24-30.

<sup>103</sup> ECA ED9/1-13., ED9/2/5., SL1/1/269.

important background to a full understanding of newspaper texts'.<sup>104</sup> In this respect, those during the war need to be treated with especial caution. Whilst compulsory censorship was never introduced, the Defence Regulations gave central government wide powers to control the media. Together with 'D' notices and the voluntary restriction exercised by editors there was a concerted effort to prevent the disclosure of information that might aid the enemy or impede the war effort by weakening the resolve of the public.<sup>105</sup> Whilst it is difficult to assess how far this influenced reporting, there were contemporary concerns that information that was of no military significance whatsoever was, nonetheless, being arbitrarily suppressed.<sup>106</sup>

Following Donaldson's example, an attempt was made to utilise oral sources. Until comparatively recently, much of the focus of police history was political and organisational. As Paul Thompson has argued, oral history offers the possibility of juxtaposing primary sources with the voice of rank-and-file officers to, among others, 'open new areas of inquiry' and bring recognition to a specific group of people ignored by historians.<sup>107</sup> Writing in 1998 Donaldson recognised that the majority of human sources in this regard were, however, already likely to have been lost.<sup>108</sup> This was even more likely with the passage of further time. Indeed, by 2010, the current writer was unsuccessful in establishing contact with anyone who had served in the police in Edinburgh during the war.

This thesis further draws on memoirs by police officers. As with most of the literature, the overwhelming majority of these relate to the Metropolitan Police. Again, in Scotland, the focus generally relates to Glasgow in the era before the first half of the twentieth century.<sup>109</sup> As Haia Shpayer-Makov identified, the majority were written by senior officers and therefore do not reflect the experience of the

<sup>104</sup> Stephen Vella, "Newspapers," in *Reading Primary Sources: The Interpretation of Texts from Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century History*, ed. Miriam Dobson and Benjamin Ziemann (London; New York: Routledge, 2009), 194.

<sup>105</sup> For a farcical example see Harold Nicolson and Nigel Nicolson, *Diaries and Letters, 1939-1945* (London: Collins, 1967), 32. Even Parliamentary Privilege could be subject to censure. See *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch*, 7 May 1942, 1.

<sup>106</sup> Neil Stammers, *Civil Liberties in Britain During the 2nd World War: A Political Study* (London: Croom Helm, 1983), 135-157.

<sup>107</sup> Paul Richard Thompson, *The Voice of the Past: Oral History*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 8.

<sup>108</sup> Donaldson, "Policing the War," 34.

<sup>109</sup> For a digest see Martin Stallion, *A Life of Crime: A Bibliography of British Police Officers' Memoirs and Biographies*, 2nd ed. (Braintree: M.R. Stallion, 2013).

rank-and-file.<sup>110</sup> Furthermore, as Paul Lawrence has argued, police memoirs need to be treated with some caution: 'there are problems in judging where fact and fiction collide'.<sup>111</sup> For example, the sole source in this regard in relation to Edinburgh is the autobiography by William Merrilees who, from August 1940, was the detective superintendent in charge of the Criminal Investigation Department (hereafter CID) of the City of Edinburgh Police. Much of his memoir is of the 'cases I have solved' variety. As Merrilees stated, it was explicitly intended:

to inspire young lads and attract them to the police service and to show that despite a humble background, lack of educational qualifications, and other handicaps – through perseverance, single mindedness of purpose and sheer hard work – it is possible to reach the top of any career upon which one embarks.<sup>112</sup>

As with many police memoirs, the commonplace that is of interest to the historian is often ignored. Nonetheless, together with the other primary sources referred to, they provide some insight into the largely neglected aspects of police history that this thesis will address.

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<sup>110</sup> Haia Shpayer-Makov, "Explaining the Rise and Success of Detective Memoirs in Britain," in *Police Detectives in History, 1750-1950*, ed. Clive Emsley and Haia Shpayer-Makov (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 103-134.

<sup>111</sup> Paul Lawrence, "'Scoundrels and Scallywags, and some honest men...': Memoirs and the Self-Image of French and English Policemen, c. 1870-1939," in *Comparative Histories of Crime*, ed. Barry S. Godfrey, Clive Emsley, and Graeme Dunstall (Cullompton: Willan, 2003), 126.

<sup>112</sup> William Merrilees, *The Short Arm of the Law, the Memoirs of William Merrilees, O.B.E., Chief Constable, the Lothians and Peebles Constabulary* (London: John Long, 1966), 9

## 2

### The Regular Officers

The *Report of the Committee on the Police Service of England, Wales and Scotland* (hereafter the Desborough Committee), which was established in response to the crisis of the police strike in London in 1918, defined the desirable attributes of candidates to the police. They must, it noted:

not only reach certain standards of height and physical development but must have a constitution which is sound in every way ... a man cannot make a good policeman unless his general character should be unblemished; he should be humane and courteous and, generally, he should possess a combination of moral, mental and physical qualities not ordinarily required in other employments.<sup>1</sup>

The delivery of policing was carried out by police officers. The expenditure on personnel has always been the most expensive aspect of the police organisation. Yet comparatively little is known of police officers as individuals. As Joanne Klein argued, police officers have largely remained ‘anonymous’, leaving a gap in the analysis of the police.<sup>2</sup> Although she and others, comparatively recently in terms of the academic sub-discipline of police history, have begun to consider the social characteristics of police officers and address the empirical gap, the studies have ignored Edinburgh. The purpose of this chapter is therefore firstly to construct a detailed profile of the 820 regular officers who served in Edinburgh during the Second World War; and secondly to consider the extent to which this changed as a consequence of the war. Given the question of whether operational activity represented a paradigm shift from the pre-war era, the chapter also identifies a combination of factors relating to personnel that undoubtedly affected capacity. In places, this research both confirms and contradicts the findings of existing studies. The chapter principally draws on officers’ Service Records. In the absence of comparable information relating to auxiliaries, however, it remains a partial picture of those who carried out operational policing in Edinburgh during the war.

<sup>1</sup> Report of the Committee on the Police Service of England, Wales and Scotland, Part 1. Cmd 253, 1919, 8.

<sup>2</sup> Klein, *Invisible Men*, 1.

The chapter examines some of the antecedents of recruits to the force, in particular their place of birth, previous occupation, and age. Put briefly, it is argued that, as a consequence of the changing nature of policing, the profile of recruits changed over the period of the first four decades of the twentieth century. The proportion from predominantly rural areas of Scotland and those formerly employed as agricultural labourers and farm servants declined, whilst there was a corresponding increase in those from Edinburgh and those formerly employed as clerks. Furthermore, it finds that joining the police was aspirational for younger recruits. Yet those who had been in other occupations for a comparatively longer period were less inclined to view it as advantageous. Lastly, whilst a comparatively small number joined during the war, they were older than those recruited in the pre-war era.

The chapter also focuses on various aspects of their service as police officers, including the circumstances under which they left. What is advanced here is the argument that discipline became stricter during the war. Whilst it might have been envisaged that the pressure of war would make senior officers more lenient in the enforcement of discipline, the reverse was the case. As Klein found in her detailed study of three English forces in the early twentieth century the ‘tolerance for some offences changed over time’.<sup>3</sup> By comparison with the pre-war period, unprecedented use was made of dismissal and requiring officers to resign in the disposal of disciplinary cases during the war. The chapter also examines the wartime phenomenon of the release of younger regular officers to the armed services and industry. It is argued that, whilst there was no apparent change in the pattern of sickness during the war, the rate of attrition of officers leaving because of ill-health was greater than the immediate post-war era. In contrast, the rate of attrition by resignation increased dramatically after the war as a consequence of the cycle of ‘reactive underestimation’.

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<sup>3</sup> *Invisible Men*, 72.

### **Place of birth, previous occupation, and age of recruits**

The significance of the place of origin of recruits to the police lies in the extent to which they were local to the area they policed. The Scottish based studies point to the migration to Glasgow and the Scottish Borders of men born in the highlands during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.<sup>4</sup> In a similar manner, English based studies found that recruits to urban forces in the nineteenth century came from largely rural areas. On the one hand, there was a belief that those from outside the force area would more readily be able to undertake control and surveillance functions over a population with whom they had no ties.<sup>5</sup> At the same time, there was a perception that the urban environment had a debilitating effect on moral and physical health and rendered recruits less able to withstand the rigours of the job than those from rural areas. As the second report of the Desborough Committee noted in 1920, the majority of recruits had been drawn from agricultural labourers 'who have the advantage over industrial workers in physique and stamina and, with proper training, make an excellent type of policeman'.<sup>6</sup> For all that, as Shpayer-Makov found in relation to the Metropolitan Police, recruits in the early twentieth century increasingly came from London.<sup>7</sup>

Although the Service Records of the officers who served in Edinburgh during the war contains details of their place of birth this has been recorded inconsistently. Some places are referred to by local names such as Linlithgowshire and Haddingtonshire rather than their actual names of West Lothian and East Lothian respectively. Likewise, in some instances officers born after 1920 have their place of birth recorded as 'Colinton', for example, even though this and other areas of Midlothian had been incorporated into Edinburgh when the city boundary was extended. In addition, in places, county names are noted in the anglicised form: Argyllshire instead of Argyll; Morayshire instead of Moray (also known as Elginshire until 1918); and Sutherlandshire instead of Sutherland. Finally, the Service Records do not always reflect the changes brought about by the Local

<sup>4</sup> Withers, "The Long Arm of the Law!", Goldsmith, "The Development of the City of Glasgow Police," 118-122., Smale, "The Development of the New Police in the Scottish Borders," 241-243.

<sup>5</sup> Emsley, *The English Police, 191-192.*, "The Policeman as Worker," 94

<sup>6</sup> Report of the Committee on the Police Service of England, Wales and Scotland, Part 2. Cmd 574, 1920, 6-7.

<sup>7</sup> Haia Shpayer-Makov, "A Portrait of a Novice Constable in the London Metropolitan Police c 1900," *Criminal Justice History* 12 (1991): 141.



Government (Scotland) Act 1889 where Ross-Shire, for example, was renamed Ross and Cromarty.<sup>8</sup> The place of birth has therefore been rationalised according to the officer's date of birth. Table 2.1 shows the number and percentage of recruits who served in Edinburgh during the Second World War by birthplace and decade of appointment. Clearly, this does not necessarily reflect where they spent the majority of their life or lived immediately prior to joining the police: their place of birth therefore remains suggestive of whether or not they were local to Edinburgh.

Of the 800 officers whose place of birth is known, 93.3 per cent came from Scotland. As Table 2.2 summarises, the majority of those were not from Edinburgh: some 65.3 per cent came from rural areas. Thus, in common with other studies, this research suggests that the majority of recruits were not local to the area they policed. Whilst the highlands were significant, however, on the basis of a rough line drawn across Scotland west to east north of Stirlingshire, more came from southern counties. Yet the single largest source was Edinburgh. As in London there was, therefore, either no real discrimination against the urban environment or there was a change in the pattern over the period when those who served during the Second World War were recruited.

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<sup>8</sup> 52 & 53 Vict, cap. 45 (1889). See Hay Shennan, *Boundaries of Counties and Parishes in Scotland, as Settled by the Boundary Commissioners 1889* (Edinburgh: William Green & Sons, 1892).

Birthplace	Recruits							
	Number							%
	1890-1899	1900-1909	1910-1919	1920-1929	1930-1939	1940-1945	Total	
Edinburgh	0	2	32	96	96	9	235	28.7
Midlothian	0	0	35	28	34	2	99	12.1
Sutherland	0	2	16	13	7	0	38	4.6
England	0	0	8	17	12	0	37	4.5
East Lothian	0	2	18	7	5	1	33	4.0
Fife	0	1	16	3	7	1	28	3.4
Perthshire	0	2	8	9	4	1	24	2.9
West Lothian	0	1	4	8	8	0	21	2.6
Berwickshire	0	0	7	4	10	0	21	2.6
Inverness-shire	1	0	4	10	6	0	21	2.6
Ross and Cromarty	0	0	3	8	9	1	21	2.6
Aberdeenshire	0	1	11	6	1	0	19	2.3
Argyll	0	2	4	9	4	0	19	2.3
Caithness	0	1	6	7	4	0	18	2.2
Lanarkshire	0	0	7	5	3	1	16	2.0
Stirlingshire	0	1	3	4	4	0	12	1.5
Angus	0	0	6	6	0	0	12	1.5
Overseas	0	0	1	4	6	0	11	1.3
Orkney	0	0	6	2	2	0	10	1.2
Glasgow	0	0	1	5	3	0	9	1.1
Roxburghshire	0	0	1	4	3	1	9	1.1
Kincardineshire	0	0	5	1	2	0	8	1.0
Peeblesshire	0	1	5	1	1	0	8	1.0
Ayrshire	0	0	1	4	2	0	7	0.9
Renfrewshire	0	0	1	3	3	0	7	0.9
Aberdeen	0	0	2	1	4	0	7	0.9
Selkirkshire	0	0	2	2	2	0	6	0.7
Dumfriesshire	0	0	2	2	2	0	6	0.7
Moray	0	0	3	2	0	0	5	0.6
Dundee	0	0	2	0	2	1	5	0.6
Banffshire	0	0	3	1	1	0	5	0.6
Ireland	0	0	3	1	1	0	5	0.6
Shetland	0	0	1	2	1	0	4	0.5
Clackmannanshire	0	0	2	1	1	0	4	0.5
Inverness	0	0	0	1	1	0	2	0.2
Nairnshire	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	0.2
Kirkcudbrightshire	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0.1
Stirling	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0.1
Kinross-shire	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0.1
Buteshire	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0.1
Dunbartonshire	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0.1
Wales	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0.1
Not recorded or Unknown	0	0	5	2	12	1	20	2.4
Total	1	16	235	279	270	19	820	100.0

**Table 2.1 Recruits by birthplace and decade of appointment**

[Source: ECA ED006/13/1-22]

Birthplace	Recruits	
	Number	%
Southern Counties: Ayrshire, Berwickshire, Buteshire, Clackmannanshire, Dumfriesshire, Dunbartonshire, East Lothian, Fife, Kinross-shire, Kirkcudbrightshire, Lanarkshire, Midlothian, Peeblesshire, Renfrewshire, Roxburghshire, Selkirkshire, Stirlingshire, West Lothian	281	37.7
Edinburgh	235	31.5
Northern Counties: Aberdeenshire, Angus, Argyll, Banffshire, Caithness, Inverness- shire, Kincardineshire, Moray, Nairnshire, Orkney, Perthshire, Ross and Cromarty, Shetland, Sutherland	206	27.6
Aberdeen, Dundee, Glasgow, Inverness, Stirling	24	3.2
Total	746	100.0

**Table 2.2 Recruits by birthplace in Scotland**

[Source: ECA ED006/13/1-22]

Existing studies have identified a change in the profile of recruits from the late nineteenth century as the number of agricultural labourers declined and the number of clerks in particular increased. This was a consequence of the decline of the agricultural sector in the nineteenth century. As T. C. Smout noted, by 1901 the proportion of male workers employed in farming had fallen by more than half from 30 per cent in 1851. At the same time, it was a consequence of rural depopulation and urban growth.<sup>9</sup> Part of the explanation also relates to the growing complexity of policing caused by new technologies and the motor-car.<sup>10</sup> In this sense, in Scotland, it was a reflection of the change in the concept of 'police' from a mechanism of municipal improvement to, as it was elsewhere in Britain, its specialist association with law and order.<sup>11</sup>

Between 1910 and 1939, when the majority of those who served in Edinburgh during the Second World War were appointed, the ratio of recruits from predominantly rural areas of Scotland declined from 78.7 per cent to 50.8 per cent, whilst those from Edinburgh increased from 13.9 per cent to 37.2 per cent, which raises the question as to whether this was a consequence of a shift in the pattern of previous employment.

<sup>9</sup> T. C. Smout, *A Century of the Scottish People 1830-1950* (London: Fontana Press, 1987), 58.

<sup>10</sup> David G. Barrie, "Police in Civil Society: Police, Enlightenment and Civic Virtue in Scotland, c. 1780-1833," *Urban History* 37, no. 1 (2010): 52.

<sup>11</sup> Haia Shpayer-Makov, "The Appeal of Country Workers: The Case of the Metropolitan Police," *Historical Research* 64, no. 154 (1991): 186. For the 'technologisation' of policing in the early twentieth century see, for example, Williams, *Police Control Systems*, 119-166.

English-based studies suggest that the majority of recruits in the nineteenth century were drawn from the ‘vast existing reservoir of manual labour’.<sup>12</sup> Whether or not this was the case for those who served in the City of Edinburgh Police during the Second World War is difficult to determine accurately given the ambiguity in occupation titles and without an accurate description of the role requirement for each job. In many places, the description of the previous occupation of a recruit given in the Service Record is ambiguous. It is unknown whether a ‘clerk’ or ‘boy clerk’ was, for example, in commerce, the civil service, or the police. Similarly, it is unclear whether ‘engineer’ was professional or artisan.

So far as seems reasonable, the descriptions of the previous occupations have been rationalised in line with those in the 1911 census of Scotland. Table 2.3 shows the number of recruits by occupational group and decade of appointment. Within these groups, the regular officers had some 244 different specific previous occupations, including butcher and bricklayer, dairyman and draper, golf-club maker and gun-maker, skinner and stationer. The majority of recruits had previous specific occupations that were most likely manual in nature. Although ‘Agriculture’ was the largest single group, only 7.7 per cent of recruits with a determinable occupation had been agricultural labourers/farm servants, which is approximate with Goldsmith’s finding in relation to Glasgow in the century from 1840.<sup>13</sup> At the same time, this was the second most numerical single occupation. This research thus confirms that the majority of recruits came from manual sectors of the economy, whilst agricultural labourers/farm servants were a significant minority.

Some 12.9 per cent of recruits, the largest single number with a determinable occupation, were clerks of some kind. Between 1910 and 1939, the ratio of clerks increased from 3.9 per cent to 19.3 per cent, whilst that of agricultural labourers declined from 16.1 per cent to 0.4 per cent, which undoubtedly helps explain the decrease in the number of Scottish recruits with a rural birthplace and an increase in those born in Edinburgh.

<sup>12</sup> Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman*, 60.

<sup>13</sup> Goldsmith, "The Development of the City of Glasgow Police," 111.

Previous occupation		Recruits							%
		Number						Total	
		1890-1899	1900-1909	1910-1919	1920-1929	1930-1939	1940-1945		
I	General or Local Government of the Country	0	1	9	13	13	6	42	5.1
II	Defence of the Country	0	0	19	20	13	0	52	6.3
III	Professional, Occupations & their Subordinate Services	0	1	1	11	19	2	34	4.1
IV	Domestic Offices or Services	0	1	11	4	9	0	25	3.0
V	Commercial Occupations	0	2	10	34	70	6	122	14.9
VI	Conveyance of Persons, Goods, & Messages	0	1	44	42	22	2	111	13.5
VII	Agriculture	0	6	68	35	14	1	124	15.1
VIII	Fishing	0	0	2	2	0	0	4	0.5
IX	Mining and Quarrying	0	0	11	7	5	0	23	2.9
X	Metal, Machine, Implement, & Conveyance Manufacture	0	1	4	38	17	1	61	7.4
XI	Precious Metals, Jewels, Watches, Instruments, & Games	0	0	0	1	1	0	2	0.2
XII	Building & Works of Construction	0	0	6	5	9	0	20	2.4
XIII	Wood, Furniture, Fittings, & Decorations	0	0	3	6	1	0	10	1.2
XIV	Brick, Cement, Pottery, & Glass	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0.1
XV	Chemicals, Explosive, Oil, Soap, Resin, &c.	0	0	1	9	3	0	13	1.6
XVI	Skins, Leather, Hair, & Feathers	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0.1
XVII	Paper, Stationery Books & Prints	0	0	3	5	7	0	15	1.9
XVIII	Textile Fabrics	0	1	4	3	4	0	12	1.5
XIX	Dress	0	0	2	1	1	0	4	0.5
XX	Food, Tobacco, Drink, & Lodging	0	2	11	12	11	0	36	4.4
XXI	Gas, Water, Electricity, & Sanitary Service	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0.1
XXII	Other, General & Undefined Workers & Dealers	0	0	22	21	9	1	53	6.5
XXIII	Without Occupation or Occupation Unspecified *	1	0	3	10	40	0	54	6.6
Total		1	16	235	279	270	19	820	100.0

\*Includes occupation undetermined.

**Table 2.3 Recruits by previous occupation and decade of appointment**  
[Source: ECA ED006/13/1-22]

Notwithstanding the extension of Edinburgh's boundaries and the consolidation of those officers from Leith Burgh Police and Midlothian Constabulary, 34 recruits were police constables, whilst two were railway policemen. A further 19 from a variety of recorded occupations had previous police service. They served in a large number of Scottish, English, and Irish city and county forces: in some cases in more than one force. For those not immediately transferring from other forces, they came from the forces in Edinburgh, the Metropolitan Police, and West Lothian. Smale noted a similar trend in the Scottish Borders in the nineteenth century.<sup>14</sup> Whilst this movement into and out of the police points to the cross-fertilisation of policing throughout the UK, it was a reflection of the attempts by individuals to establish whether they could tolerate the physical demands of the job and the attendant harsh discipline.<sup>15</sup>

Given that the majority of recruits had a previous occupation it suggests that joining the police was aspirational. Critchley has argued that the higher wages enjoyed by the police in the aftermath of the Desborough Committee, together with secure employment, paid holidays and, unusually for working-class occupations, a pension acted as 'pull' factors which created a 'golden age' for the police in Britain.<sup>16</sup> As a consequence, as Barbara Weinberger found in England, applications outstripped vacancies between 1930 and 1960. At the same time she identified that downturns in other sectors of the economy 'pushed' men 'towards an occupation they might never otherwise have considered'.<sup>17</sup> The extent to which a pension acted as an incentive to join is also unclear.<sup>18</sup> On the other hand, again in relation to the English experience, David Taylor has argued that, in addition to economic considerations, the changing nature of the job, the change in the public perception of the police, and especially the growth of the sense of professionalism from the late nineteenth century, made it an attractive career prospect.<sup>19</sup> This research suggests that the extent to which potential recruits perceived these aspects as positive depended on their age.

<sup>14</sup> Smale, "The Development of the New Police in the Scottish Borders," 234.

<sup>15</sup> Klein, *Invisible Men*, 288, 290.

<sup>16</sup> Critchley, *A History of Police in England and Wales*, 249.

<sup>17</sup> Barbara Weinberger, *The Best Police in the World: An Oral History of English Policing from the 1930s to the 1960s* (Aldershot: Scolar, 1995), 7-9.

<sup>18</sup> Emsley, "The Policeman as Worker," 99.

<sup>19</sup> Taylor, *The New Police in Nineteenth-Century England*, 44-76.

Age in years	Recruits							
	Number							%
	1890-1899	1900-1909	1910-1919	1920-1929	1930-1939	1940-1945	Total	
18	0	0	8	2	5	0	15	1.9
19	0	2	14	23	47	6	92	11.2
20	0	3	34	38	57	1	133	16.2
21	0	2	38	41	40	0	121	14.8
22	1	1	40	39	28	0	109	13.3
23	0	6	27	39	25	0	97	11.8
24	0	2	27	41	21	1	92	11.2
25	0	0	9	17	15	0	41	5.0
26	0	0	11	10	14	0	35	4.3
27	0	0	4	9	4	1	18	2.2
28	0	0	6	6	5	0	17	2.1
29	0	0	5	7	5	0	17	2.1
30	0	0	3	2	1	4	10	1.2
31	0	0	2	2	0	1	5	0.6
32	0	0	2	0	1	2	5	0.6
33	0	0	2	0	0	2	4	0.5
36	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	0.2
37	0	0	0	2	0	1	3	0.4
39	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0.1
40	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0.1
Not recorded	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	0.2
Total	1	16	235	279	270	19	820	100.0

**Table 2.4 Recruits by age and decade of appointment**

[Source: ECA ED006/13/1-22]

The Regulations made in Scotland under the 1919 Police Act in response to the Desborough Committee specified that candidates for appointment to the police must be less than 25 years of age. Older applicants were, however, accepted if they were transferring from another force or had been a member of the armed services in the preceding three months.<sup>20</sup> Table 2.4 shows the number and percentage of recruits by age in years and decade of appointment. Whilst the oldest was 40 the youngest was 18, the mean was 22.5, and the mode 20. Thus, the majority of recruits could not have been employed for very many years, which suggests that those in occupations for longer periods were less likely to see the police as an attractive option. Although the comparatively small number recruited between 1940 and 1945 does not suggest

<sup>20</sup> 9 & 10 Geo. 5, cap. 46 (1919), S.R.&O. (No. 2113), regulation 7 (1920).

any meaningful pattern in terms of place of birth and previous occupation, the mean age increased to 26.4.

During the war men aged between 18-50 could be conscripted into the armed services or directed into essential war service and the increased age of those joining the police suggests that the younger men who had previously formed the bulk of recruits were the first to be absorbed.<sup>21</sup> Throughout the war younger regular officers were also released to the armed services and industry. Furthermore, under the Police and Firemen (War Service) Act 1939, the automatic entitlement of regular officers to retire on pension was suspended for the duration.<sup>22</sup> Thus, notwithstanding the recruitment of auxiliaries, the profile of regular police officers during the war was different to that which had prevailed in the pre-war period. Operational officers were likely to have been older than might have been the case in peacetime, which raises the question as to whether this had an effect on the level of sickness and hence capacity. In the Metropolitan Police the number of officers suffering from mental and physical exhaustion nearly tripled during the war.<sup>23</sup> In his memoir the wartime constable in Devon, Edward Trist, recalled that senior officers in particular 'were haggard and toil-worn, due to the ever-increasing requirement to turn out on every air raid warning, together with the increased responsibilities each had had thrust upon him'.<sup>24</sup>

### Sickness

The date, number of days lost, and medical condition for each period of sickness are noted on officers' Service Records. In a small number of cases there is no reason noted for the absence: most likely the consequence of administrative error, especially during the war given the added burden with which the police had to contend. There is, however, no sickness record whatsoever for those officers from Midlothian or Leith prior to their consolidation in 1920 or for any transferee before they joined the force in Edinburgh. As with discipline, relevant details relating to sickness of transferees do not appear to have been transcribed to the Service Record maintained

<sup>21</sup> Gordon Wright, *The Ordeal of Total War, 1939-1945* (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), 51.

<sup>22</sup> 2 & 3 Geo. 6, cap. 103, section 10 (1939).

<sup>23</sup> Emsley, *The Great British Bobby*, 240-241.

<sup>24</sup> Edward Trist and Simon Dell, *Take Cover: The Wartime Memories of a Devon Policeman, 1938-1946* (Newton Abbot: Forest, 2001), 97.



by the City of Edinburgh Police from records held by the originating force. There is also no record of instances that occurred during an officer's release during the war – in some instances for a major part of the war – since this was probably only recorded by the relevant armed services or industry.

In a comparatively small number of cases the reason given for the sickness relates to psychological conditions such as neurasthenia, nervous debility, nervous exhaustion, and nervous breakdown. The overwhelming majority, however, relate to physical conditions such as influenza, bronchitis, fever, chill, and infective catarrh. Given that most officers were, as the Desborough Committee noted, 'liable to suffer from exposure' for the majority of their working life this is unsurprising.<sup>25</sup> Morren noted in the mid-1930s that the lack of ventilation in police boxes used by officers patrolling the beat in Edinburgh was also detrimental to health.<sup>26</sup> Part of the impetus behind recruiting agricultural workers was the belief that they would be more physically able to withstand these rigours.

Put crudely, with a mean service of 14.1 years for the 801 officers serving at the outbreak of war, the mean annual rate of sickness for all officers in the pre-war period was 0.6 periods and 10.0 days. Given the susceptibility to exposure it would be anticipated that the level of sickness would be commensurate with length of service. However, no clear pattern emerges to suggest that this was the predisposing factor. Indeed, whilst the overwhelming majority of individuals who lost five times the mean number of days joined before 1920, there were others with over 20 years service that were never or rarely off work through sickness. At the same time, some who joined in the 1930s had periods of sickness in double figures and lost twice the mean number of days. In general terms, however, the level of sickness increased with age, which was not necessarily related to length of service. Whilst the largest single number of days lost was by someone under 40, some 81.5 per cent of those with over three times the mean number of days lost were over 40 by the time war was declared. Likewise, the majority of those with twice the mean periods of sickness were over 40.

<sup>25</sup> Cmd 574, 12.

<sup>26</sup> ECA ED006/1/10, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1935, 8; 1936, 9.

In all, over the six years of war the mean annual rate of sickness for all officers was 0.5 periods and 10.6 days, which was consistent with the interwar period. Thus, on the basis of the Service Records there was no increase in the incidence of sickness during the war. As in the pre-war era, there was a relationship between age and sickness levels. Two-thirds of those who had lost more than four times the mean number of days, and over half who had been off sick for 10 periods or more, were over 40 by the end of the war. In contrast to Emsley's finding in relation to the Metropolitan Police there was, however, no increase in the level of psychological disorders and thus no change in the typology of sickness. Part of the explanation was undoubtedly related to the fact that officers in Edinburgh did not have to contend with the consequences of anything comparable to the Blitz. Furthermore, despite the restriction, some 110 regulars, whom it can be assumed were the oldest or, as will be seen, the most infirm, either retired or left the force through ill-health during the war.

### **Release of officers during the war**

During the Great War officers from Scottish police forces were released to the armed services, even where they had no obligation as a reservist. As His Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary for Scotland (hereafter HMICS) reported in 1918, some 37 per cent of the actual strength had been released in Glasgow and 27 per cent in Aberdeen.<sup>27</sup> Edinburgh released some 43 per cent.<sup>28</sup> Morren, who joined the force in November 1911, for example, had been released for four years. In total, 114 officers who had been released by Edinburgh during the Great War were still serving in the police when war was declared in 1939. The release of officers to the armed forces in an emergency was therefore not unprecedented by the time war was declared again.

Notwithstanding the recognition by the War Cabinet in 1940 that the emergency had placed 'heavy additional responsibilities' on the police and its commitment to maintain strengths at a 'level sufficient' to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities, the increasing requirement for manpower in the armed services and war-related

<sup>27</sup> NRS HH4/78 & 284 His Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary for Scotland Annual Inspection Report for City of Glasgow Police, 23 October 1919, 1; Aberdeen City Police, 29 May 1918, 1.

<sup>28</sup> NRS HH4/33, His Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary for Scotland Annual Inspection Report for Edinburgh City Police, 6 June 1918, 1.

industry created pressure to release officers.<sup>29</sup> As Churchill recalled in relation to the competing demands: 'I was like a keeper in the Zoo distributing half-rations among magnificent animals'.<sup>30</sup> Morren's annual report to the town council for 1945 records that 162 men had been released for service with the armed forces alone. The Service Records, however, only contain the specifics of some of these releases. Some officers were released two and three times during the war. In general terms, the pattern of release followed the progress of the conflict and the consequent changes in reservation status.<sup>31</sup> The majority of releases in Edinburgh occurred after late-1941. The explanation is undoubtedly related to the fact that in October of that year central government identified that two million men and women were required for the armed forces and war-related industry and scrapped all 'block reservations' of occupations, including the police.<sup>32</sup>

In April 1942 the Secretary of State for Scotland, Tom Johnston, approved a request by the Ministry of Labour and National Service for the immediate return to active coalface work of ex-miners in the police unless there were exceptional reasons to the contrary.<sup>33</sup> Although the City of Edinburgh Police had a number of officers within its ranks who had formerly been employed in the mining industry, none were released at this time. A letter from Johnston to the Ministry of Labour and National Service suggests the contribution from police forces across Scotland to the mines was minimal because of the impending draft to the armed services: 'we are very sorry not to be more helpful, but you will appreciate that the request for the release of these men has come at a very difficult time. The Scottish Police will lose some 800 regular officers in the forthcoming releases to the armed forces'.<sup>34</sup> A week later Johnston advised police authorities that central government had decided to release younger officers to the 'most active forms of combatant service', which were being expanded:

The high standard of physique and intelligence of the police make them particularly valuable for this type of service, and the Government have come

<sup>29</sup> NRS HH55/193, Note by Joint Secretaries to the War Cabinet, 7 June 1940.

<sup>30</sup> W. S. Churchill, *The Grand Alliance, Vol 3, The Second World War*, 6 Vols. (Suffolk: The Reprint Society, 1952), 403.

<sup>31</sup> For a digest of the changes see Donaldson, "Policing the War," 71-81.

<sup>32</sup> Calder, *The People's War*, 267.

<sup>33</sup> NRS HH55/196, Circular 4888, 21 April 1942.

<sup>34</sup> NRS HH55/196, Letter from SHD to Ministry of Labour and National Service, 1 July 1942.

to the conclusion that it would be in the interests of the successful prosecution of the war .... and that in the present circumstances the gain to the country's offensive power will outweigh the loss to the police forces.<sup>35</sup>

The majority of those released from the police in Edinburgh are recorded as having gone to the armed forces, whilst in 1944 one went to industry and another to coal mining. Towards the end of the war some were also released to the Allied Military Government in Occupied Territories – later called the Allied Control Commission.<sup>36</sup> The mean age and service in years of all releases in Edinburgh was 26.1 and 5.2 respectively, whilst the mode was 25 and four. Thus, those released were younger officers with a commensurate length of service. The mean length of release in years was 2.7, the mode three, and the maximum seven. All but four were constables and therefore more than likely to have been deployed on preventative policing. Whilst this was less a proportion of the actual strength of the force than in the Great War the loss of 162 regular officers for lengthy periods of the war represented a considerable abstraction in real terms. Despite the recruitment of auxiliaries, they did not necessarily have the same degree of local knowledge or experience, especially the members of the Police War Reserve and the Women's Auxiliary Police Service, particularly in dealing with the more technical aspects of policing such as the regulation of road traffic. By comparison with the pre-war period there was therefore a reduction in the capacity of the force during the Second World War. In particular the ability to undertake preventative policing was diminished. Indeed, the continued abstraction of at least 40 regulars into 1946 prolonged the loss of experience.<sup>37</sup>

Some of those released never returned to the force however. At least nineteen officers were killed or posted as missing in action, whilst at least two died from unknown causes during their release to the armed forces. At least five resigned whilst released to the armed services. Ingleton argued that some officers in Britain were disillusioned by the log-jam in promotion in the police caused by the suspension of the automatic right to retire and were inspired by the opportunities in the armed services. Some constables who had been commissioned or achieved rank

<sup>35</sup> NRS HH55/215, Circular 4897, 28 April 1942.

<sup>36</sup> cf ECA ED006/1/11, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1945, 3.

<sup>37</sup> cf ECA ED006/1/11, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1945, 3; 1946, 6.

were therefore resentful about returning to the police to find themselves back at the bottom of the hierarchy.<sup>38</sup> Morren recorded that 76 released officers were commissioned. Whatever the motivation of those who resigned whilst released, the combined losses compounded the crisis of capacity in the immediate post-war era. The direction of the war effort by central government thus influenced the effectiveness of local policing during the war and in the immediate aftermath.

At the end of the war there was an exodus from police forces throughout Britain as the regular officers whose superannuation had been deferred were allowed to leave. In 1945 Morren cautioned that the revocation on 1 January 1946 of the power to retain police officers compulsorily would lead to a reduction in the actual strength.<sup>39</sup> Between the end of hostilities and the end of 1946, for example, 110 regular officers left the City of Edinburgh Police, or some 15.7 per cent of the mean actual strength over the period. At the same time, the auxiliary officers recruited for the duration of the war were stood down.<sup>40</sup> In this sense, the repercussions of the war created a shortage of officers in the immediate aftermath.

In addition, as will be seen, many officers resigned due to the cycle of 'reactive underestimation'. The improvements brought about as a consequence of the Desborough Committee had not been sustained in the following two decades. By the immediate post-Second World War era the police were again underpaid in relation to comparable occupations and many left the police for better pay and conditions in industry for example. As a consequence, recruitment in forces throughout Britain barely kept pace with wastage.<sup>41</sup> Morren reported with 'grave concern' in 1947 that recruitment in Edinburgh had become 'increasingly difficult'.<sup>42</sup> The stability of the police workforce and hence capacity had become sufficient a problem that, in an echo of 1919, central government established a committee of inquiry (the Oaksey Committee), which led to a pay rise in July 1949 and the cycle of 'reactive underestimation' was re-set to start again.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Ingleton, *The Gentlemen at War*, 29.

<sup>39</sup> NRS HH55/187, Circular 6192, 8 November 1945.

<sup>40</sup> ED006/1/11, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1945, 3; 1946, 5; 1947, 5.

<sup>41</sup> Philip Rawlings, *Policing: A Short History* (Cullompton: Willan, 2002), 196-197.

<sup>42</sup> ED006/1/11, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1947, 30.

<sup>43</sup> See Report of the Committee on Police Conditions of Service, Part 1. Cmd 7674, 1949, 90-91.

## Discipline

The Service Records contain details of disciplinary offences and punishment. However, in some instances where officers were required to resign as an alternative to dismissal, which was undoubtedly the consequence of a disciplinary offence, the details are not recorded. Furthermore, as previously noted, there is no disciplinary record for those officers from Midlothian or Leith prior to their consolidation in 1920 or for any transferee before they joined the force in Edinburgh. Thus, whilst the Service Records remain the most detailed source in respect of discipline, statistics should be considered as indicative rather than precise.

Up until 1920 disciplinary ‘incidences’, which could comprise a number of separate offences, were recorded in officers’ Service Records in general terms such as ‘bringing the force into disrepute’. However, as part of the 1920 Regulations issued by the Secretary for Scotland, a Discipline Code was issued and remained in force largely unaltered throughout the period under consideration (see Appendix ‘5’). C. H. Rolph recalled that the Code was:

A farrago of Thou Shalt Nots based on King’s Regulations as they governed the regular army at the time of the Peninsular War, though they exuded also a faint flavour of Cromwell’s Model Army. They forbade you to do almost anything, and in case they might have forgotten something they added that you must not do anything “likely to bring discredit on the reputation of the force or of the Police Service.” The effect was that almost any kind of conduct, on or off duty, which was not compulsory was prohibited.<sup>44</sup>

Notwithstanding, disciplinary incidences continued to be recorded in the Service Records in similarly vague and general terms. An amendment issued by the Secretary of State for Scotland in 1934 regarding the procedure to be adopted in disciplinary cases, however, stipulated that offences ‘must specify the section or sections of the Code under which the charge is made’.<sup>45</sup> For consistency, disciplinary incidences recorded in general terms on the Service Records have, so far as seems reasonable, been rationalised with those of the Discipline Code.

<sup>44</sup> C. H. Rolph, *Living Twice: An Autobiography* (London: Gollancz, 1974), 77.

<sup>45</sup> S.R.&O. (No. 658) (1934). The Secretary for Scotland was created in 1885 and made a Secretary of State in 1926. See 48 & 49 Vict, cap. 61 (1885), 16 & 17 Geo. 5, cap. 18 (1926).

Existing studies have identified the repressive and arbitrary nature of discipline in the 'new' police. Given the recruitment from largely manual sections of the economy, it was believed that this would create a stable workforce. In this sense, it was another aspect of 'reactive underestimation'. Harsh conditions prevailed until the stability of the workforce was threatened. Every aspect of an officer's working and private life was controlled. The requirement to live in police accommodation, for example, was intended to allow officers to be recalled to duty at any time without pay and to facilitate surveillance of their private life. Officers could not drink off-duty and were obliged to wear their uniform at all times, whilst church attendance was compulsory.<sup>46</sup> The officer in charge of one Scottish force in the mid-nineteenth century wrote in a memorandum that he hoped those off duty on the Sabbath:

will not fail to attend a Place of Worship and that all members of the Force, whether on duty or not will observe the Sabbath and all other moral duties according to the Divine Commands ... [He further hoped] that the men in the Section House as well as the men on duty in the office will peruse the Bibles supplied for their use and he trusts that all men will read the Bibles in their families and single men in their lodgings...<sup>47</sup>

The harsh regime led to many dismissals, especially for drink-related offences. Together with the low rate of pay in the era before the Desborough Committee, this created a rapid turnover of personnel.<sup>48</sup> The paradox for police authorities and chief constables was, therefore, that the application of discipline contributed to instability in the workforce. Nonetheless, and despite the introduction of the Code, discipline in the police remained, as one writer has argued, 'extraordinarily harsh and pervasive', even by the standards of the early twentieth century.<sup>49</sup> In a letter to the Secretary of State for Scotland the Scottish Police Federation complained that chief constables continued to act in an 'arbitrary' and 'high-handed' way whilst 'exercising their prerogative in disciplinary cases'. The Police Federation concluded that 'justice was

<sup>46</sup> Haia Shpayer-Makov, "Relinking Work and Leisure in Late Victorian and Edwardian England: The Emergence of a Police Subculture," *International Review of Social History* 47, no. 2 (2002): 217-218.

<sup>47</sup> Cited in *75th Anniversary Brochure*, 50-51.

<sup>48</sup> cf. Goldsmith, "The Development of the City of Glasgow Police," 150-151., Critchley, *A History of Police in England and Wales*, 153.

<sup>49</sup> Brogden, *On the Mersey Beat*, 61.



administered in a partial and biased manner', which continued to engender discontent.<sup>50</sup>

The 1931 *Manual* reminded Scottish police officers of the necessity of:

absolute obedience to all who are placed in authority over you, and rigid observation of every regulation made for your general conduct ... Obey every order given to you by your superior officer without for a moment questioning the propriety of it. You are not responsible for the order but for obedience.<sup>51</sup>

At the same time a paradox existed whereby constables who were at the bottom of the hierarchy exercised discretion over operational policing. Regardless of what they might be instructed to do constables could largely choose which offences to enforce or ignore whilst patrolling their beat. Indeed, the 1928 Royal Commission on Police Powers and Procedure in England and Wales consistently recognised that it was 'impossible to issue hard and fast instructions' given the 'variety and complexity' of the police role and that a constable's power was vested in the individual.<sup>52</sup> Williams has correctly identified that the tension between the need to control officers and complexity in the delivery of policing was managed by inculcating the development of self-discipline and the incentive of promotion.<sup>53</sup>

Scottish constables were further urged in the 1931 *Manual* to discipline themselves to be: 'truthful in word and deed ... [and] ... temperate in his habits ... maintain an equable temper ... good order in his family ...[and] ... not contract debt ...'.<sup>54</sup> As Shpayer-Makov found, even the provision of leisure pursuits and competitions for police officers was, in addition to team spirit and collaboration, a means to 'promote bourgeois ideals of self-reliance, self-restraint, industriousness, obedience to rules, and maximum effort'.<sup>55</sup> There are, therefore, stark continuities across urban police forces in Britain between the Victorian era and the 1930s in the application of discipline in the police and the inculcation of self-discipline among officers.

<sup>50</sup> NRS HH55/570, Letter from Joint Central Committee of Scottish Police Federation to Secretary of State for Scotland, 2 March 1932.

<sup>51</sup> *Police Manual for Scotland*, 7-8.

<sup>52</sup> Cmd 3297, 8, 15, 18, 33.

<sup>53</sup> Williams, *Police Control Systems*, 72, 75.

<sup>54</sup> *Police Manual for Scotland*, 27-28.

<sup>55</sup> Shpayer-Makov, "Relinking Work and Leisure in Late Victorian and Edwardian England," 226.



Whereas constables chose which offences to enforce, senior officers also exercised discretion in dealing with disciplinary incidences. As Klein found, having come through the ranks, many senior officers remained sympathetic to their subordinates and therefore 'most minor problems were handled informally unless constables made a habit of breaking the rules after being advised to mend their ways'.<sup>56</sup> The Service Records relating to officers in Edinburgh can, therefore, only ever be a partial measure of the actual extent of disciplinary incidences.

Of all 820 officers who served in Edinburgh during the Second World War nearly 20 per cent of are recorded as being the subject of discipline at some point in their service: between the earliest date an officer was recruited in 1899 and the date the last one left the force in 1969. Some 80 per cent therefore had no disciplinary record. Those who did were involved in 258 incidences. Although the mean number of incidences was 1.6 the largest number committed by one officer during his service was seven. As stated, each incidence could comprise a number of offences. Thus, notwithstanding that these might be trivial, there was clearly some latitude that allowed officers to accumulate comparatively substantial disciplinary records whilst still remaining in the job. Smale found that the chief constable in Edinburgh in the late nineteenth century was 'remarkably lenient' by comparison with those in the Scottish Borders in the matter of discipline relating to officers drinking on duty for example. Some 42 officers who had been disciplined for being drunk on three occasions and four who had been disciplined seven times were not dismissed.<sup>57</sup> By the twentieth century there was, therefore, a legacy of leniency in Edinburgh in relation to the disposal of disciplinary incidences. Chief constables clearly had different views on the delivery of policing.

It could be assumed that those most likely to offend would be officers who were early in their service and therefore had not become fully conversant with the rigid requirements. Disciplinary incidences were, however, committed by officers at every level of service in years. On the other hand, the general trend points to an inverse relationship between offending and increasing length of service. Officers clearly became increasingly ordered or fully established the boundaries of acceptable

<sup>56</sup> Klein, *Invisible Men*, 92, 109.

<sup>57</sup> Smale, "The Development of the New Police in the Scottish Borders," 265.

conduct. It is also probable that officers were less likely to transgress towards the end of their police service as the prospect of securing their pension became more apparent.<sup>58</sup>

In the pre-war era 131 officers are recorded as having committed 186 disciplinary incidences comprising 230 offences. Put loosely, each officer disciplined was responsible for a mean of 1.4 incidences comprising 1.2 offences. The rate of offending for the 802 officers who joined the police before the emergency was therefore 16.3 per cent. As Table 2.5 demonstrates, the largest single category relates to neglect of duty, which could be anything from wilful or careless omission to idling and gossiping or failing to work the beat in accordance with orders. This research thus confirms Klein's finding in the period before 1939 that it constituted the majority of offences committed by officers.<sup>59</sup> Given that the mean service of those committing disciplinary offences in the pre-war era was 10.9 years it seems unlikely that the offences were related to naiveté. By the interwar period the demand on the police had increased exponentially in respect of a variety of activities that had little to do with their core role. In exercising discretion or merely complacency there was therefore greater potential for an officer to neglect some requirement. Whilst some were undoubtedly dealt with informally, it provided an opportunity for more zealous supervisors to pursue the formal process.

<sup>58</sup> Emsley, "The Policeman as Worker," 99.

<sup>59</sup> Klein, *Invisible Men*, 73.

Discipline Code Offence	Pre-war era		During the Second World War	
	Number	%	Number	%
1. Discreditable Conduct	29	12.6	15	15.8
2. Insubordination or Oppressive Conduct	8	3.5	6	6.3
3. Disobedience to Orders	6	2.6	2	2.1
4. Neglect of Duty	84	36.5	24	25.3
5. Falsehood or Prevarication	13	5.7	2	2.1
6. Breach of Confidence	1	0.4	0	0.0
7. Corrupt Practice	2	0.9	1	1.0
8. Unlawful or Unnecessary Exercise of Authority	7	3.0	1	1.0
9. Malingering	2	0.9	2	2.1
10. Absence Without Leave or Late for Duty	9	3.9	3	3.2
11. Uncleanliness	0	0.0	0	0.0
12. Damage to Clothing or Other Articles Supplied	0	0.0	0	0.0
13. Drunkenness	43	18.7	29	30.5
14. Drinking on Duty or Soliciting Drink	12	5.2	3	3.2
15. Entering Licensed Premises &c. While on duty	12	5.2	4	4.2
16. Lending or Borrowing Money	0	0.0	0	0.0
17. Being found Guilty of Offence in Court	2	0.9	3	3.2
Total	230	100.0	95	100.0

**Table 2.5 Disciplinary offences in the pre-war era and during the Second World War**

[Source: ECA ED006/13/1-22]

The next largest and proximate category of offences related to alcohol. For obvious reasons, the offences of being drunk on duty invariably went hand-in-hand with those of drinking on duty or soliciting drink, and entering licensed premises. Together these account for 29.1 per cent of all offences. At times, an officer could also be charged with the associated offences of leaving the beat and bringing discredit on the police. The incidence could clearly, therefore, give rise to a number of separate disciplinary offences depending on the interpretation of the circumstances by the chief constable. In four instances between 1922 and 1924 officers were disciplined for being unfit for duty through drink whilst off duty and, at least in two of these, when they were in plain clothes. Whilst it remained a disciplinary offence to be unfit for duty through drink when off duty until at least 1947, the absence of

any cases after 1924 suggests that either officers were not drinking off duty, which seems unlikely, or that supervisory officers had begun to exercise discretion in this respect.

Existing studies have identified that drink-related offences were the largest category of disciplinary action in the nineteenth century.<sup>60</sup> The issue of officers drinking on duty in Edinburgh and elsewhere was of such concern that it was made a specific part of the annual inspection of police forces by HMICS. Part of the explanation as to why policemen drank on duty relates to opportunity. It was easy for an officer to succumb to the offer of a free drink from a publican who was keen to ensure that there was no adverse comment from the police with regard to the public house licence in addition to a prompt response to any trouble on the premises. As a nineteenth century ballad from a policeman's perspective mocked:

The publicans have such a dread  
Whene'er the hour gets late  
My very strut does make them quake,  
When I am on my beat,  
I'll levy fines whene'r I can,  
In fact I'll never cease,  
I will torment them night and day ...<sup>61</sup>

Klein found that drinking also alleviated the boredom of walking a beat for hours alone.<sup>62</sup> It was also likely to have been considered a justifiable perk at times in the cycle of 'reactive underestimation' when police wages were comparatively low. Hard drinking also aligned with the emphasis on masculinity and toughness that was, as Emsley argued, part of policing.<sup>63</sup> Whilst, as this study finds, it continued to be an issue in the 1930s and 1940s, its decline as the pre-eminent disciplinary problem was a reflection of the wider trend in society towards sobriety. As one writer has argued,

<sup>60</sup> See, for example, Smale, "The Development of the New Police in the Scottish Borders," 264.

<sup>61</sup> National Library of Scotland, 'The New Police Ballad', [digital.nls.uk/broadsides/broadside.cfm/id/14850/transcript/1](http://digital.nls.uk/broadsides/broadside.cfm/id/14850/transcript/1). Accessed 31 December 2015.

<sup>62</sup> Klein, *Invisible Men*, 209.

<sup>63</sup> Clive Emsley, *Hard Men: The English and Violence since 1750* (London: Hambledon and London, 2005), 132.

there was a 'gradual and temporarily interrupted long-term decline' in alcohol consumption in Britain from the beginning of the twentieth century.<sup>64</sup>

Notwithstanding the discretionary application of the Discipline Code, the introduction of the Regulations in 1920 regularised the punishments that could be imposed either singly or in combination for disciplinary offences. Officers could, for example, be dismissed, required to resign, demoted, fined, reduced a number of classes (annual increment of pay), reprimanded, or cautioned.<sup>65</sup> Whilst not specified in the Regulations, transferring an officer to another division was commonly used in combination with other forms of punishment as a disposal of disciplinary incidences in the period before the Second World War. Part of the intention might have been to move the officer to somewhere where there was more supervision. At the same time it could remove the officer from the proximity of anything associated with the offence, such as a public house or brewery. On the other hand, it might have been intended to be an encumbrance by giving the officer further to travel to and from his place of work.

<b>Disposal</b>	<b>Pre-war era</b>	<b>During the Second World War</b>
Fine	41.0	33.3
Transferred	18.0	13.0
Reduction in class	13.0	17.9
Reduction in money	7.9	4.8
Severe reprimand	6.3	16.7
Reprimand	4.6	1.2
Other	5.0	0.0
Suspended	2.9	1.2
Demoted	1.3	0.0
Dismissed	0.0	7.1
Required to resign	0.0	4.8
Total	100.0	100.0

**Table 2.6 Disposal of disciplinary incidences in the pre-war era and during the Second World War (%)**

[Source: ECA ED006/13/1-22]

As Table 2.6 demonstrates, the most frequently used disposal in disciplinary incidences in the pre-war era was a fine. Whilst the mean was 22s, individual amounts varied between 2s 6d and 90s. Table 2.7 shows the scale of pay for

<sup>64</sup> A. E. Dingle, "Drink and Working-Class Living Standards in Britain, 1870-1914," *The Economic History Review, New Series* 25, no. 4 (1972): 609.

<sup>65</sup> S.R.&O. (No. 2113), regulations 20-23 (1920).

constables who joined after 1931, for example. Thus, at its maximum, the fine could amount to over one week's wages. In other places the level of fine is recorded as anything from one day's to one week's pay. Some officers were reduced an amount of money for six or 12 months. Whilst the mean reduction was 4.3s per week, the maximum was 10s per week for six months, which was nearly three times the amount of the maximum fine. On the basis of the rate of pay in 1931 it represented anything between five and eight per cent of a constable's annual pay. Even more potentially harsh was the reduction in 'class'. Although the mean was a reduction of 5.3 classes, five officers found themselves reduced 10 classes for 12 months. On the basis of the 1931 scales this represented a reduction of some 22 per cent of pay for a constable on the highest rate. Thus, whilst no officers were dismissed for drunkenness or any other disciplinary offences in the pre-war era, some monetary punishments were anything but lenient.

Length of police service	Weekly rate in shillings
On appointment	62s
After 1 Year	65s
After 2 years	67s 6d.
After 3 years	70s
After 4 years	72s 6d.
After 5 years	75s.
After 6 years	77s 6d.
After 7 years	80s
After 8 years	82s
After 9 years	84s
After 10 years	86s
After 11 years	88s
After 12 years	90s

**Table 2.7 Scale of pay for constables appointed after 30 September 1931**  
[Source: *Report of the Committee on Police Pay (New Entrants)*. Cmd 4274, 1931]

Weinberger identifies a change in police discipline in England as a consequence of the Second World War. On the one hand, the presence of auxiliaries brought a 'new civilian attitude'. One regular recalled that supervisory officers 'had to treat them with kid gloves because they were just as likely to say "well you can go and ..."'. At the same time, supervisory officers were 'overburdened' with additional responsibilities and had 'less time to look for minor transgressions'.<sup>66</sup> Something of that change is evident in police memoirs. St. Johnston, for example, recalled that a

<sup>66</sup> Weinberger, *The Best Police in the World*, 121.

senior officer in Chelsea, who had been refused permission to retire at the outbreak of war, became 'slack and only did the bare minimum of work taking no interest in seeing that the job was done well or that the men were properly supervised'.<sup>67</sup> Trist recounted the story of an officer drunk on duty falling through a window in Newton Abbot. Whilst this would otherwise have led to dismissal he was, because of the demands of the emergency, fined, admonished, and transferred to a station to receive greater supervision from officers who were lay-preachers and strict teetotallers.<sup>68</sup> In Edinburgh, Merrilees recalled that 'the multiplicity of war-time duties kept me, like other police officers, constantly busy'.<sup>69</sup> There was, therefore, a clear potential for the pattern of discipline in Edinburgh to be less strict than in the pre-war era.

During the Second World War 57 officers in Edinburgh were disciplined in respect of 72 incidences comprising 95 offences. Again put crudely, each officer disciplined was responsible for a mean of 1.2 incidences comprising 1.3 offences, which is remarkably similar to the pre-war period. As a percentage of the 820 officers who served during the war the rate of offending was therefore 6.9 per cent. Although this is much less than the pre-war ratio the timescales are clearly different. Whilst the war lasted six years, disciplinary incidences in the pre-war era have been calculated from the earliest in 1910 until 1939. On the basis of a per-year calculation of the number of officers disciplined, the number of incidences, and the number of offences, there was approximately twice as many in each category during the war than before. Officers were therefore either committing more serious transgressions or senior officers had become stricter in following the formal process for circumstances that had previously been resolved informally.

Table 2.5 demonstrates that drunk on duty and its associated disciplinary offences became the largest category during the war. Together they comprised 37.9 per cent of all offences. Neglect of duty, meanwhile, was the second largest at 25.3 per cent, which represents a reversal of the pre-war trend. At the same time, the possibility that more officers were drinking on duty during the war contradicts the trend in society: as will be seen in relation to operational policing, public drunkenness

<sup>67</sup> St. Johnston, *One Policeman's Story*, 59.

<sup>68</sup> Trist and Dell, *Take Cover*, 77-78.

<sup>69</sup> Merrilees, *The Short Arm of the Law*, 147.

decreased during the war due to the shortage of alcohol and conscription of those who produced and consumed it. Part of the explanation for the increase in police officers drinking on duty might be related to the pressure of policing the home front. There was in relation to sickness, however, no increase in the incidence of psychological disorders during the war. On the other hand, it might have been the case that officers were more predisposed to take a drink on duty in the belief that senior officers were preoccupied with war-related duties and therefore less concerned with the application of the Discipline Code.

The relative increase in the number of officers disciplined, incidences, and offences during the war suggests that Morren was more concerned to enforce discipline than in the pre-war period. Indeed, Table 2.6 shows that, whilst a fine remained the most frequently used form of disposal, there was a notable and hitherto unprecedented use of dismissal and requiring officers to resign. Given the added pressures on capacity during the war it might be assumed that Morren would do everything to retain officers, especially in circumstances where their loss was otherwise avoidable. Probably for this reason suspension from duty was used more sparingly than in the pre-war era. Yet the disposal in nearly 12 per cent of incidences involved dismissal or the requirement to resign. Although one officer was dismissed on the grounds of being unlikely to become an efficient officer, the others related to disciplinary offences including drunkenness, discreditable conduct, neglect of duty, malingering, being absent without leave, being found guilty of an offence in court, failing to account for property, and assaulting a member of the force. Whilst the specific circumstances of the incidences are unknown, there is nothing on the face of it that was not part of the pattern of incidences in the pre-war era. Whilst the mean length of service of these officers was 12 years, two had over 20 years' service.

The apparently more strident attitude to punishment might therefore be the consequence of an expectation by Morren that, given the wartime pressure on capacity and lack of supervision, officers with comparatively lengthy police service should have demonstrated more self-discipline, especially where discharge could render some liable to conscription to the armed services. In that sense, the incidences would be perceived as being aggravated by a breach of trust worthy of more condign punishment than would have been the case in peacetime. This



research thus suggests a contradiction during the war with Klein's finding in the pre-war era that 'probationers were treated more strictly than veterans' in the application of discipline.<sup>70</sup>

### Leaving the force

One of the consequences of 'reactive underestimation' was recurring instability in the police workforce. Existing studies have identified a high rate of turnover from the creation of the 'new' police. Some forces consistently had to re-stock entirely.<sup>71</sup> With improvements in conditions and increasing status, however, the number leaving voluntarily in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries decreased.<sup>72</sup> At the same time, the continued harsh conditions and certainty of exposure led many otherwise healthy officers to leave because of ill-health.<sup>73</sup>

The 1921 Police Pensions Act gave effect to the recommendations of the Desborough Committee with regard to the age of retirement and entitlement to superannuation for members of a police force.<sup>74</sup> In general terms, it was compulsory for constables and sergeants to retire on attaining the age of 55, superintendents and inspectors at 60, and chief constables and assistant chief constables at 65. The age differentials for ranks in the legislation was likely a reflection of the recognition that those lowest in the hierarchy had to endure the harshest conditions on the beat, whilst increasingly senior officers had more of an administrative role.

All regular officers were entitled to retire on pension after 25 years' service, after 10 years' on medical certificate, or if incapacitated by injury on duty. Those who had not completed 10 years' service could retire on medical certificate and receive a gratuity.<sup>75</sup> For officers retiring under normal circumstances, for example, a pension of one-half of wages was payable after 25 years' service and two-thirds after 30 years' (see Appendix '6'). Of the 801 officers who served in Edinburgh during the war whose date of leaving is known, 432 had completed between 25 and 30 years'

<sup>70</sup> Klein, *Invisible Men*, 73.

<sup>71</sup> Smale, "The Development of the New Police in the Scottish Borders," 274.

<sup>72</sup> The 1890 Police (Scotland) Act made superannuation available at 25 years' service or after 20 years with a medical certificate. See 53 & 54 Vict. cap. 64, section 1 (1890).

<sup>73</sup> Shpayer-Makov, *The Making of a Policeman*, 135-137.

<sup>74</sup> Cmd 253, 17.

<sup>75</sup> 11 & 12 Geo. 5, cap. 31, sections 1 & 2 (1921).

service, whilst a further 179 had completed between 31 and 43 years' service. Over three-quarters therefore had sufficient service for a pension and all but 88 were constables. Thus, this research appears to confirm Klein's finding that most constables 'managed to qualify for their pensions'.<sup>76</sup>

The 1920 Regulations specified that the cause of an officer leaving the force should be recorded as: pensioned on completion of service; pensioned in consequence of an injury received on duty; pensioned on account of ill-health; discharged on gratuity on account of ill-health; resigned; required to resign; dismissed; or discharged as unlikely to become an efficient constable.<sup>77</sup> A large number of variations have, however, been recorded on the Service Records. Although some categories are unambiguous, it is clear that those making the entries used others erroneously in places. Whilst an officer had clearly completed the required amount of service for a pension, for example, the entry might, nonetheless, show that they 'resigned'. Furthermore, although not a specified category, some are recorded as having transferred to another force, whilst others who 'resigned' were, in reality, also transferring. The Regulations also do not specify a category for those who died whilst in service or were killed or reported as missing in action whilst on release to the armed services. An attempt has therefore been made to rationalise the entries in the Service Records on the basis of what seems reasonable to construct an indicative picture.

As Table 2.8 shows, of the 801 officers whose reason for leaving the force is recorded, a total of 64.4 per cent were pensioned on completion of service. A further 30 of those recorded as having resigned without health-related issues had completed between 25 and 33 years' service, which suggests that in some, if not all instances, their Service Record should have shown that they had been pensioned on completion of service. Thus, by any measure, the majority of officers who served in the police in Edinburgh during the Second World War retired from the force. In that respect the police workforce was stable by comparison with the general pattern in police forces in the early and mid-nineteenth century.

<sup>76</sup> Klein, *Invisible Men*, 297.

<sup>77</sup> S.R.&O. (No. 2113), regulation 45 (1920).

Cause	During the Second World War		Post-war era*	
	Number	%	Number	%
Pensioned on completion of service	54	29.8	462	74.5
Pensioned on account of ill-health	49	27.1	13	2.1
Discharged on gratuity on account of ill-health	0	0.0	1	0.2
Resigned	29	16.0	94	15.2
Required to resign	4	2.2	3	0.5
Dismissed	6	3.3	2	0.3
Died	10	5.5	31	5.0
Killed/Missing in Action (armed Forces)	19	10.5	0	0.0
Resigned on account of ill-health	7	3.9	3	0.5
Transferred	3	1.7	11	1.8
Total	181	100.0	620	100.0

\* The last officer who had served during the Second World War left the force in May 1969.

**Table 2.8 Cause of leaving the force during the Second World War and in the post-war era**

[Source: ECA ED006/13/1-22]

At same time, resignations and ill-health continued to cause instability which had managerial implications for operational capacity. In both cases the general pattern during the Second World War was different from that which prevailed over the period of service for the remainder of officers who served in the police in Edinburgh during the war. The 93 officers recorded as having resigned with less than 25 years' service had a mean service of 11.7 years. For many, resigning was, therefore, not the immediate reaction to joining the force and deciding that the conditions were not tolerable. Indeed, with the mode being 10 years service, they were clearly accustomed to the requirements, which suggests that other 'push' and 'pull' factors were significant.

Over 71 months during the Second World War 27 officers with less than 25 years' service resigned. Put roughly, the monthly rate of attrition to resignation in relation to these officers was therefore 0.38. Of these, 22 resigned after the introduction of the Police and Firemen (Scotland) (Employment) Order 1940, made under Defence Regulation 29B, which prevented constables serving in a whole-time capacity from leaving except with the consent of the chief constable and was, therefore, intended

by central government to maintain the capacity of the police.<sup>78</sup> Given that they came from a wide range of previous occupations there is no obvious pattern to suggest that resignations during the war were, for example, related to other aspects of the war effort on the home front. One officer with three years' service had formerly been a musician, for example, another with eight years' service had been a theatre attendant whilst a third with 21 years' service had been a clerk. Given the pressure on capacity it would be reasonable for Morren to have used the power under the Order to reject the resignations. On the other hand, given the potential expectation that officers would exercise a greater degree of self-discipline during the war than previously, he might have been of the view that it was better not to retain those who were disenchanted. Thus, Morren used discretion in the application of the restrictions on leaving the police during the war.

The monthly rate of attrition to resignations at least tripled in the immediate aftermath of the war however. In his 1947 Report, Morren advised that, notwithstanding the appointment of 125 officers that year, 71 others had resigned including 33 recruited since the end of the war.<sup>79</sup> The Service Records, meanwhile, indicate that over 39 months in the period between the end of hostilities and the implementation in July 1949 of the pay rise recommended by the Oaksey Committee, 48 officers with less than 25 years' service resigned. As before, there is no commonality in relation to their previous occupations to suggest they left to go to specific industries. One officer with seven years' service had been a baker, whilst another with 17 years' service had been a reporter, and a third with 22 years' service had been a farm servant.

Part of the explanation for the resignations might have been a reaction to the apparently stricter application of discipline during the war. At the same time, it was undoubtedly a consequence of the cycle of 'reactive underestimation'. Many of those who resigned did so because police pay had again failed to keep pace with the cost of living. As the Oaksey Committee noted, 'general comparisons with other occupations in which conditions of work are in any way comparable indicate that the police are at present underpaid'. Given the context of full employment in the

<sup>78</sup> NRS HH52/29, Circular 4034, 20 June 1940.

<sup>79</sup> ED006/1/11, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1947, 29.

immediate post-war period, the committee noted there was ‘ample opportunity of transferring to work that makes fewer demands, seems more congenial or offers more immediate financial reward’.<sup>80</sup> The police was therefore a less attractive employment option in the immediate post-war period for those men with other opportunities than it had been in the period after the Desborough Committee. In effect, for those concerned with the governance of the police, attracting recruits became more difficult in the immediate aftermath of the war.

Some of those who resigned, however, did so because of ill-health. Together with those who otherwise left on the grounds of ill-health they comprise 9.1 per cent of those whose reasons for leaving the force are known. Although 31 of these officers had over 30 years’ service and were therefore eligible to retire on the maximum pension of two-thirds, it cannot be assumed that they had simply been categorised wrongly on their Service Record as retiring with ill-health rather than because of it. One officer who served during the war had 43 years’ service by the time he left the force. Put simply, even though they had completed enough service to gain a pension it was possible for regular officers, provided they were under the compulsory age of retirement, to leave the force on the grounds of ill-health. Given that preventative policing in Edinburgh was premised on beat patrol until at least the 1980s and officers thus continued to be subject to exposure to the elements, it would be unsurprising if some did not succumb to associated ailments, especially those who had endured it for a lengthy period. The mean service of those who left on the grounds of ill-health was 25.1 years. In general terms, they were, therefore, older officers. Those who left the force on ill-health were, however, clearly in the minority. This research therefore again confirms the finding of Klein’s pre-war study.<sup>81</sup>

The majority of the officers who served in the police in Edinburgh during the Second World War who left on the grounds of ill-health did so during the war and the pattern was therefore the reverse of that relating to ordinary resignations. Put crudely, the monthly rate of attrition to ill-health was over 1200 per cent greater during the war than in the post-war period. Part of the explanation relates to the compulsory

<sup>80</sup> Cmd 7674, 10, 90.

<sup>81</sup> Klein, *Invisible Men*, 297.

retention of officers suffering from ill-health beyond the point where they otherwise would have been released and until their health broke down completely. The incidence of sickness would, therefore, clearly have been greater than that indicated by the Service Records. Indeed, at the end of the war Morrren compared the level of sickness with that of 1938 and found that the average number of days lost for regular officers had increased from 10.0 to 15.3 as a consequence of ‘wartime conditions and the fact that the Force is generally composed of older men’, which undoubtedly impacted on operational capacity and effectiveness.<sup>82</sup>

## Conclusion

The evidence suggests that the application of discipline became stricter during the war. Whilst the extent to which this was a ‘push’ factor is unknown, it is clear that the cycle of ‘reactive underestimation’ precipitated a dramatic increase in resignations in the immediate post-war era. The improvements made by the 1919 Act had, by then, been eroded and once the power to retain officers compulsorily had been revoked many took the opportunity to leave for employment that was both better paid and had less harsh attendant conditions. In effect, attracting recruits to the police became harder in the immediate aftermath of the war.

The chapter also demonstrates that some of the antecedent characteristics of recruits to the force in Edinburgh changed over the period under consideration. For example, the decline in those from rural areas of Scotland and those employed as agricultural labourers and farm servants was most likely a consequence of the increasing complexity of policing. Recruits were increasingly drawn from clerical occupations that were more likely to be located in an urban environment, especially Edinburgh.

The significant conclusion to be drawn from this chapter, however, is that whilst the profile of police officers had evolved since the nineteenth century in consequence of the demands of policing, it changed dramatically in response to the Second World War. On the one hand, the restriction on retirement meant that those who would otherwise have been superannuated were retained. At the same time younger regular officers were released to the armed services and industry. Those recruited during the

<sup>82</sup> ECA ED006/1/11, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1945, 4.

war were also older due to the conscription of younger men to the armed forces and essential civilian services. In general, police officers serving during the war were older than otherwise would have been the case. Furthermore, given both the restriction on leaving and that the Service Records do not point to an increase in the incidence of sickness, the high rate of those who left on ill-health suggests that some officers, for whatever reason, continued to work whilst they were unfit and up until the point where there was no alternative but to release them. In addition, although auxiliaries were recruited to assist the majority were not trained to the same extent as regular officers nor were they as experienced. Thus, even without the additional demands of policing the home front, the operational capacity of the police in Edinburgh to carry out preventative and the more technical aspects of policing in particular was diminished by comparison with the pre-war period. As a consequence, as will be seen, officers at both the strategic and tactical level utilised discretion whilst aspects of core policing and the regulation of road traffic were either not carried out to the same extent that they had been in the interwar period or were abandoned for the duration.

## 3

## The Police Authority

By the Defence Regulations the Secretary of State for Scotland was empowered to give chief constables and police authorities 'such general or special instruction as appears to him necessary or expedient in the interests of public safety, the Defence of the Realm, the maintenance of public order or the efficient prosecution of the war'. Critchley has argued that this put chief constables 'for the first time in the history of the police ... under the formal authority (as opposed to the informal) authority' of central government.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, the City Prosecutor, James Mill, contemporarily viewed the provisions as giving the Secretary of State for Scotland 'drastic powers over the police'. The Secretary of State, Mill pointed out, 'is to be regarded as the official head and central coordinating authority of the Scottish Police'.<sup>2</sup> In effect, the Defence Regulations supplanted the 'tripartite' form of police governance as it had evolved by the second decade of the twentieth century.<sup>3</sup>

In general terms, until then central government made regulations concerning pay and conditions and provided a subvention of 50 per cent whereas chief constables exercised operational control. The police authority, meanwhile, was responsible for 'maintaining' the force in terms of personnel and infrastructure and provided the remaining 50 per cent of finance through local taxation.<sup>4</sup> Notwithstanding, there were significant areas of overlapping power and authority, which was a consequence of the compromise between the conflicting principles that underpinned the creation of the

<sup>1</sup> Critchley, *A History of Police in England and Wales*, 228.

<sup>2</sup> Mill, *The Scottish Police*, 18.

<sup>3</sup> 'Governance' is simply conceived here as the mechanism that exercises control and coordination over policy and the allocation of resources to provide for the delivery of services. See R. J. Morris, "Governance: Two Centuries of Urban Growth," in *Urban Governance: Britain and Beyond Since 1750*, ed. R. J. Morris and Richard H. Trainor (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), 1-14., Mark Bevir and R. A. W. Rhodes, "Searching for Civil Society: Changing Patterns of Governance in Britain," *Public Administration* 81, no. 1 (2003): 41-62., *Interpreting British Governance* (London: Routledge, 2003), 6.

<sup>4</sup> The 'police authority' refers to the local government aspect of police governance in Scotland. During the nineteenth century it was variously known as the 'police board' and 'police committee'. By 1939 it was usually referred to by the Secretary of State for Scotland as the 'police authority'. Contemporary newspaper reports, however, continued to utilise all the terms interchangeably. In England, with the exception of the Metropolitan Police where the Home Secretary was the 'police authority', it was known in borough forces as the 'watch committee'. In English county forces it was known as the 'police committee', then, after 1889 as the 'standing joint committee'. See Emsley, *The English Police*, 250.



'new' police forces. On the one hand, there was the perception of the need for an effective system of police to protect property in particular whilst, on the other, there was a fear of creating an instrument that would infringe personal liberty. The resulting relatively fragmented way in which local forces evolved and developed with increasingly national underpinnings created problems of a lack of definition around specific responsibilities and accountability that persists in 2016.<sup>5</sup>

The purpose of this chapter is to consider police governance in Edinburgh and whether this altered as a consequence of the Defence Regulations. Specifically, the chapter analyses power dynamics in relation to the police authority. Whilst the general overview of the roles of central government and the chief constable in the model of police governance is drawn from the existing historiography, the specific analysis of the police authority in Edinburgh is based on empirical research: principally, the minutes of the town council and the Lord Provost's Committee. Given the way in which the relationship between aspects of police governance developed, a longitudinal approach has been adopted to show transformation across time.

The chapter establishes that a complex and overlapping pattern of power, authority, and interdependence existed at all levels of police governance, especially between the police authority, the town council, and its network of committees. Furthermore, notwithstanding specific wartime factors that undermined stability in the committees, continuity in outcomes was maintained. In this regard the Lord Provost occupied the pivotal role. Thus, whilst central government exercised its power under the Defence Regulations elsewhere in Scotland and England and Wales and in other contexts to, in effect, supplant the existing system of governance during the war, the police authority in Edinburgh remained a significant actor in the structure of local policing. As it was elsewhere in Britain and at other times, power in relation to the governance of the police in Edinburgh during the Second World War was negotiated in the interaction between local and central government.

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<sup>5</sup> Whilst the 1960 Royal Commission was established, in part, to consider the constitutional position of the police throughout Britain and the arrangements for their control and administration, HMICS argued in 2011 that the resulting 1967 Act exacerbated the weaknesses in governance and accountability. See Andrew Laing and Emma Fossey, "Governance and Accountability of Policing in Scotland: A Discussion Paper by HM Inspectorate of Constabulary (Abridged)," (Edinburgh: The Scottish Government, 2011), 3. The problem remains unresolved in the second decade of the twenty-first century in the relationship between Police Scotland and its unitary authority.

## Overview of central government in the governance structure

By comparison with the other actors, it is easy to determine the official position of central government in the structure of police governance since this was largely based on legislation and maintained through government circulars. It is, however, more difficult to determine the extent to which these were adhered to in practice at the local level. Much of the historical record in this regard is implicit at best, obscuring the subtle shifts in dynamics between the social actors at any specific point in time.

The dominant trend relating to central government in the governance structure of the policing is one of increasing intervention. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries central government was largely content to allow Scottish civic elites to determine whether a system of police was required and its format. Local initiatives, which mirrored much of the improvement legislation in England, were, however, dependent on Parliament for the acts that conferred the necessary power.<sup>6</sup> At the same time, in the pre-reform era when many municipal authorities were run by self-perpetuating oligarchies, the creation of police commissions conferred a measure of local political power.<sup>7</sup> One consequence of the dual system of administration was that it precipitated power struggles for control of the police throughout Scotland. In Edinburgh, one struggle raged between 1820-22 over who had power over the superintendent in charge of the police.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>6</sup> David G. Barrie, "Anglicization and Autonomy: Scottish Policing, Governance and the State, 1833 to 1855," *Law and History Review* 30, no. 2 (2012): 465.

<sup>7</sup> For the example of the self-elected corporation in Glasgow see T. M. Devine, "Urbanisation and the Civic Response: Glasgow 1800-30," in *Industry, Business and Society in Scotland Since 1700: Essays Presented to Professor John Butt*, ed. John Butt, T. M. Devine, and A. J. G. Cummings (Edinburgh: J. Donald, 1994), 183-196., Irene Maver, "Politics and Power in the Scottish City: Glasgow Town Council in the Nineteenth Century," in *Scottish Elites: Proceedings of the Scottish Historical Studies Seminar, University of Strathclyde, 1991-1992*, ed. T. M. Devine (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1994)., "The Guardianship of the Community: Civic Authority Before 1833," in *Glasgow. Vol. 1, Beginnings to 1830*, ed. T. M. Devine and Gordon Jackson (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), 239-277.

<sup>8</sup> McGowan, *Policing the Metropolis of Scotland*, 220-223, 235., In Aberdeen, see Rosemary Tyzack, "'No Mean City'? The Growth of Civic Consciousness in Aberdeen with Particular Reference to the Work of the Police Commissioners," in *The City and its Worlds: Aspects of Aberdeen's History Since 1794*, ed. Terence Brotherstone and Donald J. Withrington (Glasgow: Cruithne, 1996), 351-371. In Dundee, see Louise Miskell, "From Conflict to Co-operation: Urban Improvement and the Case of Dundee, 1790-1850," *Urban History* 29, no. 3 (2002). In Glasgow, see David G. Barrie, "'Epoch Making' Beginning to Lingering Death: The struggle for Control of the Glasgow Police Commission, 1833-46," *The Scottish Historical Review* LXXXVI, 2, no. 222 (2007).

As part of the general shift in thinking on social policy in the late nineteenth century central government increasingly sought power from Parliament to intervene in municipal affairs.<sup>9</sup> By comparison with earlier permissive legislation, Scottish police acts echoed provisions in England in becoming increasingly authoritarian.<sup>10</sup> The 1857 Act, for example, obliged county areas to set up and maintain forces and, in a precursor to the early twentieth century, gave the Secretary for Scotland the power to make regulations for the new forces.<sup>11</sup> The Act also established central government strategy, expressed in successive acts, to reduce the number of forces through amalgamation.<sup>12</sup> Most significantly, the Act empowered the Secretary for Scotland to inspect all forces for efficiency in return for a grant of 25 per cent towards the cost of pay and clothing. Whilst this might have been intended to compensate local authorities for the loss of autonomy, it established the precedent of the periphery's fiscal dependency on the centre in relation to local policing. The power of central government was, however, confined to withholding the grant.<sup>13</sup> In any event, some forces refused to accept the grant and therefore remained outwith the system of inspection until the Second World War. Similarly, despite immediate attempts to coerce smaller forces to amalgamate by certifying them as inefficient, some resisted amalgamation until well into the twentieth century. The power of central government over municipal policing in the late nineteenth century therefore remained limited in practice.

<sup>9</sup> Graeme Morton, "Civil Society, Municipal Government and the State: Enshrinement, Empowerment and Legitimacy. Scotland, 1800-1929," *Urban History* 25, no. 3 (1998): 363. For a critique of the existence of *laissez-faire* see J. B. Brebner, "Laissez Faire and State Intervention in Nineteenth Century Britain," *Economic History* 8 (1948).

<sup>10</sup> For a summary of some of the legislation see R. M. Urquhart, *The Burghs of Scotland and The Burgh Police (Scotland) Act 1833, The Police of Towns (Scotland) Act 1850, The General Police and Improvement (Scotland) Act 1862: An Introductory Note* (Motherwell: Scottish Library Association, 1992)., *The Burghs of Scotland and The Burgh Police (Scotland) Act 1833 (3 & 4 Will. IV c.46)* (Motherwell: Scottish Library Association, 1989)., *The Burghs of Scotland and The Police of Towns (Scotland) Act 1850 (13 & 14 Vict. c.33)* (Motherwell: Scottish Library Association, 1989)., *The Burghs of Scotland and The General Police and Improvement (Scotland) Act 1862 ("The Lindsay Act") (25 & 26 Vict. c.101)* (Motherwell: Scottish Library Association, 1991).

<sup>11</sup> 20 & 21 Vict, cap. 72 (1857).

<sup>12</sup> See especially 55 & 56 Vict, cap. 55 (1892).

<sup>13</sup> James Moore and Richard Rodger, "Who Really Ran the Cities? Municipal Knowledge and Policy Networks in British Local Government, 1832-1914," in *Who Ran the Cities?: City Elites and Urban Power Structures in Europe and North America, 1750-1940*, ed. Robert Beachy and Ralf Roth (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 55.

The 1919 Act represented a much stronger element in the movement towards standardisation and central direction however.<sup>14</sup> Dixon recalled that it was the 'integrating influence par-excellence'.<sup>15</sup> It gave the Secretary for Scotland wide-ranging powers to make regulations. It thus marked the clear transition from local agency in determining the conditions of police forces to one where these were set nationally. The government grant was also increased to 50 per cent to fully meet the cost of maintaining police forces thereby increasing further the fiscal dependency of local authorities on the centre.<sup>16</sup> Indeed, until 1946 police authorities in Scotland required prior approval for even the most minor expenditure.<sup>17</sup> At the same time, as the 1928 Royal Commission on Police Powers and Procedure in England and Wales noted, circulars issued by central government had come to be regarded by chief constables as virtually mandatory.<sup>18</sup>

In the decades before the introduction of the Defence Regulations central government, therefore, had established a pattern of increasing its powers to acquire *de facto* control of local police forces. Yet, as will be seen in the discussion of Edinburgh in relation to the introduction of women police, the Secretary of State for Scotland clearly remained dependent on the police authority for the implementation of policy. What is immediately noticeable in the historical record of the interaction between the two political actors is that there is little general evidence of change in the operating procedure or language after the introduction of the Defence Regulations compared to that in the immediate pre-war period. Central government and the police authority continued to defer to each other for matters within their respective purviews in relation

<sup>14</sup> Reiner, *The Politics of the Police*, 52.

<sup>15</sup> Arthur L Dixon, "The Home Office and the Police between the World Wars," (Unpublished 1966), 257. Subsequent to the Desborough Committee, Dixon was placed in charge of the newly formed Police Division of the Home Office to work out the practicalities of implementation. The 'Home Office and the Police' relates to this period and has much the feel of a memoir and is therefore considered a primary source. During the Second World War he was charged with the task of creating a National Fire Service. 'The Emergency Work of the Police Forces' thus contains references to issues with which he had no direct involvement and is therefore considered a secondary source. See T. A. Critchley, "Dixon, Sir Arthur Lewis (1881-1969)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* ed. H.C.G Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

<sup>16</sup> The Desborough Committee Report noted that the grant had been increased to 50 per cent at some time prior to March 1919. See Cmd 7674, 17-18. Dixon outlines how the increase occurred in relation to England and Wales. See Dixon, "The Home Office and the Police between the World Wars," 59-61. The Police Supplementary Government Contribution Rules, 17 November 1919, state that the grant is intended to meet the one-half of the net total expenditure of police forces. See NRS HH55/498.

<sup>17</sup> See NRS HH55/498, Circular 6425, 5 October 1946.

<sup>18</sup> Cmd 3297, 16.

to even the most commonplace administrative issues. Administrative power in relation to the governance of the police therefore continued to be negotiated in the interaction between central and local government.

Part of the explanation was undoubtedly related to the ethos of the two Secretaries of State that were in office for all but 12 months of the Second World War. David John Colville, in office from May 1938 to May 1940 and therefore over the first eight months of the war, was, according to George Pottinger, ‘determined to be fair to all points of view’ and to ‘direct business with acceptance’.<sup>19</sup> In a similar vein, despite being associated with Red Clydeside, the Labour MP and ex-regional Commissioner for Scotland, Tom Johnston, in office from February 1941 to May 1945 and therefore for the majority of the war, was, according to David Torrance, a ‘zealous advocate of government by consent’.<sup>20</sup> Indeed, as Johnston himself recalled, the Advisory Council he established, consisting of all previous Secretaries of State, was an ‘experiment in political cooperation’.<sup>21</sup> Thus, notwithstanding the Defence Regulations, it was unlikely that either Colville or Johnston would be anything other than politically pluralist.

### **Overview of chief constables in the governance structure**

The dominant theme in the largely English-based historiography of chief constables in the governance structure is one of growing professionalism and increasing autonomy in operational matters. Notwithstanding the difficulty of periodising systems of police, one of the significant characteristics of the ‘new’ forces was that they were under hierarchical command. By 1812 in Edinburgh the ‘Superintendent’ in charge of the police in Edinburgh was in direct operational control without ‘direction from political or judicial authority’.<sup>22</sup> One scholar has argued that by the mid-nineteenth century the image of a professional, disciplined police hierarchy was more or less

<sup>19</sup> George Pottinger, *The Secretaries of State for Scotland, 1926-76: Fifty Years of the Scottish Office* (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1979), 78. The remaining Secretaries of State for Scotland during the Second World War were: Ernest Brown, May 1940-February 1941; Harry Primrose, May-August 1945; Joseph Westwood, August 1945-October 1947.

<sup>20</sup> David Torrance, *The Scottish Secretaries* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2006), 52.

<sup>21</sup> Thomas Johnston, *Memories* (London: Collins, 1952), 169.

<sup>22</sup> McGowan, *Policing the Metropolis of Scotland*, i, 1, 107, 340.

consolidated throughout Britain.<sup>23</sup> Others have pointed out that by the late Victorian period the police 'increasingly insisted on their status as professionals'.<sup>24</sup>

Part of the explanation in Scotland is related to the previously noted change in the definition of 'police' and profile of personnel. At the same time, the increase in operational autonomy was a consequence of the activities of central government. Its deployment of concepts of 'efficiency' and 'national security' in the early twentieth century, whilst simultaneously assuming increased responsibility for the training and appointment of chief officers, reinforced the culture of professionalism.<sup>25</sup> Together with judicial pronouncements in the first decades of the twentieth century that reinforced the doctrine of constabulary independence, police authorities increasingly withdrew from the governance of the more technical aspects of policing leaving chief constables in executive control.<sup>26</sup>

Probably for this reason, following his appointment as chief constable in 1935, Morren's annual reports to the town council were much shorter and contain far less detail than his predecessor. By the time he retired Ross had been in office for 35 years and the pattern of his interaction with the town council had therefore been established before some of the developments that increased further the autonomy of chief constables. Yet, as will be seen, given the hierarchy of fiscal dependency, Morren remained dependent on the police authority for the provision of the most minor piece of equipment or infrastructure. At the same time, the police authority acquiesced to almost everything he requested, which was undoubtedly a reflection of his perceived expertise.

<sup>23</sup> Reiner, *The Politics of the Police*, 53.

<sup>24</sup> Clapson and Emsley, "Street, Beat and Respectability," 126.

<sup>25</sup> Williams argued that the process was fully consolidated by the corruption scandals of the 1950s. See Williams, "Britain's Police Forces: Forever Removed from Democratic Control?"

<sup>26</sup> Lustgarten, *The Governance of Police*, 49. By 1960 the Royal Commission on the Police saw the question of controlling the police as one of 'controlling chief constables'. Notwithstanding, the police in Scotland were bound to obey the lawful instructions of the sheriff and magistrates with regard to the maintenance of public order and the prosecutor in relation to criminal investigations. The Royal Commission concluded that assertions of Constabulary Independence in Scotland had therefore been more cautious than England. See Report of the Royal Commission on the Police. Cmd 1728, 1962, 23-24, 34.



Given that the majority of urban chief constables had risen through the ranks, one of the distinguishing features of their relationship with their police authorities in the early twentieth century was that it was perceived to be one of 'professional expert and local paymaster'.<sup>27</sup> In this sense, in the context of the response to the demands of increasingly complex urban societies, the ascent of chief constables paralleled that of professionals in other areas of municipal government.<sup>28</sup> Having risen through the ranks Morren clearly fits the profile of urban chief constables and there is no evidence in the period under consideration that the police authority in Edinburgh treated him as anything other than the professional police officer.<sup>29</sup> By contrast, county chief constables were less likely to have police experience; rather, they were drawn from the landed gentry, former army officers, or ex-colonials and were, like the local authority, therefore, part of the feudal structure.<sup>30</sup> As St. Johnston in Oxfordshire during the war recalled: 'One of the real pleasures of being a County Chief Constable has always been the invitations to most, if not all of the big houses' such as Blenheim or Tusmore.<sup>31</sup>

Thus although chief constables had, by the early twentieth century, acquired power outwith emergencies to make autonomous operational decisions, they remained dependent on the police authority as 'gatekeeper' for applications to central government for approval of grant expenditure. In the majority of cases the police authority, however, approved the recommendations made by the chief constable. As with its relationship with central government, therefore, the police authority negotiated power in relation to the police force through the interaction with the chief constable.

<sup>27</sup> Michael Brogden, *The Police: Autonomy and Consent* (London: Academic Press, 1982), 155.

<sup>28</sup> Moore and Rodger, "Who Really Ran the Cities?," 39.

<sup>29</sup> For Morren's Service Record see ECA ED6/13/14(2).

<sup>30</sup> In 1920 Desborough recommended that no person without previous police experience should be appointed as chief constable unless he had some exceptional qualification or there was no other candidate. See Cmd 574, 11. Notwithstanding, by 1939 90.4 per cent of English county chief constables had not come through the ranks compared with 5.1 per cent of borough chief constables. See Reiner, *Chief Constables*, 14-15. In Scotland, although the percentage of those who did not have police experience in the 42 chief constables of the 48 forces examined under the 1857 Act is unknown, only 12.5 per cent of those in counties and 5.5 per cent of those in burghs in 1939 had a military title. cf Stallion and Wall, *The British Police*.

<sup>31</sup> St. Johnston, *One Policeman's Story*, 68.

## **Edinburgh Town Council, the police authority, and power-interdependence**

By an Act of 1856 the powers and responsibilities of commissioners in Edinburgh with respect to the 'Watching Force' were transferred to the town council.<sup>32</sup> Although this rectified the problem of dual administration that had characterised the creation and development of 'new' police forces, it has to be viewed in the context of the enormous expansion of municipal power in response to the growing complexity of urban society. As Barry Doyle has pointed out: 'local government took on a bewildering array of powers' in Britain between 1830 and 1940, much of it as a consequence of local initiative.<sup>33</sup> The assertion that the centre acquired power unilaterally in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries therefore requires modification. In addition to the other social actors in the model of police governance there was, however, a complex pattern of power-interdependence within Edinburgh Town Council in relation to the police authority.

As a consequence of the expansion of municipal functions, the number of single-issue council committees and sub-committees increased dramatically. Appendix '7' shows that there were 11 main business areas of Edinburgh Town Council prior to the 1856 Act. By the Second World War, however, the structure had expanded considerably. As Appendix '8' shows, whilst there remained 11 main business areas, there were 23 sub-committees. Members of the police authority were therefore members of a number of other committees. Analysis of the minutes of the town council provides that, of the 93 members who were in office during the war, a mean of 2.5 served on only one committee in any one year whilst the remainder were members of between two and six, with the mode being three in all years except 1941-1942 when it was two.<sup>34</sup> In short, the police authority was part of an intricate web of power-interdependence between the various committees and vertically with the town council as councillors negotiated political deals. As Ewen found in his study, civic functions

<sup>32</sup> 19 & 20 Vict, cap. 32 (1856).

<sup>33</sup> Barry M. Doyle, "The Changing Functions of Urban Government: Councillors, Officials and Pressure Groups," in *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain Vol III*, ed. D. M. Palliser, Peter Clark, and M. J. Daunton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 287-289.

<sup>34</sup> ECA SL1/1/389-395 Minutes of the Town Council, 1938-45. The figure includes Lords Dean of Guild and Convenors of Trades who by 63 & 64 Vict, cap. 49 (1900) were constituent members of the Town Council. For the history of the offices see David Keir, ed. *The Third Statistical Account of Scotland. Vol.15, The City of Edinburgh* (Glasgow: Collins, 1966), 280.



and private discussions helped control rivalries and encourage intra-dependency.<sup>35</sup> Of course, none of this interaction is part of the historical record. There was, however, a widespread belief that town councils during the Second World War operated on a system of ‘you scratch my back and I’ll scratch yours’.<sup>36</sup> Put simply, the extent to which members of the various committees were able to advance their respective policy priorities depended on an established quid pro quo. As will be seen, the Lord Provost occupied the pivotal role across this network of committees.

The continuity of outcomes was therefore, in part, dependent on the stability of membership. Historians have argued that this led to members becoming ‘repositories of collective memory and precedent’ where radical policy options were circumscribed.<sup>37</sup> Councillors in the policy communities thus acquired institutional memory of interaction and outcomes. On the one hand, there was greater potential for stability during the Second World War due to the suspension of the normal rules for the election of councillors. In an attempt to prevent the development of the oligarchies, which were a feature of the pre-reform era, the 1900 Act specified that one-third of the councillors for each ward had to face re-election annually.<sup>38</sup> The suspension of this requirement by an Act of 1939, however, allowed existing councillors to remain in office.<sup>39</sup> Some 54 per cent of Edinburgh councillors served for the duration of the war, whilst 35 per cent of the remainder served for four years of the war or more. They generally tended to remain in the same committees or business areas during the Second World War. Councillor Adam Millar, for example, was a member of the Education Standing Committee, and the Treasurer’s Standing Committee for the duration of the war. In a similar manner, councillor Hardie remained a member of both the Public Health Standing Committee and the Streets and Buildings Committee throughout the war, whilst also being a member of the Emergency Committee for all but the first year.

<sup>35</sup> Ewen, "Power and Administration," 76-77.

<sup>36</sup> *Edinburgh Evening News*, 19 July 1940, 4.

<sup>37</sup> Moore and Rodger, "Who Really Ran the Cities?," 53.

<sup>38</sup> 63 & 64 Vict, cap. 49 (1900).

<sup>39</sup> 2 & 3 Geo. 6, cap. 115 (1939). Although operative for one year, the Act was renewed with minor amendments in 1940, 1941, 1942, and 1943. See ECA SL1/1/394, Fourteenth Annual Progress Report by Lord Provost’s Committee for the year 1943-44, 2. The 1900 Act already made similar provision for the filling of casual vacancies. An Order by 24 Geo. 5, cap. 5 (1933), however, specified that casual vacancies in Edinburgh should be filled by election.

On the other hand, the system of co-option to fill casual vacancies caused by the resignation or death of a councillor created instability in the network of committees and threatened the continuity of outcomes. Twenty members were appointed in Edinburgh during the war under the arrangement.<sup>40</sup> Although there was a tacit understanding that a member of the same political party as the departing councillor would fill the vacancy, and the process had been used in the Great War, it created resentment from the outset.<sup>41</sup> At a council meeting in mid-1942, for example, socialist members protested strongly and motioned unsuccessfully for the reinstatement of elections on the basis that, given ten members had by then been co-opted, the council could not claim to be democratic.<sup>42</sup> Likewise, the City Treasurer commented at a Unionist Party meeting in 1943 that some of those co-opted would be reluctant to face an election and implicitly questioned the extent to which the town council was politically representative.<sup>43</sup> Whilst there is no evidence of any such appointment being rescinded in Edinburgh, the example of the Fife County Council shows that it did happen elsewhere and demonstrates the extent to which co-option was a divisive issue amongst councillors.<sup>44</sup>

James Moore and Rodger have argued that in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the unwritten law of municipal business was that loyalty to the committee was as important as loyalty to the political party.<sup>45</sup> During the Second World War a parliamentary electoral truce similar to that in the Great War was also in operation. Party whips agreed that no candidate would be set up to contest a seat in opposition to the representative of the political party to which the former member belonged.<sup>46</sup> Notwithstanding, and despite the existence of a 'National' followed by a Coalition central government for most of the war, political partisanship created instability across the network of committees of Edinburgh Town Council, most notably in the period until November 1943.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>40</sup> See ECA SL1/1/395, Fifteenth Annual Progress Report by Lord Provost's Committee for the year 1944-45, 3.

<sup>41</sup> *Edinburgh Evening News*, 14 October 1939, 8.

<sup>42</sup> *The Scotsman*, 5 June 1942, 3.

<sup>43</sup> *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch*, 10 December 1943, 8.

<sup>44</sup> *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch*, 27 June 1944, 5.

<sup>45</sup> Moore and Rodger, "Who Really Ran the Cities?," 52.

<sup>46</sup> *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch*, 7 September 1939, 7.

<sup>47</sup> For an outline of British politics during the Second World War and the electoral truce in the Great War see Andrew Thorpe, *Parties at War: Political Organization in Second World War Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 1-2, 23.

It is difficult to discern precisely the political composition of the town council during the war. Surprisingly, the political party to which councillors belonged is not recorded in the council record. Furthermore, contemporary newspaper reports of appointments to the council or council offices, retirements, and obituaries rarely give a clue to political affiliation.<sup>48</sup> On the basis of MPs elected to Scottish constituencies in the general election of 1935 and subsequent by-elections before the war, the majority of councillors would likely be a mix of Unionist, Labour, Independent Labour, Liberal, 'National' Liberal, and Scottish Nationalists.<sup>49</sup> In general terms, local government in Scotland was characterised by a Conservative-dominated alliance of Liberals and Independents based on an anti-Socialist agenda. In some places they were known as Moderates, whilst in others they were referred to as Progressives and contemporary newspapers used the terms interchangeably even in the same report.<sup>50</sup> For the sake of continuity, 'Moderates' will be adopted in this chapter. The *Edinburgh Evening News* reported in late 1941 that this grouping commanded a clear majority in Edinburgh Town Council.<sup>51</sup> Given the system of co-option this is unlikely to have altered for the remainder of the duration of the war. An unpublished typescript shows that of the 88 councillors in office during the war, 25, whom contemporary newspaper reports referred to as Socialists, were, at some point during the war, members of the Labour Party.<sup>52</sup>

A further councillor, John Cormack, represented the Protestant Action Society, which arose in Edinburgh in 1933 as a backlash to the state funding provided to Roman Catholic schools by the 1918 Education (Scotland) Act. The object of the society was to spread the principles of 'true Protestantism throughout the country and oppose the

<sup>48</sup> See, for example, the obituary for councillor Given. *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch*, 2 September 1940, 3. Also the article on councillor Morrison Millar who, in 1919, became the first woman to be elected to the town council. *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch*, 4 March 1944, 3.

<sup>49</sup> Christopher Harvie, *No Gods and Precious Few Heroes: Scotland Since 1914* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1993), 90.

<sup>50</sup> I. G. C. Hutchison, *Scottish Politics in the Twentieth Century* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), 47., John Holford, *Reshaping Labour: Organisation, Work, and Politics; Edinburgh in the Great War and After* (London: Croom Helm, 1988), 15.

<sup>51</sup> *Edinburgh Evening News*, 4 November 1941, 3.

<sup>52</sup> Russell A Fox, *Members of the Labour Party Elected to Edinburgh Town Council 1909 to 1971* (Unpublished, 1971). For the relative weakness of the Labour Party see, for example, Christopher Harvie, "Labour in Scotland during the Second World War," *The Historical Journal* 26, no. 4 (1983)., W. W. Knox and A. Mackinlay, "The Re-Making of Scottish Labour in the 1930s," *Twentieth Century British History* 6, no. 2 (1995).

erroneous teaching of Romanism at every opportunity'.<sup>53</sup> Cormack was the instigator of much of the sectarian disturbances that erupted in Edinburgh in 1935. Although the Society had a larger share of the vote than Labour in the 1936 municipal elections its credibility as a political force declined as the decade wore on. Furthermore, some, like councillor Horne, had defected to become 'Independents'. As a result, the Society had virtually receded to a one-man operation. With the outbreak of war, the impetus behind the protestant cause was further diminished.<sup>54</sup> Nevertheless, as will be seen, Cormack elicited a considerable operational policing response during the Second World War. By 1942 the three councillors left advocating the cause were referred to in contemporary newspaper reports as the Protestant Action Group.<sup>55</sup>

It would be assumed that a persistent political majority throughout the war would predispose a degree of stability. It was this disposition, however, that underpinned strife across the network of committees. Specifically, Labour members were aggrieved that they were not offered the proportion of offices to which they felt their number in the council entitled them to. *The Scotsman* reported in 1942 that there had been 'openly declared war' over the issue.<sup>56</sup> As a consequence, for some years in the immediate pre-war period they refused to become chair or convenor of any of the committees.

At the first election of offices in the early months of the war, however, the Labour Whip claimed 'full representation' on the committees, probably in response to the drive for national unity. In the event Labour was offered the chair of only one committee, which one Labour member described as an 'insult'.<sup>57</sup> Given Labour's established position, it is likely that it was, in consequence, declined as no members of the party held office that year other than bailie. Nonetheless, by late 1940 an accommodation had clearly been reached whereby the Moderates and Labour had agreed that it would make for the better handling of affairs if the offices were shared.

<sup>53</sup> NRS HH1/777, Report by Procurator Fiscal of Edinburgh on the anti-Catholic disturbances in the city in 1935.

<sup>54</sup> David L. Ritchie, "They Do Not Become Good Scotsmen": A Political History of the anti-Irish Campaign in Scotland, 1919-1939" (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Edinburgh 2013), 197-233., Tom Gallagher, *Edinburgh Divided: John Cormack and No Popery in the 1930s* (Edinburgh: Polygon, 1987), 1, 29, 130, 148, 150.

<sup>55</sup> *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch*, 6 November 1942, 4.

<sup>56</sup> *The Scotsman*, 7 November 1942, 3.

<sup>57</sup> *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch*, 10 November 1939, 4.

As the *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch* reported: ‘those who follow Town Council affairs will be genuinely pleased to know that a movement is on foot whereby the Labour Party may take a larger share of the offices’.<sup>58</sup> As a consequence, Labour councillors did take a number of offices that year.

Yet the extent to which the Moderates were prepared to share power was clearly limited. At the election of the Lord Provost in 1941 the Moderates, in private session, nominated a single candidate thus demonstrating the extent to which power was exercised in the margins to official meetings. Labour members argued that, given the need for national unity and the tacit political truce, the selection should have been made in full council.<sup>59</sup> Criticising the ‘Tory majority’ for ‘reducing the government of Edinburgh to a farce’ Labour members consequently absented themselves from council meetings and again refused to accept office.<sup>60</sup> For whatever reason, at the election of office bearers in late 1942 a ‘more congenial atmosphere’ prevailed and Labour members took a number of offices.<sup>61</sup> The inequality of political power thus threatened the continuity in outcomes as members of committees withdrew from pluralist politics.

Whilst, in general terms, Labour members served on committees to the same extent as the mode throughout the war, and 11 became chair or convenor, the profile of two who changed allegiance to the Communist Party in 1940 is markedly different. In 1856 the practice was established that all members of the council should, as near as possible, be members of the same number of committees.<sup>62</sup> Although the two Communist Party councillors were members of the council for virtually the duration of the war neither served on more than two committees nor became an office-holder or bailie. By way of contrast, councillor Hogg, who changed allegiance in 1940 from Labour to the Moderates served on a mean of 4.5 committees in each of the war years and became chair of the Public Health Standing Committee for three years.

<sup>58</sup> *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch*, 30 October 1940, 4.

<sup>59</sup> *The Scotsman*, 8 November 1941, 4.

<sup>60</sup> *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch*, 4 November 1941, 2; 7 November 1941, 4; 14 November 1941, 5; 21 November 1941, 8.

<sup>61</sup> *Edinburgh Evening News*, 5 November 1942, 4., *The Scotsman*, 7 November 1942, 3.

<sup>62</sup> ECA SL1/1/269, Minutes of the Town Council, 18 November 1856.

The explanation was undoubtedly related to the pervasive, but largely unfounded, fear during the war of subversion by fifth columnists, especially in the aftermath of the fall of the Low Countries and France in May-June 1940.<sup>63</sup> In particular, there was a fear that Fascists and, until Germany's invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941, the Communist Party were Trojan Horses, fomenting a 'revolutionary defeatist' ethos.<sup>64</sup> As will be seen in relation to operational policing, the threat was taken seriously by the SHD. In Edinburgh, preparations were made for the inauguration of a 'sixth column' to counteract the activities of the Fifth.<sup>65</sup> In addition to the related closure of the city chambers for much of the war, armed police were posted at all police stations and key administrative points to guard against sabotage.<sup>66</sup> Furthermore, over months in 1940, for example, the Town Clerk sought guidance on the policy for dealing with Conscientious Objectors and other employees whose loyalty was in question.<sup>67</sup> Elsewhere in Scotland, two Socialist councillors in Greenock complained that they had been rejected as Special Constables without any explanation.<sup>68</sup> In this context, the change of allegiance to the Communist Party by two councillors in Edinburgh undoubtedly caused alarm. Their service profile across the committee network was, therefore, undoubtedly a reflection of the attempt to withhold or restrict the extent to which they could exercise municipal power.

A similar process was clearly at work in respect of Cormack. Whilst two members of the Protestant Action Group had, by 1942, been convenor of a committee, Cormack had never been appointed to any office despite having been a councillor since 1933. At the election of office bearers in 1942 there was some rapprochement between the Moderates and Labour members. As a consequence, the Protestant Action Group complained that there had been some 'queer going on behind the scenes', that the council 'still ran on party lines', and that the Moderates were 'on their knees to the Labour Party'. In protest, Cormack took the unorthodox but ultimately unsuccessful

<sup>63</sup> *Edinburgh Evening News*, 17 April 1940, 5., *The Scotsman*, 24 May 1940, 11. See also, for example, Hylton, *Their Darkest Hour*, 12., Stephen M Cullen, "The Enemy Within," *Military Illustrated*, no. 274 (2011).

<sup>64</sup> Richard Thurlow, "The Evolution of the Mythical British Fifth Column, 1939-46," *Twentieth Century British History* 10, no. 4 (1999)., *Fascism in Britain: A History, 1918-1985* (Oxford Blackwell, 1987), 193., *The Secret State: British Internal Security in the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), 229.

<sup>65</sup> *Edinburgh Evening News*, 1 June 1940, 4.

<sup>66</sup> *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch*, 4 June 1940, 1.

<sup>67</sup> *Edinburgh Evening News*, 25 July 1940, 5; 26 July 1940, 3; 26 September 1940, 2.

<sup>68</sup> *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch*, 22 August 1940, 3.

step of seconding his own nomination as a bailie. Similarly, although the Protestant Action Group nominated candidates for the convenor of every committee, it was heavily defeated.<sup>69</sup> A subsequent letter to the *Edinburgh Evening News* complained that the Moderates and Labour had done ‘all in their power to keep the Protestant Councillors from getting into a position to which, through length of service, they are entitled’.<sup>70</sup> Despite similar appeals, Cormack was consistently denied the opportunity to become chair of any committee or a bailie during the war.<sup>71</sup> The repeated fractures over politics and appointment to offices across the network of committees in Edinburgh Town Council raises serious questions as to the existence of a ‘widespread and unprecedented ethic of self-sacrifice, social levelling and community spirit’ which underpin the concept of a ‘people’s war’.<sup>72</sup>

### **The police authority, the Lord Provost, and power-interdependence**

Of all the areas of municipal administration the Watching Department was considered the most important. From the creation of the ‘new’ police it was, in consequence, strongly linked to the principal council officer, the Lord Provost.<sup>73</sup> In the early to mid-nineteenth century, for example, although Residential Commissioners were elected to provide local policing, the Lord Provost along with other councillors exercised power in the ‘new’ system of police through their appointment as General Commissioners responsible for policy formulation. The Lord Provost was, moreover, convenor of the commissioners’ Watching and Lodging Houses Committee, known as the Police Board, and along with the sheriff had the power to appoint and dismiss the officer in charge of the Watching Force. Furthermore, in 1855-1856 the Lord Provost occupied the pivotal position among both the commissioners and town council during the consideration to end dual administration, which undoubtedly explains why there was not in Edinburgh, as there was elsewhere in Scotland, a bitter struggle over incorporation. Indeed, as the Bill was passing through Parliament, the commissioners recorded that they unanimously consented to ending dual administration ‘after hearing the explanation of the Lord Provost’.<sup>74</sup>

<sup>69</sup> *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch*, 6 November 1942, 4.

<sup>70</sup> *Edinburgh Evening News*, 9 November 1942, 2.

<sup>71</sup> *Edinburgh Evening News* 23 November 1944, 3.

<sup>72</sup> Harris, "War and Social History," 317.

<sup>73</sup> McGowan, *Policing the Metropolis of Scotland*, 235. The office of the Lord Provost is roughly equivalent to the office of Mayor in England.

<sup>74</sup> ECA ED9/1/13, Minutes of General Commissioners, 5 May 1856.



By the Second World War the Watching Department was the purview of the Lord Provost's Committee. As will be seen, however, both the Lord Provost's Committee and its Watching Standing Sub-Committee acted as the police authority in practice. Given its overarching responsibilities the Lord Provost's Committee was, with the possible exception of the Finance Committee, the pre-eminent council committee. It was often referred to as the Cabinet of the town council.<sup>75</sup> During the war it was for example, empowered to coordinate the work of the standing committees; deal with any questions of policy affecting any outside local body on which the council was represented; and, with any general questions affecting the conduct of the administration of the council or with any matter affecting the interests of the council not referred to any other committee. The members of the committee and especially the Lord Provost were therefore in a position to exercise power and influence across council policy communities and elsewhere. Indeed, in addition to being the convenor of his own committee and its Watching Sub-Committee, the Lord Provost was also an ex-officio member of all standing committees to which he was not otherwise appointed. Furthermore, whilst the Treasurer was similarly an ex-officio member of all committees and any councillor could attend any committee meeting, they were not entitled to a vote, whereas the Lord Provost was.

At the same time, the fragmentation of the committee structure in the town council prevented the principal officer from exercising despotic authority.<sup>76</sup> Furthermore, a complex pattern of power-interdependence existed between the town council and the Lord Provost's Committee. For example, councillors were directly or indirectly dependent on the town council for their appointment to the Lord Provost's Committee. Members of the Lord Provost's Committee were specified in Standing Orders as: the Lord Provost, the Convenor of Trades, the chairs of the other standing committees (except Trinity Hospital), together with five other members appointed by the town council.<sup>77</sup> Over the council sessions 1938-1944 the committee had a mean annual membership of 24.4. In turn, the Lord Provost's Committee was empowered to recommend councillors to the town council for appointment to the other committees.

<sup>75</sup> Keir, *The Third Statistical Account of Scotland*, 287.

<sup>76</sup> Moore and Rodger, "Who Really Ran the Cities?," 50-51.

<sup>77</sup> See ECA SL70/3/4B, Standing Orders of the Town Council of Edinburgh as revised to 18 November 1937.



Given the significance of the Lord Provost's Committee, and in order to ensure continuity of outcomes, it would be assumed that stability of membership would be a matter of policy. Yet despite the suspension of elections, the committee was not as stable as the town council. The minutes of the committee show that of the 58 councillors who were members for some portion of the Second World War, nearly two-thirds were members for between one and three years, with the mode being one year. The overwhelming majority of the members of the committee served for half the duration of the war or less.<sup>78</sup> Nonetheless, whilst four members served on the committee for the duration, another 10 members served for four years or more. In addition, members of minority political groups, such as Cormack and those in the Communist Party, whose agendas might threaten stability, were excluded. Most importantly, the Lord Provost chaired almost 89 per cent of the meetings of the committee that took place during the war. Although there were three individuals who occupied the office, their unique position in the nexus of committees, enabled them to exercise formal and informal influence to create stability. Furthermore, despite the additional pressures of commitment to other committees, such as the Civil Defence Committee and Emergency Committee that were introduced as consequence of war, not once throughout the duration did the Lord Provost's Committee fail to achieve the required quorum of six members. The telling point is that there was significant potential to maintain continuity of outcomes in the Lord Provost's Committee.

Although the Watching Department was remitted to the Watching Sub-Committee along with other responsibilities such as police pensions, the fire brigade, coal weighing, and cruelty to children, both it and the Lord-Provost's Committee acted as the police authority in practice during the Second World War. This represented a continuity of business practice. The commissioners of 1855 and their Watching and Lodging Houses Committee, for example, dealt with the same issues in relation to the 'new' police. During the Second World War, whilst the minutes of the Watching Sub-committee were read and approved by the Lord Provost's Committee which, in turn, reported to the town council, the exercise of power in relation to the maintenance of the police force was, however, more diffuse than this suggested hierarchy of accountability. There was no clear pattern to suggest which committee had the power

<sup>78</sup> SL25/2/24-30, Minutes of Lord Provost's Committee, 1938-45.

to deal with specific matters. In some cases the Watching Sub-Committee made decisions without reference to the Lord Provost's Committee. In others the Lord Provost's Committee took decisions over exactly the same range of issues without reference to its sub-committee. In still other instances, the committees would remit to each other. In this regard, Laxton and Rodger have identified that it was established practice in Edinburgh Town Council in the nineteenth century to 'anaesthetise issues' by remitting them to committees.<sup>79</sup>

Part of the explanation for the ambiguity over responsibility relates to the lack of specificity in the remits of the Lord Provost's Committee and the Watching Sub-Committee. In any event, during the Second World War, the members of the Watching Sub-Committee were also obviously members of the Lord Provost's Committee and town council and could, therefore, provide formal and informal continuity through the levels of the corporation. Specifically, the Lord Provost as chair of the town council, the Lord Provost's Committee, and the Watching Sub-Committee was in a pivotal position to explain police authority policies at official meetings or in their margins to secure continuity in outcomes. Thus the areas of overlapping power and authority that existed between the other social agents in police governance were also present in Edinburgh at the level of the local authority. References to the police authority in this thesis could, therefore, signify either the Lord Provost's Committee or its Watching Sub-Committee.

Apart from casual vacancies the members of the Watching Sub-Committee were appointed at the first meeting of the council session by the Lord Provost's Committee. Over the council sessions 1938-1944 the mean annual membership was 11.4. Virtually half the number of the Lord Provost's Committee were appointed to the Watching Sub-Committee. The comparative instability in membership of the Lord Provost's Committee was therefore transmitted to its sub-committee. Only one of the 27 members who served on the Watching Sub-Committee during the war did so for the duration. However, nine members served on the sub-committee for four years of the war or more. The Lord Provost who chaired 72 per cent of the meetings during the war provided further continuity. The salient point in all of this all is that across the

<sup>79</sup> Laxton, Rodger, and Littlejohn, *Insanitary City*, 91.

two committees that could be considered the police authority there was, notwithstanding the introduction of the Defence Regulations, significant potential for stability in policy outcomes.

### **The police authority, the chief constable, and power-interdependence**

Although contemporary newspapers reported on the meetings of the Lord Provost's Committee these rarely, if ever, refer to police-related matters. Furthermore, the Watching Sub-Committee appears to have been ignored entirely. In short, there is little in the way of media reporting on the meetings of the police authority and the picture of its activities is therefore drawn from the committee minutes.

By the Second World War the pattern of governance that consigned the police authority to the rump of maintaining the force was well established and meetings considered comparatively minor administrative issues. Much was concerned with the infrastructure of the police estate as well as issues associated with pensions. In early 1944, for example, Morren submitted a letter to the Watching Sub-Committee from a retired senior officer requesting his pension be paid in full to him on the basis that, since 1936 when the police authority granted a payment of one-half to his wife, he had become divorced and given she no longer had responsibility for their children.<sup>80</sup> The sub-committee also dealt frequently with matters relating to rent allowance. In May 1941, for instance, Morren submitted applications for an increase in rent allowance for Constables Orr and Lindsay on the grounds that they were single men who had dependent relatives living with them.<sup>81</sup> In November 1943 Morren made a request relating to rent allowance to the Lord Provost's Committee on behalf of Constable Stevens.<sup>82</sup> Although this was remitted to Watching Sub-Committee, it demonstrates Morren's contemporary understanding that either committee could fulfil the functions of the police authority.

The committees also spent a considerable amount of time dealing with extensions of leave for officers who had been sick for more than 90 days. In mid-1941, for example, Morren passed to the Watching Sub-Committee a suggestion from the medical referee

<sup>80</sup> ECA SL25/2/29, Minutes of Watching Sub-Committee, 22 March 1944.

<sup>81</sup> ECA SL25/2/26, Minutes of Watching Sub-Committee, 21 May 1941.

<sup>82</sup> ECA SL25/2/29, Minutes of Watching Sub-Committee, 24 November 1943.

that Constable Thomson be granted a further one-month leave of absence.<sup>83</sup> A few months later a similar representation by Morren on behalf of Constable Fraser was, however, handled by a special sub-committee of the Lord Provost's Committee that had been established to deal with urgent matters during the council's summer vacation.<sup>84</sup>

The police authority also took much time during the war over the perpetual changes in personnel that were the consequence of the additional duties the police were required to undertake and the release of regular officers. Towards the end of the war, however, as well as concentrating on reconstruction, the focus related to the release of officers to the Allied Control Commission. In April 1945 the Lord Provost's Committee, for instance, agreed to a request to release Constables Mackay and Canning for service as staff sergeants.<sup>85</sup> By contrast, in December 1944 the Town Clerk received notification that Constable Ross had been appointed to the Commission as a staff sergeant. In view of the urgency, the Town Clerk obtained the authority to the secondment from some members of the Watching Sub-Committee.<sup>86</sup> Although the sub-committee retrospectively approved of the action taken, the example demonstrates the extent to which power was exercised by the police authority in the margins to official business.

By the Second World War the process whereby the chief constable was considered the professional expert in the pattern of police governance was, whilst not complete, also well established. As a consequence, with, as will be seen, the notable exception of the regulation of road traffic, the police authority acquiesced to most of Morren's representations. Councillors, who were accountable to the electorate, were dependent on the chief constable for the local delivery of policing and were, therefore, usually unwilling to contradict his recommendations. At the same time, the chief constable clearly remained dependent on the police authority for the matters that fell within the purview of maintaining the force. In late 1944, for example, the Lord Provost's Committee approved Morren's request to sell the manure from the police stables for

<sup>83</sup> ECA SL25/2/26, Minutes of Watching Sub-Committee, 18 June 1941.

<sup>84</sup> ECA SL25/2/26, Minutes of Special Sub-Committee to Deal with Urgent Matters during the Vacation, 26 August 1941.

<sup>85</sup> ECA SL25/2/30, Minutes of Lord Provost's Committee, 25 April 1945.

<sup>86</sup> ECA SL25/2/30, Minutes of Watching Sub-Committee, 17 January 1945.

the sum of £3 per annum.<sup>87</sup> Similarly, in May 1940, the Watching Sub-Committee approved his recommendation to rent premises at a cost of £12 per year to provide a rallying point for Special Constables in the event of an air raid.<sup>88</sup> Shortly thereafter the Lord Provost's Committee approved his representation to modify the premises at a cost of £20.<sup>89</sup> Given the Watching Sub-Committee dealt with the original application for the premises, it would be reasonable to assume that it would have considered the subsequent request for the modification. Since the costs in both representations were not significantly different, the amount of money was therefore not the factor that determined which committee dealt with an issue. Indeed, there is no identifiable pattern to indicate that there was any demarcation on the basis of cost. It is therefore likely that representations were made to whichever committee had a meeting proximate to the date the issue arose.

Indeed, there is, similarly, no clear pattern to the occasions when Morren's requests were refused by the police authority. In the early weeks of war, for example, he made representation to the Lord Provost's Committee that, given they were in exposed conditions during air raids, members of the force should be provided with identity discs at a total cost of some £8.<sup>90</sup> Whilst this was ultimately refused it prompted a rare case of recorded division in the committee over police matters. Clearly, some members of the committee were uncomfortable with rejecting a recommendation by the chief constable. In contrast, the Watching Sub-Committee apparently unanimously rejected Morren's representation in mid-1944 to provide electric kettles for each police box at a total cost of some £500.<sup>91</sup> It is unlikely that the refusal to accede to the representation for kettles was related to cost since Morren was successful in pursuing more costly facilities throughout the war. Perhaps, therefore, the reason why some requests were rejected was that some members of the police authority viewed them as an irrelevance given competing demands. Councillors were clearly required to exercise discretion to prioritise the allocation of limited fiscal resources.

<sup>87</sup> ECA SL25/2/30, Minutes of Lord Provost's Committee, 15 November 1944.

<sup>88</sup> ECA SL25/2/25, Minutes of Watching Sub-Committee, 22 May 1940.

<sup>89</sup> ECA SL25/2/25, Minutes of Lord Provost's Committee, 22 June 1940.

<sup>90</sup> ECA SL25/2/24, Minutes of Lord Provost's Committee, 25 October 1939.

<sup>91</sup> ECA SL25/2/29, Minutes of Watching Sub-Committee, 21 June 1944.

### **The police authority, central government, and power-interdependence**

The pattern of power-interdependence between the chief constable and the police authority during the war was replicated in the relationship between the police authority and central government. Whilst the police authority generally approved Morren's representations, the minutes emphasise that this was almost always with the caveat of permission from central government. Even in requests involving minimal cost, the police authority sought approval from the SHD for grant expenditure. At the same time, notwithstanding the Defence Regulations, central government clearly remained dependent on the police authority for the delivery of policy at the local level. Judging by the historical record, the language used by SHD in its interaction with the police authority in Edinburgh shows a contemporary awareness of the reality of interdependence. As the examples relating to establishing police reserves and women police demonstrate, rarely did the SHD adopt a tone that was anything other than conciliatory. Furthermore, the SHD hardly, if at all, refused a representation by the police authority. Part of the explanation was related to the pluralist character of at least two of the Secretaries of State for Scotland: Colville and Johnston. It is clear that the interaction between central government and the police authority in Edinburgh during the Second World War was something of a highly ritualised dance, which contemporarily underscored the reality of interdependence.

Apart from issues relating to equipment and infrastructure, much of the interaction between the police authority and central government related to the perpetually changing personnel profile. In the preparations for war in January 1939, for example, the Watching Sub-Committee minuted a communication from Colville to the effect that he had under consideration the question of improving the existing arrangements for the strengthening of police forces in emergencies by establishing a First Police Reserve of mainly retired officers, a Police War Reserve, and recruiting additional Special Constables. Forces in England and Wales could, since 1911, call on such reserves in an emergency. In contrast to the Home Office in England and Wales, the SHD was of the view that there was no statutory authority to establish such reserves.<sup>92</sup> Chief constables in Scotland had therefore obtained reinforcements by inviting retired officers to become temporary constables. The minutes record that Colville wished to

<sup>92</sup> NRS HH55/183, Circular 3454, 22 December 1938.

know ‘whether local authorities considered it desirable’ to form a reserve and was thus a reflection of the recognition by central government that it was, in this respect, dependent on police authorities.<sup>93</sup> In this case, the Watching Sub-Committee remitted the matter to the Town Clerk and chief constable to discuss with the SHD. Thus, although they were required to report, aspects of police administration were negotiated by others in the margins to police authority meetings. Morren’s subsequent recommendation to recruit a reserve was referred to the town council, which approved.<sup>94</sup>

Part of the explanation as to why the issue was considered by the town council was undoubtedly related to the fact that the issue was more significant in comparison to those normally dealt with by the Lord Provost’s Committee or the Watching Sub-Committee. In this case the town council acted as the police authority, complicating further the picture of power relations in respect of the governance of the police. Furthermore, although the Act of Council to establish a reserve was a response to an initiative by the SHD, the council remained dependent on central government for approval of the specifics. By the same token, whilst the SHD approved the council’s representation, it deferred over the question of augmenting the Special Constabulary. Power over resources was thus negotiated in the interaction between local and central governments.

Indeed, a comparison with Glasgow illustrates the limitations of central government power in this regard. Whilst all other police forces in Scotland agreed to the proposal to recruit a reserve, Glasgow Town Council procrastinated by continually employing the familiar municipal delaying tactic of adjournment. Part of the explanation was related to the fact that the corporation had a socialist majority drawing on the memory of police reserves being used in the General Strike. Although the council agreed after some four months to establish a reserve the process was clearly characterised by compromise.<sup>95</sup> Put simply, Colville remained unable to force the town council to comply.

<sup>93</sup> ECA SL25/2/24, Minutes of Watching Sub-Committee, 11 January 1939.

<sup>94</sup> ECA SL25/2/24, Minutes of Watching Sub-Committee, 8 February 1939.

<sup>95</sup> *The Scotsman*, 3 March 1939, 9; 24 March 1939, 6; 27 April 1939, 8; 10 May 1939, 9; 12 May 1939, 7; 3 June 1939, 10; 23 June 1939, 8.



### The Defence Regulations in practice

Elsewhere in Scotland, the Secretary of State for Scotland used the Defence Regulations to supplant the existing system of police governance. In mid-1940, for example, notwithstanding the threat by Lerwick Town Council to resign en-masse, Colville used this power to amalgamate the burgh force with the Zetland county force and make the new force subject to the provisions of the 1857 Act.<sup>96</sup> Similarly, in late 1940, against the wishes of police authorities and notwithstanding that the regulations had not been approved, Ernest Brown granted police officers a supplementary bonus of 5s and a war duty bonus of 3s per week. Whilst the council in Fife, for example, railed against the fact that it had not been consulted and undertook to protest over Brown's 'high-handed attitude', it acknowledged that it had 'no option but to accept it'.<sup>97</sup> There was certainly a contemporary perception by local authorities that the pre-war system of police governance had been supplanted. The *Police Review* reported in 1942 that there had been a number of 'outbursts' at police authority meetings against 'interference' by central government in matters of police administration.<sup>98</sup> At the Watching Sub-Committee in Edinburgh in late 1944 the Town Clerk reported on the proceedings of the Scottish Local Authority Associations where it had been agreed that the Secretary of State for Scotland, Tom Johnston, should be urged to give 'utmost weight' to their views. The Association of County Councils, meanwhile, suggested that in view of the 'unsatisfactory' position, it should refuse to attend related meetings.<sup>99</sup>

Elsewhere in Britain and in other respects, there was a feeling that local authorities had lost power to direct municipal affairs. In particular, the introduction of a regional form of government through regional commissioners gave rise to a perception that powers conferred for civil defence were being utilised to encroach on other areas that had hitherto been the purview of local government. One contemporary critic saw it as an 'insidious attack on the entire system of local democratic government' and likened it to the imposition of the Gauleiters in Germany.<sup>100</sup> Harold Scott, the wartime Chief Administrative Officer in the regional government in London and subsequently

<sup>96</sup> *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch*, 20 April 1940, 6; 1 June 1940, 5.

<sup>97</sup> *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch*, 7 September 1940, 6.

<sup>98</sup> *Police Review*, 8 May 1942, 230.

<sup>99</sup> ECA SL25/2/30, Minutes of Watching Sub-Committee, 13 December 1944.

<sup>100</sup> *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch*, 16 March, 1942, 5.



Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, remembered that other critics of the development recalled Oliver Cromwell's system of Major Generals and 'suggested that the Government was creating a machine which might in time supplant democratic rule under the sanction of wartime emergency'.<sup>101</sup>

Despite these fears, police authorities in larger burgh forces, such as Inverness and Dunfermline, successfully rebuffed proposals by the Secretary of State for Scotland that they should merge with their respective county forces.<sup>102</sup> As the *Police Review* noted, police authorities in Scotland were 'strongly and stubbornly opposed to any amalgamation'.<sup>103</sup> In the event, all these forces remained independent for the duration of the war.<sup>104</sup> Indeed, it was only after the war that the Secretary of State for Scotland was by the 1946 Act successful in amalgamating forces in the face of opposition from local authorities.<sup>105</sup> By way of contrast, in England the Home Secretary amalgamated a number of forces during the war under the Defence Regulations.<sup>106</sup> The assumption that the Defence Regulations wholly supplanted the existing system of police governance therefore requires qualification.

### **The police authority, central government, and power-interdependence: the example of women police**

A great deal of the interaction on personnel matters between the SHD and the police authority in Edinburgh during the Second World War related to the issue of women police. By 1939 there was a long continuity of hostility from police authorities, chief constables, the Police Federation, and regular male officers to the notion of women police. From the outset in 1914 the movement for women police was decried as a 'farcical manifestation of feminist agitation'.<sup>107</sup> Some of the leading figures in the

<sup>101</sup> Harold Richard Scott, *Your Obedient Servant* (London, 1959), 121.

<sup>102</sup> *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch*, 18 November 1942, 7., *Police Review*, 13 November 1942, 546; 27 November 1942, 566.

<sup>103</sup> *Police Review*, 19 November 1943, 557.

<sup>104</sup> cf Eighty-Third Report of His Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary for Scotland, 1946.

<sup>105</sup> 9 and 10 Geo, 6, cap. 71 (1946). For a recent survey of amalgamations and mergers see Louise A. Jackson, Neil Davidson, and David Martin Smale, "Scottish Police Force Amalgamations and Mergers: A Historical Perspective," *Scottish Justice Matters* 3, no. 2 (2015).

<sup>106</sup> Dixon, "The Emergency Work of the Police Forces," 193. Although these were intended to be for the duration only this provided the basis for the abolition of 45 borough forces in 1947. Emsley, *The English Police*, 169.

<sup>107</sup> Cited in Jennifer Brown and Frances Heidensohn, *Gender and Policing: Comparative Perspectives* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000), 52. See also, for example, Mary Sophia Allen and Julie Helen Heyneman, *The Pioneer Policewoman* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1925), 14., Lilian Wyles, *A*

movement for women police were militant feminists and suffragettes.<sup>108</sup> As Phillipa Levine found, some of the hostility also arose because the notion of women police challenged 'traditional' perceptions of a woman's sphere by claiming an authoritative role in the public domain.<sup>109</sup> At the same time, some of the resentment arose through the difference in social class between early women police and regular male officers. Although the personnel profile of regular male officers changed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as fewer agricultural labourers and farm servants were recruited, the majority still came from manual sectors of the economy. In contrast, John Carrier found that nearly half of early women police were of private means.<sup>110</sup> Finally, homophobia was a factor: whilst none ever 'came out', Ray Douglas has found evidence that some in the voluntary women police movement were lesbians.<sup>111</sup>

Despite the recommendation by a succession of committees for the employment of women police in the interwar years, the reports consistently recognised the discretion of local authorities and chief constables.<sup>112</sup> As a consequence, and notwithstanding the introduction by the SHD of regulations for policewomen in 1932, which mirrored those in England and Wales, central government remained reluctant to interfere with local autonomy by imposing an establishment of women on forces. The accompanying circular stressed that 'the existing discretion of the police authority as to whether police women are to be so employed or not is maintained'.<sup>113</sup> One consequence of this was that where women were employed they were restricted to dealing with women and children. By 1939 there were two regular women police

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*Woman at Scotland Yard: Reflections on the Struggles and Achievements of Thirty Years in the Metropolitan Police* (London: Faber, 1952), passim.

<sup>108</sup> Mary Sophia Allen and Julie Helen Heyneman, *Woman at the Cross Roads* (London: Unicorn Press, 1934), 69., Frances Heidensohn, *Women in Control?: The Role of Women in Law Enforcement* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1992), 46.

<sup>109</sup> Phillipa Levine, "'Walking the Streets in a Way No Decent Woman Should": Women Police in World War I," *Journal of Modern History* 66, no. 1 (1994): 62.

<sup>110</sup> John Carrier, *The Campaign for the Employment of Women as Police Officers* (Aldershot: Avebury, 1988), 61.

<sup>111</sup> Ray. M. Douglas, *Feminist Freikorps: The British Voluntary Women Police, 1914-1940* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1999), 20.

<sup>112</sup> See, for example, Report of the Committee on the Employment of Women on Police Duties. Cmd 877, 1920., Cmd 3297, 92-97.

<sup>113</sup> NRS HH55/483, *Police (Women) (Scotland) Regulations, 1932.*, Circular 2678A, 1 November 1932.

officers in Edinburgh in a strength of 804, which suggests that there was some resistance to the notion of women in the police in the interwar period.<sup>114</sup>

Thus, as Ewen noted in his interwar study of Leicester, the question of women police was negotiated in the interaction between central government and police authorities.<sup>115</sup> Indeed, in the preparations for war in March 1939 the SHD advised forces of the ‘possibility’ of employing women as drivers and for clerical and canteen work.<sup>116</sup> Similarly, following the creation of the Women’s Auxiliary Police Corps by the SHD in July 1939, it pointed out in November that, whilst there might have been a case for vesting some with police powers in areas where there were military camps, the general principle regarding the employment of women remained at the discretion of police authorities and chief constables.<sup>117</sup> Morren recommended that 100 women be appointed and the Watching Sub-Committee agreed.<sup>118</sup> Whilst this suggests a reversal of interwar hostility to the notion of women police, it must be seen in the context of two facts: the first, that, as with the regular women officers, the role was limited; and the second, as Louise Jackson identified in relation to women’s increased involvement in policing in both world wars, that this was ‘positioned as “war work” undertaken for “the duration” only’.<sup>119</sup>

Furthermore, whilst the police authority had, certainly by early 1942, with the approval of the SHD, increased both the full-time and part-time establishments of auxiliary women, it was determined to resist any suggestion that some be given police powers. Despite, as will be seen in relation to operational policing, a moral panic over a resurgence of ‘khaki fever’ and pressure from a variety of women’s social policy organisations to create women police patrols with authority to deal with women in the vicinity of military camps, the police authority remained resolute that no further action

<sup>114</sup> Constables Hancock and Robb were appointed in 1926 and 1928 respectively. Hancock retired in 1943 and Robb in 1959. See ECA ED6/13/8., ED6/13/18. Whilst their Service Record does not identify how they were deployed, Edith Tancred, the director of the Scottish Training Centre for women police in the period immediately after the Great War, recalled that women were not utilised for uniform patrol in any city in Scotland before the Second World War. Edith Tancred, *Women Police, 1914-1950* (London: National Council of Women of Great Britain, 1951), 47.

<sup>115</sup> Ewen, “Power and Administration,” 167-171.

<sup>116</sup> ECA SL25/2/24, Minutes of Watching Sub-Committee, 19 April 1939.

<sup>117</sup> NRS HH55/187, Circular 3599, 18 July 1939; Circular 3767, 9 November 1939.

<sup>118</sup> *Edinburgh Evening News*, 1 November 1939, 9., *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch*, 8 December 1939, 5.

<sup>119</sup> Louise A. Jackson, *Women Police: Gender, Welfare and Surveillance in the Twentieth Century* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), 17.

would be taken.<sup>120</sup> In this the police authority was clearly following the line taken by the chief constable, the ‘expert’. Morren advised in a report to the Town Clerk that the allegations of women loitering for the purposes of importuning were ‘grossly exaggerated’ and that there was ‘no apparent need for the employment of women police to deal specially with this alleged problem’.<sup>121</sup> At the same time, members of the town council clearly remained vehemently opposed to the idea of women police. Following the corporation’s approval to supply uniforms to members of the Women’s Auxiliary Police Corps, and despite the assurance of the Treasurer that a women’s police force had not been established, councillor Cormack retorted that he had ‘never approved of this war time business’. Another councillor claimed that the women were ‘uniform daft’, queried their usefulness, and whether they were thus avoiding other forms of war work.<sup>122</sup>

Thus, notwithstanding the introduction of the Defence Regulations and the shortages of personnel caused by the release of regular male officers, central government was unable to force the police authority to augment its capacity by employing women with police powers. Indeed, throughout late 1941 and early 1942 the police authority deflected the issue into one of dealing with social problems. The focus therefore became one of developing a scheme to create social centres and entertainments as well as deploying women social workers. Members of the Women’s Auxiliary Police Corps in Edinburgh, meanwhile, continued to be employed on driving, clerical, and canteen duties.<sup>123</sup>

In mid-1942, however, there was a subtle change in the content and tone of SHD communications with the police authority in Edinburgh, which suggests a shift in the dynamics of power whereby central government was centralising. With the release of 88 regular officers to the armed services the Secretary of State for Scotland, Tom Johnston, announced that he had reviewed the authorised strength of the force and had ‘decided’ that two members of the Women’s Auxiliary Police Corps would have

<sup>120</sup> ECA SL25/2/26, Minutes of Watching Sub-Committee, 10 September 1941., Minutes of Lord Provost’s Committee, 17 September 1941.

<sup>121</sup> Scottish Catholic Archives, DE/122/5/1, Report by Chief Constable City of Edinburgh Police, 12 August 1941.

<sup>122</sup> *Edinburgh Evening News* 3/10/1941, 4., *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch*, 20/11/1941, 5.

<sup>123</sup> *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch*, 20 September 1941, 3., *The Scotsman*, 8 May 1942, 3.

police powers.<sup>124</sup> That said, whilst the Lord Provost's Committee noted the circular, it clearly took no further action.<sup>125</sup> Despite the existence of uniformed women police patrols engaged by London and North Eastern Railways at Waverley Station and uniformed women military police corps patrols throughout Edinburgh, councillors clearly felt that they could ignore Johnston's decision in the knowledge that central government otherwise remained dependent on the police authority for the local delivery of policing.<sup>126</sup>

Part of the explanation was related to Johnston's democratic instincts. Experience had shown showed that he was unlikely to force issues when faced with a larger council that was determined to resist. In that respect, notwithstanding the potential for disruption over co-option, party politics, and the dispute over offices that arose during the war, there remained sufficient stability within the police authority and across the network of council committees to guarantee continuity in outcomes. In this regard the Lord Provost was the pivotal figure. Indeed, throughout the remainder of 1942 and into 1943 the police authority in Edinburgh continued to see the question of introducing women police in terms of addressing a specific social problem rather than one of police capacity. Only when reviewed in early 1943 did a special sub-committee that had been specifically convened to consider the 'scheme for dealing with social problems' recommend that because of particular concerns about girls over 17 years of age 'uniformed women police be added to the strength of the Police Force'.<sup>127</sup> In what was described as a 'new venture', eight women, who would form a 'new branch' of the Women's Auxiliary Police Corps, were sworn-in and given the full powers of a regular constable to carry out patrols to deal with 'special war-time problems' in relation to the 'behaviour and welfare of women and young girls'.<sup>128</sup>

Whilst the approval by the police authority might suggest a forced change of attitude to the idea of women police it reflects three facts: the first, that the women were additional to the whole-time strength of the force; the second, that the deployment was

<sup>124</sup> NRS HH55/215, Circular 4897, 28 April 1942.

<sup>125</sup> ECA SL25/2/27, Minutes of Lord Provost's Committee, 24 June 1942.

<sup>126</sup> *Edinburgh Evening News*, 20 October 1942, 3.; *The Scotsman*, 11 February 1942, 7.

<sup>127</sup> ECA SL25/2/28, Minutes of Special Sub-Committee on Scheme for Dealing with Social Problems, 17 March 1943.

<sup>128</sup> *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch*, 20 October 1943, 6; 28 January 1944, 3.

a 'war-time measure only';<sup>129</sup> and the third, that it is difficult to assign cause and effect given the length of time between Johnston's decision and the introduction of the women patrols. In fact, by the time that the women patrols were introduced in Edinburgh other police authorities in Dundee, Glasgow, and Inverness, for example, had either introduced women police or increased existing establishments.<sup>130</sup> Thus rather than taking direction from central government, the police authority in Edinburgh more than likely drew on developments elsewhere in Scotland. One of the characteristics of policing in the UK in the early twentieth century was cross-fertilisation between police forces of, for example, practices and personnel. What further cautions against viewing the approval of women patrols in Edinburgh as the consequence of a change in the dynamics of power is the refusal by much smaller police authorities in East Lothian, Dumfries, and Stirling, for example, to accept an establishment of women police which Johnston subsequently sought to impose under the Defence Regulations.<sup>131</sup> Thus, the issue of women patrols with police powers in Edinburgh and elsewhere further militates against any generalisation that the balance of power in police governance shifted decisively from local government in Scotland during the Second World War.

## Conclusion

This chapter demonstrates that by the Second World War most of what the police authority in Edinburgh dealt with related to minor administrative issues regarding infrastructure and personnel in particular. However, whilst the chief constable enjoyed increasing operational autonomy and central government increasingly intervened in municipal policing through the acquisition of power and creating fiscal dependency, a complex pattern of interdependence existed where lines of authority were blurred at all levels of police governance. The pattern of interdependence was partly a consequence of the organic way that the model of police governance had evolved. At the level of the town council it was also the result of the increasing complexity of municipal business. The consequent intricate committee structure

<sup>129</sup> ECA SL25/2/28, Minutes of Watching Sub-Committee, 19 May 1943; 14 July 1943. Minutes of Lord Provost's Committee, 21 July 1943.

<sup>130</sup> *The Scotsman*, 22 May 1942, 3; 24 June 1942, 3; 17 April 1943, 3.

<sup>131</sup> NRS HH55/187, Circular 5660, 5 April 1944, and replies thereto. In East Lothian see also *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch*, 9 May 1944, 5., *Edinburgh Evening News*, 11 July 1944, 4.

created an obvious interdependence of power between the police authority and the town council as members practised pluralist politics.

Whilst central government utilised its general powers, and specifically the Defence Regulations, elsewhere in England and Wales and other areas in Scotland in other contexts during the Second World War, the police authority in Edinburgh remained a significant political actor in police governance. Rhodes' model therefore withstands historical analysis in relation to police governance in Edinburgh during the Second World War. The example of women assuming police powers demonstrates that central government was unable to force the police authority to introduce them, despite problems with capacity. Part of the explanation relates to the stability of local government in Edinburgh. Despite co-option, political partisanship, and the furore over offices that arose as a consequence of the war, there was sufficient stability to ensure continuity in outcomes. In this regard, the Lord Provost played the central coordinating role in the police authority and across the network of committees. Power in the governance of the police in Edinburgh in the Second World War therefore continued to be negotiated in the interaction between central government, the chief constable, and the police authority. The thesis that the introduction of the Defence Regulations generally marginalised the police authority in the model of governance therefore requires qualification.



## 4

## The Police Federation

In the last weeks of 1919 the first meetings of the local branches of the newly created Police Federation took place in Edinburgh City Police and in forces throughout Britain. For the first time since the creation of the 'new' police the establishment of a recognised means of representation for rank-and-file officers offered the prospect of a mechanism to redress the harsh working conditions that were the catalyst for the strikes which took place in some English police forces in 1918 and 1919. Some, however, saw the Police Federation as a poor substitute for a trade union, membership of which had been made illegal, and pejoratively described it as a 'Goose Club' in that it would 'march in step' with the authorities.<sup>1</sup>

As the representative machinery for the majority of police officers the Police Federation therefore was and remains a very significant aspect of the police organisation. The lack of detailed historical analysis, particularly in relation to the Second World War, thus represents a substantial omission. Laybourn and Taylor's study, for example, is limited to an outline of the creation of the Federation and its activities in England and Wales until 1939.<sup>2</sup> The purpose of this chapter is to consider whether the Police Federation in Edinburgh was more or less successful in representing its members within the macro-structural context of the direction of the war effort on the home front. As observed, by the Defence Regulations the Secretary of State for Scotland increased his control over municipal policing. Furthermore, in addition to the extra operational demands associated with the war effort, officers were compulsorily retained beyond the point at which they would otherwise have been superannuated. The application of discipline in Edinburgh during the war also became stricter by comparison with the pre-war period. It might therefore be reasonable to expect the Police Federation to have been more active in an attempt to address these issues on behalf of its members. Yet the degree to which the Police Federation in Edinburgh was an effective means of representation was dictated, in part, by the negotiations and positioning of the various parties. Drawing principally on the minute

<sup>1</sup> Cited in Judge and Wales, *The First Fifty Years*, 2.

<sup>2</sup> Laybourn and Taylor, *Policing in England and Wales*.



books of the Scottish Police Federation, the intricacies of these dynamics are examined in some detail.

What will also be advanced here in terms of the Federation personnel is that becoming a representative did not prove to be a barrier to advancement. Furthermore, that there was no correlation between experience of having been disciplined and becoming a Federation representative. At the same time, representatives were more likely than not to have had previous employment in occupations where collective bargaining probably existed.

The main point, however, is that there was no change in the pattern of Federation activity in Edinburgh during the Second World War. Although the Federation arose in response to the fear of Bolshevism, its form and function were severely circumscribed by the context of 'reactive underestimation'. In this regard, the fragmented structure created a hierarchy of power-dependency. The interaction between local and national policy communities was also characterised by factional rifts. Together with structural fault lines and apathy this limited further what the Federation could achieve. Most of the issues that the Federation pursued during the Second World War had been unresolved for decades. Yet the withdrawal of the rest day and payment for overtime as a consequence of the war intensified the sense of frustration at what it had been able to achieve since its creation and a *zeitgeist* of dissatisfaction with the existing machinery emerged. Nonetheless, there was uncertainty between the local and national policy communities and between the Federation in Scotland and England as to how to resolve the problem. Mass meetings re-emerged as a tactic whilst existing structures continued to be utilised. In any event, in the context of the war there was even less of an incentive for central government to concede the creation of a more effective means of collective bargaining for rank-and-file officers. The Federation remained an ineffective mechanism of representation until 1949 at least.

### **The legacy of the creation of the Police Federation**

Unsurprisingly, the harsh working conditions imposed on the 'new' police forces from their creation fomented discontent and led to calls for the right to confer. Attempts throughout the nineteenth century, which precipitated small-scale strikes in England, however, were ruthlessly suppressed. The men who created the National Union of

Police and Prison Officers in the Metropolitan Police in 1913 therefore conducted its activities clandestinely. Yet the reaction of the authorities was harsh. This, together with the privations caused by the Great War, provided the immediate catalyst for the 1918 strike in London.

Given the context of the Great War and the Russian Revolution, central government, in a pre-eminent example of 'reactive underestimation', granted an immediate increase in pay and established the Desborough Committee. In this respect, it mirrored a wide-ranging programme of social reform that, as Mark Swenarton argued, had a counter-revolutionary function.<sup>3</sup> Although this upset temporarily the balance of power in the model of police governance, central government wasted no time in reasserting its position. Whilst Lloyd George obfuscated the question of recognising the National Union of Police and Prison Officers, the martinet General Sir Nevil Macready was appointed overnight as Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police. Macready immediately made contingency plans to break the union in London and reform the representative boards that had been established, which were dominated by constables who were regarded as the most militant.<sup>4</sup> In a strident example of 'divide and rule', which prefigured the creation of the Police Federation, he reasoned that those already promoted would be more concerned for their careers than those with no prospects and instituted separate boards for constables, sergeants, and inspectors. Indeed, commentators during the Second World War perceived a structural weakness in the Federation given that representatives would be unwilling to press claims resolutely in case it prejudiced their chances of promotion.<sup>5</sup> At the same time, in what was to become the pattern adopted by central government and police authorities for dealing with the Federation for the next three decades, Macready rejected most of the boards' representations out of hand.<sup>6</sup>

In Scotland, chief officers seized the opportunity to purge forces of members of the union. Norman Morrison, a sergeant in the Argyllshire Constabulary, recalled that he and others were given five minutes by the chief constable to resign either from the

<sup>3</sup> Mark Swenarton, *Homes Fit for Heroes: The Politics and Architecture of Early State Housing in Britain* (London: Heinemann Educational, 1981), 77-86.

<sup>4</sup> *The Scotsman*, 4 September 1918, 4.

<sup>5</sup> *Police Review*, 6 August 1943, 376; 22 October 1943, 516.

<sup>6</sup> Judge and Wales, *The Force of Persuasion*, 17.

union or the police.<sup>7</sup> At the same time, the Police Bill was rushed through Parliament and the consequent Act created the Police Federation and made unionisation and inciting disaffection illegal. Whilst the chief Constable in Edinburgh, Roderick Ross, advised the force that he did 'not propose to inquire into individual cases, whether an officer, who formerly belonged to a Union, has not abandoned membership' he reminded officers of the 'full consequences of remaining a member'.<sup>8</sup> This, together with the acceptance of the recommendations of the Desborough Committee, which doubled pay, undermined the demands by the National Union of Police and Prison Officers for recognition and the subsequent strike in a handful of English forces was limited and the union quickly collapsed.<sup>9</sup> The especially harsh reaction by central and local government to strikers in Liverpool was intended to demonstrate that any challenge to their power in the governance of the police would not be tolerated.<sup>10</sup>

In an echo of Macready, the 1919 Act stipulated that the Police Federation would be based on separate boards. Given the context of its creation, this was clearly perceived to be the least-worst option. Branch Boards for constables, sergeants, and inspectors were to be established in every force, to which up to seven representatives would be elected depending on the authorised strength. In Edinburgh, from the inception of the Federation and throughout the Second World War, there was one representative for each rank in each of the five territorial divisions as well as Headquarters. To consider matters of common interest the three Branch Boards combined to form a Joint Branch Board. The rank-specific boards were required to send up to four delegates each to an annual Central Conference and these could meet as a Joint Central Conference. The delegates to the Central Conferences were required to elect six members to a Central Committee for each rank that together became the Joint Central Committee, the national executive. As with the committee structure of Edinburgh Town Council, the organization of the Federation therefore created the potential for an intricate pattern of

<sup>7</sup> Morrison refused to leave the union and, notwithstanding that he had 27 years' service, was forced to resign forthwith and told to vacate his police house. Following a protest by ratepayers, however, he was reinstated. Norman Morrison, *My Story* (Inverness: Highland News, 1937), 107-109.

<sup>8</sup> SPFE, Edinburgh City Police General Order 900, 24 October 1919.

<sup>9</sup> *The Scotsman*, 2 August 1919, 7; 5 August 1919, 5.

<sup>10</sup> For the background to the police strikes and aftermath see, for example, Kenneth Guy Jack Charles Knowles, *Strikes: A Study in Industrial Conflict; with Special Reference to British Experience between 1911 and 1947* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1952), 102., Reiner, *The Blue-Coated Worker*, 19-20., Jones, "The 'Spirit of Petrograd' ?", 3., Judge and Wales, *The First Fifty Years*, 2-5., *The Force of Persuasion*, 11-22., Brogden, *On the Mersey Beat*, 18.

power-interdependencies as members interacted in a variety of policy communities at local and national levels. As will be seen, however, a hierarchy of power-dependence existed in practice. Furthermore, the interaction between the Federation at the local and national levels was characterised by factional rifts.

Although the Act specified that the meetings could regulate their own procedures, it prescribed the amount of time that could be spent transacting business. The quarterly Branch Boards and bi-monthly Central Committees were restricted to one day's duration, whilst the Central Conference was limited to two days. Additional meetings at the local level were at the discretion of the chief constable, whilst the approval of the Secretary for Scotland was required for those held nationally. The form of the Federation was thus strictly controlled to minimise its impact.

So too was its function. Under the provisions of the 1919 Act, the Federation did not have any negotiating function; rather it was a mechanism of representation. It was restricted to bringing to the notice of the chief constable, police authorities and the Secretary for Scotland all matters affecting welfare and efficiency, other than questions of discipline and promotion affecting individuals. Furthermore, although the Act also made provision for the Secretary for Scotland to call and chair a Police Council comprising representatives of police authorities, chief constables, and superintendents, the participation of the Federation national executive was at his discretion. As the Oaksey Committee found in 1948, the limitations on the activities and methods of the Federation 'spared the authorities the anxiety they might otherwise have felt about the effects of such representative machinery upon discipline'.<sup>11</sup>

Probably for this reason, from their inception the rank-specific boards in Edinburgh sought to reassure Ross in fairly obsequious terms of their loyalty.<sup>12</sup> Notwithstanding, there is evidence of suspicion of the Federation and its activities. In 1933, for example, the Joint Branch Board deprecated as a 'betrayal of confidence' the occasion when Ross instructed a representative to attend his office to discuss the work of the Federation. Similarly, in its third decade of existence, in the last weeks of the Second

<sup>11</sup> Report of the Committee on Police Conditions of Service, Part II. Cmd 7831, 1949, 64.

<sup>12</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Constables' Branch Board, 19 November 1919, 1., Minutes of Sergeants' Branch Board, 19 November 1919, 1., Minutes of Inspectors Branch Board, 17 November 1919, 1.

World War, the Joint Branch Board secretary explained that the reason the agenda had not previously been circulated was because it had on previous occasions been fully discussed by officers who were not Federation representatives prior to the meeting taking place.<sup>13</sup>

As constituted by the 1919 Act, the Federation was therefore severely circumscribed in form and function. It arose in the context of the fear of a Bolshevik uprising and ‘reactive underestimation’. Yet Laybourn and Taylor are not convinced that there was a serious revolutionary threat and therefore the extent to which this provided the impetus for the creation of the Federation. They have argued instead that the police strikes merely ‘strengthened the conviction of inter-war governments that the police should have a formal, but largely toothless, influence over their pay and conditions’.<sup>14</sup> In any event, the Federation was set up to fail. Rolph recalled on joining the police in the immediate aftermath that ‘everyone thought the whole thing a farce’.<sup>15</sup> It represented, as Reith identified a decade after the end of the Second World War, the ‘setting up of a court in which officials against whom the police complained were the judges and these had untrammelled power to withhold justice if they wished’.<sup>16</sup> Its legacy for the next thirty years was that the Federation was largely ineffective in representing its members.

### **The personnel of the Federation in Edinburgh**

It might be assumed readily that the Federation would attract as representatives those with a previous occupation where unionisation was common, such as in industry. During the Second World War 52 officers served in the rank-specific boards in Edinburgh. Of those who can positively be identified the occupation of 46 is known. They came from a wide range of occupations: carter and clerk, gardener and grocer, ploughman and postman, sailor and soldier. As Table 4.1 shows, again based on the list of occupations in the 1911 census for Scotland, the largest single number of representatives, 23.9 per cent, came from the ‘Agriculture’ group. Yet occupation groups ‘V’, ‘VI’, ‘X’, ‘XVII’, and ‘XX’ together account for 54.3 per cent of representatives. The majority of those drawn to seek election to the Police Federation

<sup>13</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Joint Branch Board, 3 February 1933, 239-240; 16 August 1945, 322.

<sup>14</sup> Laybourn and Taylor, *Policing in England and Wales*, 15.

<sup>15</sup> C. H. Rolph, *As I Was Saying* (London: Police Review, 1985), 118.

<sup>16</sup> Reith, *A New Study of Police History*, 276.

therefore came from occupations where collective bargaining probably existed. Interestingly, although small in number in real terms, members of the Inspectors' Branch Board were under-represented in the 'Agriculture' group which might support the hypothesis that officers were more likely to achieve middle rank if they had formerly been employed in more complex occupations. Of the 146 officers who became an inspector at some point in their service, the previous occupation of 144 is known. Only 10, however, had formerly been farm servants. The single largest number – 44 or nearly one-third of the remainder – had been clerks of some kind. As noted in chapter two, as a consequence of the growing complexity of policing, there was an increase between 1910 and 1939 in the ratio of clerks recruited.

Previous Occupation		Number				%
		Constables' Branch Board	Sergeants' Branch Board	Inspectors' Branch Board	Total	
I	General or Local Government of the Country	2	2	0	4	8.7
II	Defence of the Country	1	1	3	5	10.9
V	Commercial Occupations	3	1	2	6	13.0
VI	Conveyance of Persons, Goods, & Messages	2	3	3	8	17.4
VII	Agriculture	4	5	2	11	23.9
X	Metal, Machine, Implement, & Conveyance Manufacture	1	2	5	8	17.4
XVII	Paper, Stationery Books & Prints	0	1	0	1	2.2
XX	Food, Tobacco, Drink, & Lodging	1		1	2	4.3
XXII	Other, General & Undefined Workers & Dealers	1	0	0	1	2.2
Total		15	15	16	46	100.0

**Table 4.1 Federation representatives by previous occupation**

[Source: ECA ED006/13/1-22]

Part of the discontent in the police during the Great War was related to the harsh and arbitrary nature of discipline. It might, therefore, be readily assumed that those who

had personal experience would, notwithstanding that the Federation was prohibited from interfering in individual cases, be attracted to any mechanism that offered the prospect of addressing its general application. However, this research finds no correlation between those seeking election as a Federation representative and personal experience of having been disciplined. Of those whose identity is known, just one-fifth of constables had been disciplined before they became Federation representatives. Some one-fifth of all officers who served in Edinburgh during the Second World War were disciplined at some point in their career, which suggests that there was no greater incidence in Federation representatives at constable level.

Given that it would be reasonable to assume that having a clean or minor disciplinary record would be a precondition for promotion, it might be expected that having been disciplined would be even less likely to feature as a possible incentive for becoming a Federation representative among those promoted. Indeed, only two sergeants, or 12 per cent of those whose identities are known, were disciplined before they became members of the Board. Given that one was disciplined whilst a member of the Constables' Branch Board, only one thus had experience of being disciplined before becoming a member of the Sergeants' Branch Board. As expected, having been promoted twice by the time they served on the Board, the incidence for inspectors is well below that for all officers. Whilst two inspectors were disciplined during their career, only one had been disciplined before becoming a Federation representative for the first time.

Rolph recalled that senior officers perceived Federation representatives as 'crypto-commies, agitators, mikers' and that they therefore became 'marked men'.<sup>17</sup> There is some evidence during the Second World War to suggest that inspectors, in particular, were concerned that being an active representative would hamper their careers. In late 1940 the Inspectors' Branch Board became so incensed that comments attributed to a named delegate to the Inspectors' Central Conference had been included in the report of the proceedings that it convened an extra-ordinary meeting where they resolved to complain to the secretary of the conference.<sup>18</sup> A further meeting was called in response to the reply received from the secretary which the Inspectors' Branch Board

<sup>17</sup> Rolph, *As I Was Saying*, 117.

<sup>18</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Inspectors' Branch Board, 6 February 1941, 51-52.



rejected as a 'complete evasion of the points raised'.<sup>19</sup> The fact that inspectors were still pursuing the issue a year later illustrates the extent of concern. At the subsequent statutory meeting the Inspector's Branch Board passed a resolution for the Central Conference to the effect that names of speakers should not be published and again requested an explanation.<sup>20</sup> In the absence of an explanation in the minutes it is difficult to see why inspectors would otherwise have been so troubled if they had not feared for their careers; especially given that the other rank-specific boards did not have similar concerns.

Many inspectors were, however, committed Federationists. Indeed, notwithstanding their obviously greater mean service, which meant that they were more likely than constables and sergeants to have had proximity to the creation of the Federation and its negative associations, either through personal experience or association with officers who had served through the events of 1918 and 1919, they chose to become representatives. Of those who served on the Edinburgh Inspectors' Branch Board during the war, seven previously served on the Sergeants' Branch Board. They were therefore well placed to provide a degree of continuity in the Inspectors' Branch Board and, significantly, in the Joint Branch Board.

In any event, this research finds no evidence that becoming a Federation representative was detrimental to promotion. For example, after being a member of the Inspectors' Branch Board in the 1923 session, Morren was promoted to lieutenant and superintendent before being appointed chief constable in 1935, thereby by-passing the rank of assistant chief constable.<sup>21</sup> Officers in each of the rank-specific boards were also promoted both in the pre-war era and during the Second World War whilst they were representatives. In short, there is no evidence to suggest that the pattern of promotion for those who were Federation representatives was in any way different from the remainder of the officers who served during the Second World War.

<sup>19</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Inspectors' Branch Board, 8 May 1941, 52-53.

<sup>20</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Inspectors' Branch Board, 4 November 1941, 54-55.

<sup>21</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Inspectors' Branch Board, 29 October 1923, 13. The rank of Lieutenant, which was particular to the police in Scotland, was imported from France. See Barrie, *Police in the Age of Improvement*, 267. In July 1948 the designation was changed to chief inspector. See Cmd 7674, 47.



### **The rank-specific boards: power-dependence on the Joint Branch Board**

Given that - at least prior to 1919 - constables were perceived to be the most militant it might be expected that they would be the most enthusiastic advocates of representative machinery. However, although the legislation made provision for quarterly meetings, the Constables' Branch Board in Edinburgh during the Second World War only met a mean of twice a year. Part of the explanation might have been a consequence of the consideration by Federation representatives at the local level that the war had created a different context, especially given the drive for national unity. At the first meeting of the Joint Branch Board after the outbreak of war, for example, there was clearly some uncertainty as to how it should function.<sup>22</sup> Similarly, at the national level, the Joint Central Committee accepted that the machinery of the Federation could not 'operate normally in abnormal times' and that 'certain modifications' were necessary.<sup>23</sup> At the same time, the lack of meetings might also be the consequence of a concern by Morren to minimise abstractions from duty, given the additional demands on the police during the war. Even in the final year of the war, and although the Joint Branch Board was statutorily entitled to a day for a meeting, he wrote to it questioning the need for it to take a whole day to transact business.<sup>24</sup>

Nonetheless, in the preceding twenty years, from its inception when enthusiasm for the possibilities offered by a mechanism for representation might reasonably be expected to have been at its highest, it only met a mean of once a year on its own account. The only year in which it held the statutory four meetings was 1920, the first full year of its existence. The initial enthusiasm clearly did not last long. Given that the Federation was perceived to be a 'Goose Club' by some, part of the explanation might have been related to a perception that it would be unable to effect change. As will be seen, there certainly were instances during the Second World War that suggest a contemporary awareness of apathy and frustration. Generally speaking, however, the Constables' Branch Board deferred to the Joint Branch Board in matters of policy at the local level. The majority of meetings of the Constables' Branch Board from its creation until the end of the Second World War transacted little business other than the

<sup>22</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Joint Branch Board, 18 October 1939, 138.

<sup>23</sup> *Police Review* 24 November 1939, 415; 15 December 1939, 479.

<sup>24</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Joint Branch Board, 3 August 1944, 277.

election of office bearers. In this sense the Constables' Branch Board was largely power-dependant on the Joint Branch Board.

On the other hand, the Constables' Branch Board had occasionally demonstrated willingness in the interwar period to act unilaterally in relation to rank-specific matters. In 1922, for example, after having failed to garner support at the Joint Branch Board on the basis that the issue of a special increment to officers who passed the promotion examination only affected constables, the Constables' Branch Board made a representation to Ross.<sup>25</sup> Similarly, in 1925 after the Joint Branch Board defeated a motion to make further representations relating to the pay increments of officers injured whilst released to the armed services during the Great War, the Constables' Branch Board appealed to Ross on the grounds that the issue affected only those who had not been promoted.<sup>26</sup> Outwith the Joint Branch Board, the Constables' Branch Board also combined with other rank-specific boards to exercise power. At its first meeting, for instance, it agreed to seek the cooperation of the Sergeants' Branch Board to put forward a claim for the detective allowances recommended by the Desborough Committee to be paid to constables.<sup>27</sup>

Yet given the lack of activity on its own account during the Second World War it is difficult to assess whether the Constables' Branch Board was more or less successful in representing its members. Judging by the interwar period there is nothing to suggest that it would have been considered an irrelevance by the chief constable. Ross generally appears to have been willing to accede to reasonable requests. Evidence emerges during the Second World War, however, of some disaffection with existing structures and outcomes and suggests that there was a perception of a lack of power at the level of the Constables' Branch Board. In February 1945, despite a statement by the Secretary of State for Scotland, Tom Johnston, that it would not be allowed, the Board unanimously passed a motion that it should meet with the Constables' Branch Board of the City of Glasgow Police to progress issues that pertained only to constables and to continue to press for an 'extended method of representation'.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>25</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Constables' Branch Board, 1 November 1922, 38-39.

<sup>26</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Constables' Branch Board, 4 November 1925, 55-56., Minutes of Joint Branch Board 4 November 1925, 93; 3 December 1926, 98.

<sup>27</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Constables' Branch Board, 19 November 1919, 2.

<sup>28</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Constables' Branch Board, 9 February 1945, 100.

Part of the rationale behind the fragmented structure of the Federation was to dilute the power of the constables in the representative machinery because they were regarded as the most militant. It would, therefore, be reasonable to expect an inverse relationship between Federation activity and higher rank. Meeting a mean of once a year during the Second World War, with the exception of 1941 when it met twice, the Sergeants' Branch Board was even less active than the Constables' Branch Board. Furthermore, notwithstanding that it had held twice as many meetings as the Constables' Branch Board over the preceding twenty years, it transacted even less business on its own account.

Part of the explanation for this inactivity during the war, and before, might be related to the fact that sergeants were, by comparison to constables, more content with their lot. Having been promoted they were spared many of the hardships endured by constables on the beat. Conversely, given the belief that being a representative was detrimental to career prospects, it might be that some, even though they sought election, tried to minimise the impact of the Federation in practice. The lack of activity could also be a further symptom of longstanding apathy based on the perception that the Federation was ineffectual. In 1929, for example, the chairman pointed out that two of the three members who had not attended the meeting had failed to give a reason. He directed that, as the business was recognised as police duty, the secretary should communicate with them to ascertain their explanation and, as if to reinforce the point, the relevant parts of the minutes were underlined in red ink.<sup>29</sup>

At the same time, the Sergeants' Branch Board from its creation also clearly deferred to the Joint Branch Board as the principal local policy forum. At its first meeting the Sergeants' Branch Board discussed grievances in the delay in implementing the 1914 Act in relation to rest days as well as the Desborough Committee recommendations relating to pay scales and allowances. The Board agreed that it was preferable to pursue the issues collectively and to present a petition from all the Edinburgh Branch Boards.<sup>30</sup> Similarly, in 1920 the secretary intimated that there was no business before the meeting 'as it was the intention to explain what had been done with regard to rent

<sup>29</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Sergeants' Branch Board , 23 February 1920, 4-5.

<sup>30</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Sergeants' Branch Board , 19 November 1919, 3-4.

allowance to the Joint Branch Board'.<sup>31</sup> In matters affecting all federated ranks the Sergeants' Branch Board therefore was also power-dependant on the larger local 'policy community' of the Joint Branch Board.

Meanwhile, like their subordinate colleagues, the Sergeants' Branch Board was willing to exercise power unilaterally in relation to rank-specific issues. For example, in the first weeks of war the Sergeants' Branch Board made representations to Morren requesting that he dispense with Sergeants' Visiting Sheets.<sup>32</sup> The Inspectors' Branch Board had already made a representation with regard to Inspectors' Visiting Sheets.<sup>33</sup> Whilst Morren approved the inspectors' request he 'declined to consider the proposal' from the sergeants, which suggests that he perceived a power differential in the two boards or between the two ranks.<sup>34</sup> Overall, however, given the lack of activity it is, as with the Constables' Branch Board, difficult to arrive at an assessment as to whether the Sergeants' Branch Board was more or less successful in representing its members' interests during the Second World War.

The Inspectors' Branch Board held a mean of two meetings a year during the Second World War. Although this was little different to the other boards, the Inspectors' Branch Board was marginally more active on its own account than the other two. Part of the explanation might be related to the fact that some of the representatives were experienced Federationists. That said, the issues with which it concerned itself were minor and rank-specific. In late 1941, for example, a special meeting was called to consider a resolution of the Joint Central Committee that inspectors should be issued with white shirts.<sup>35</sup> Similarly, in late 1944 the Board discussed whether inspectors should wear leather Sam-Browne or cloth belts.<sup>36</sup> Throughout its existence the Inspectors' Branch Board appears to have been more concerned about their uniform than the other federated ranks, which was probably related to their perception of their status as the senior rank. In the pre-war period, for instance, the Board successfully applied to Morren to change the issued waterproof coat for one similar to that worn by

<sup>31</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Sergeants' Branch Board, 31 August 1920, 8.

<sup>32</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Sergeants' Branch Board, 8 October 1939, 57-58.

<sup>33</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Inspectors' Branch Board, 8 February 1939, 47.

<sup>34</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Inspectors' Branch Board, 8 November 1939, 48., Minutes of Sergeants' Branch Board, 8 November 1940, 59.

<sup>35</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Inspectors' Branch Board, 7 October 1941, 53.

<sup>36</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Inspectors' Branch Board, 5 October 1944, 60.

military officers.<sup>37</sup> On the whole, though, little business was transacted other than the election of office bearers and as with the other rank-specific boards, the Inspectors' Branch Board deferred to the Joint Branch Board where matters of policy affected all federated ranks. At the statutory meeting in November 1942, for example, the Inspectors' Branch Board resolved to request that the Joint Branch Board pursue the question of rent allowance for single officers and income tax on rent rebates.<sup>38</sup> Yet given the lack of evidence it remains difficult to measure the extent to which the Inspectors' Branch Board, as with the other rank-specific boards, represented its members' interests during the Second World War.

The significant point from all of this is that from their creation, and throughout the Second World War, all rank-specific boards in the Federation in Edinburgh met infrequently and conducted little substantial business. Whilst they acted on their own account at different times in matters relating specifically to that rank, they deferred to the larger 'policy community' of the Joint Branch Board in issues of common interest. Part of the explanation was undoubtedly the legacy of the 1919 Act. Although it created the potential for an intricate pattern of interactions at local and national levels its intention was to fragment the power of the Federation. As will be seen, whilst this did not, in practice, appear to have set one rank against another in Edinburgh, it did create fractures in its relationship with the national executive, particularly over the power of the Federation in Glasgow. In any event, a restricted remit and concerns over career prospects, engendered apathy within the rank-specific boards in Edinburgh and limited what they could achieve on their own.

Furthermore, the local boards were dependent on the assent of the chief constable or local authority to their representations. Given the lack of activity it is difficult to calculate the extent to which this was given. Whilst Ross and Morren generally appear to have been ready to accede to requests that they thought 'reasonable', the legacy of 'reactive underestimation' suggests that this would otherwise be grudging. At a meeting of the Joint Branch Board in 1941, for example, the chairman pointed out that the Association of the Counties of Cities had been antagonistic towards the

<sup>37</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Inspectors' Branch Board, 24 October 1938, 45; 8 February 1939, 47.

<sup>38</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Inspectors' Branch Board, 5 November 1942, 58.

Federation for 20 years.<sup>39</sup> Fundamentally, however, since the 1919 Act empowered the Secretary of State for Scotland to make regulations as to pay and conditions nationally, there was little scope for the rank-specific boards at the local level to do much other than exert pressure through the larger local and national policy communities. In practice, therefore, the rank-specific boards looked to the Joint Branch Board and Joint Central Committee as the mechanism to pursue issues common to all federated ranks.

### **The Joint Branch Board**

By comparison with the rank-specific boards the Joint Branch Board met more frequently throughout its existence. During the Second World War there was a mean of five meetings a year, with a maximum of eight in both 1942 and 1944. This was consistent with the interwar figure of four and a maximum of seven. Given the power-dependence of the rank-specific boards on the Joint Branch Board the meetings were well attended. With a maximum of six officers from each rank present, the mean attendance during the Second World War was 13, which was also reasonably consistent with the interwar figure. The war therefore had no effect on the number of meetings or level of attendance.

Issues discussed at the Joint Branch Board could, however, be divided by rank. In the first months of the war, for example, whilst two constables moved that representation be made to Morren for his ‘sympathetic consideration’ to restore the weekly rest day, which had been suspended because of the war, two inspectors unsuccessfully moved that this be delayed.<sup>40</sup> Likewise, in late 1940 whilst the constables moved that officers on rest days be excluded from turning out during the period of alert for an air raid, inspectors were successful in having the representation delayed for three months.<sup>41</sup>

At times, meetings were acrimonious and otherwise divisive. In May 1940, for instance, the minutes record that a ‘very heated debate’ took place and ‘some very personal remarks’ were made between the sergeant in the chair and an inspector over

<sup>39</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Joint Branch Board, 15 April 1941, 179. The Association of the Counties of Cities, which met in Edinburgh, consisted of Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, and Glasgow. See Keir, *The Third Statistical Account of Scotland*, 279.

<sup>40</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Joint Branch Board, 8 November 1939, 141-142.

<sup>41</sup> SPFE, Minutes Joint Branch Board, 8 November 1940, 166.

the report of a deputation to the chief constable. Although Morren had consented to all but one of the issues discussed, some were concerned that whilst it had been agreed at a previous meeting that the deputation would seek the reinstatement of the weekly rest day, it had pursued additional resolutions.<sup>42</sup> Similarly, in late 1940 an inspector pointed out that a sergeant who had been defeated in the recent elections was, nonetheless, canvassing to be nominated to the Central Conference. Although the sergeant was a very experienced member of the Federation, the inspector threatened that if the Sergeant's Branch Board acceded, the inspectors and constables would sit as a 'separate body'.<sup>43</sup>

Nevertheless, the members of the Joint Branch Board were generally well-disposed to each other. The minutes cite numerous occasions when officers of different ranks combined to propose and support resolutions and office bearers. Indeed, whilst constables were, for reasons unknown, generally the lowest attendees, there is no evidence to suggest that the higher ranks sought to capitalise on their numerical advantage. Indeed, the distribution of offices shows distinct impartiality. Of the five chairmen during the Second World War three were constables, one was a sergeant, and one an inspector. The two secretaries, meanwhile, were constables. A remarkably similar pattern was evident among those who served in the pre-war period. Of the 11 chairmen there were three constables, four sergeants, and four inspectors. Similarly, of the five secretaries, one was a constable, two were sergeants, and two were inspectors. To function, the Joint Branch Board was therefore dependent on the members of the rank-specific boards.

Branch Board	Number		
	Chairmen	Secretaries	Total
Constables'	4	5	9
Sergeants'	2	3	5
Inspectors'	4	6	10
Joint	5	2	7

**Table 4.2 Federation office bearers during the Second World War**  
[Source: SPFE Minutes of Constables', Sergeants', Inspectors', and Joint Branch Boards]

<sup>42</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Joint Branch Board, 5 February 1940, 146; 9 May 1940, 149.

<sup>43</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Joint Branch Board, 8 November 1940, 165., Minutes of Sergeants' Branch Board, 8 November 1940, 59.



As Table 4.2 shows, with the exception of the Sergeants' Branch Board, the Joint Branch Board had fewer changes in office bearers during the Second World War and was therefore generally more stable than the rank-specific boards. Furthermore, as Table 4.3 reveals, there was a significant concentration of experience in Federation matters in the office bearers of the Joint Branch Board during the Second World War which could ensure continuity in outcomes.

	<b>Chairman Joint Branch Board</b>	<b>Secretary Joint Branch Board</b>	<b>Contemporaneous and previous offices held</b>
Constable Watson	X	-	Chairman Joint Branch Board Secretary Constables' Branch Board
Constable Dunn	X	X	Chairman Constables' Branch Board
Sergeant Porteous	X	-	Chairman Sergeants' Branch Board
Constable Campbell	X	-	Secretary Joint Branch Board Chairman Constables' Branch Board
Constable Martin	-	X	Chairman Constables' Branch Board Secretary Constables' Branch Board
Inspector Smith	X	-	Chairman Inspectors' Branch Board

**Table 4.3 Joint Branch Board office bearers during the Second World War**  
[Source: SPFE Minutes of Constables', Sergeants', Inspectors', and Joint Branch Boards]

On the other hand, the potential for stability and continuity was undermined by the amount of time given by chief constables to the secretary of the Joint Branch Board to conduct business. Given the antipathy towards the Federation this might have been a tactic intended to limit its power. In late 1932, for example, the secretary of the Joint Branch Board, and conterminously secretary of the Joint Central Committee, was restricted to two days per week on average throughout the year to carry out the duties associated with both boards and, as a consequence, had a 'breakdown in health'.<sup>44</sup> Whilst Roderick Ross granted an extension the following year to four hours per day on average throughout the year, there is no evidence that the circumstances had changed by the Second World War.<sup>45</sup> Indeed, although Morren had been a Federation representative, his concern in late 1944 over the time taken for meetings suggests that

<sup>44</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Joint Branch Board, 5 August 1932, 226; 25 October 1932, 229.

<sup>45</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Joint Branch Board, 25 October 1932, 231; 3 February 1933, 234.



some restrictions would remain. As a result, there was clearly some disinclination to take the office of secretary of the Joint Branch Board. In August 1942 the secretary, a constable, resigned due to the 'pressure of other duties' and the sergeant and constable who were proposed, in turn, declined to accept the office.<sup>46</sup>

By the Second World War the Joint Branch Board had employed a variety of tactics in addition to meetings to maximise its impact given the constraints imposed by the 1919 Act. At one of its earliest meetings, it resolved to write to the MP for Central Edinburgh requesting that he ask a question in Parliament about the implementation of the recommendations by the Desborough Committee.<sup>47</sup> Similarly, in 1922, probably in response to the drive for public economy and retrenchment as recommended by the Committee on National Expenditure (the Geddes Committee), it had sought to influence prospective MPs by asking them whether they would oppose any attempt to repeal the power of the Secretary of State for Scotland to make national regulations in respect of the governance of the police.<sup>48</sup>

Central government, however, sought to ensure that the power of the Federation remained limited. In the early 1930s, following a recommendation from the Joint Central Committee, the Joint Branch Board in Edinburgh received permission from the chief constable, Roderick Ross, to uplift a subscription from the force to assist a Liverpool MP, who had provided 'valuable assistance' to the Federation in Parliament, in relation to the expenses incurred in contesting the seat.<sup>49</sup> The Secretary of State for Scotland, however, was clearly concerned that this represented an attempt to subvert the limitations in the 1919 Act and instructed that the monies be returned on the grounds that the machinery of the Federation should not be used for political purposes.<sup>50</sup>

Nevertheless, both before and during the Second World War, the Joint Branch Board utilised deputations to the police authority and, especially, the chief constable as a mechanism to press its representations in addition to or in place of correspondence

<sup>46</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Joint Branch Board, 13 August 1942, 207.

<sup>47</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Joint Branch Board, 27 May 1920, 6.

<sup>48</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Joint Branch Board, 1 November 1922, 45.

<sup>49</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Joint Branch Board, 23 October 1931, 193-194.

<sup>50</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Joint Branch Board, 5 February 1932, 199.

arising out of meetings.<sup>51</sup> In late 1943, for example, a deputation was made to Morren on: auxiliaries; performing plain clothes duties; special increments; police doing duty as public dance-hall attendants; and the delivery of messages by police other than those of a humanitarian nature. Given the absence of detail in the historical record it is difficult to assess how effective the deputations generally were. In this instance the minutes of the regular meeting of the Board merely record that it was agreed that the 'replies be accepted as satisfactory'.<sup>52</sup> Yet the Joint Branch Board persisted with deputations throughout the Second World War which suggests that it was at least perceived to be an effective mechanism for making representations. Indeed, the Joint Branch Board demonstrated that it was willing to exploit the power-potential of deputations involving other representative organisations. In the immediate pre-war era, the Board agreed to combine in a deputation with the local branch of the Superintendent's and Lieutenant's Representative Council to the Lord Provost's Committee of Edinburgh Town Council to press for the revocation of the supplementary deductions which had been imposed as a consequence of the Report by the Committee on National Expenditure (the May Committee).<sup>53</sup> The imposition of pay scale 'B' for new recruits resulted in a substantial differential between officers doing the same job and was viewed by the Joint Branch Board with 'dismay'.<sup>54</sup> As will be seen, it became one of the main strands of frustration at the inability of the Federation to effect change that found particular expression during the Second World War.

Along with deputations, some of the functioning of the Joint Branch Board took place outwith official meetings. Although his actions were subsequently endorsed by the meeting, which implies accountability, it is clear that the secretary to the Board exercised power unilaterally. In 1940, for example, the meeting endorsed the correspondence which the secretary had undertaken with the Federation in the burghs of Ayr and Inverness variously relating to: hours of duty; the loss of the weekly rest

<sup>51</sup> For pre-war examples see SPFE, Minutes of Inspectors' Branch Board, 23 February 1920, 5; 23 October 1931, 196.

<sup>52</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Joint Branch Board, 22 November 1943, 259.

<sup>53</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Joint Branch Board, 22 January 1934, 25-26. For a synopsis of the police representative organisations see NRS HH55/1073, Committee on Police Conditions of Service: SHD Memorandum of Evidence, 1949, 3-5.

<sup>54</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Joint Branch Board, 23 October 1931, 194-196.

day; carrying of respirators and steel helmets; and the wearing of greatcoats.<sup>55</sup> This was, however, no wartime expedient. In mid-1921, for instance, the secretary explained to the meeting what action he had taken with regard to the passing through Parliament of the Police Pensions Bill. The minutes record that the Board was in agreement with what had been done and left the matter to the secretary to 'take what further action seemed necessary'.<sup>56</sup>

Some of the functioning of the Joint Branch Board during the Second World War and before also took place through sub-committees. In mid-1941, for example, the Joint Branch Board agreed that the chairman, secretary, and one other member from each rank, inquire into the issue of pay scale 'B'.<sup>57</sup> Similarly, in early 1945, in response to the growing frustration at what the Federation had been able to achieve since its formation, the Joint Branch Board agreed to appoint a sub-committee to make the necessary arrangements to hold a mass meeting of Federation members in Edinburgh.<sup>58</sup>

Although the Federation was forbidden from making representations on discipline affecting individuals, the Joint Branch Board from the outset pursued issues related to its general application. In mid-1944, for example, a member of the Joint Branch Board related to the meeting the circumstances of his disciplinary case, which appeared to turn on the imposition of a punishment that was perceived to be unwarranted. As a consequence, the Board agreed to ask the chief constable to review his decision but solely on the grounds that Morren had misinterpreted the instructions specified by the Secretary of State for Scotland. The minutes show that in consequence the matter was referred to the Secretary of State for Scotland, Tom Johnston, and the Joint Central Committee, which suggests that the representation by the Joint Branch Board to Morren was, however, unsuccessful.<sup>59</sup>

In the interwar period the Joint Branch Board also demonstrated that it was, despite prohibition, willing to make representations with regard to promotion affecting

<sup>55</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Joint Branch Board, 5 February 1940, 144.

<sup>56</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Joint Branch Board, 16 May 1921, 24-25.

<sup>57</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Joint Branch Board, 8 May 1941, 182.

<sup>58</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Joint Branch Board, 28 March 1945, 311.

<sup>59</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Joint Branch Board, 12 May 1944, 270; 7 July 1944, 274; 5 October 1944, 284; 27 November 1944, 294.

individuals. In mid-1933, for example, the secretary of the Joint Branch Board appears to have communicated with the Secretary of State for Scotland regarding the promotion of a sergeant who had not fulfilled the criteria as laid down in the Regulations and had 'caused a great amount of discontent in the force'. The sergeant in question had recently been a member of the Joint Branch Board as well as chairman of the Sergeants' Branch Board. The Joint Branch Board thus appears to have been prepared to act impartially, even to the detriment of those who had been Federation representatives. Indeed, although the Secretary of State for Scotland replied to the effect that the promotion was in order, the Joint Branch Board agreed to pursue the matter with the Joint Central Committee for 'definite action' given that the Regulations had been broken.<sup>60</sup> Whilst it is unknown how successful the Joint Branch Board ultimately was, the incident further demonstrates that the Board was willing to pursue the issue at more than one level and in contravention of the limitation on the extent of Federation activities.

Most of the business of the Joint Branch Board before and during the Second World War, however, related to a myriad of minor issues. In early 1945, for instance, the Board passed a motion asking Morren to review police duties with regard to the measuring and monitoring of ice on public lochs and ponds and suggested that the role should be carried out by the City Engineers and Parks Department.<sup>61</sup> This duty represented a direct continuity with the activities of the force nearly a century before and suggests that the extent to which the war impacted on operational priorities was limited.<sup>62</sup> As Laybourn and Taylor likewise found in relation to the Federation in England and Wales in the interwar period: 'Most of the business it conducted was about the pedestrian, day-to-day activities of policing.'<sup>63</sup>

Part of the explanation for the concentration on comparatively minor issues by the Joint Branch Board was a consequence of apathy. Notwithstanding that meetings were generally well attended, there was repeated absenteeism. In 1942, and twice in 1943, for example, as the quorum of two-thirds of members was not present, the

<sup>60</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Joint Branch Board, 31 July 1933, 12.

<sup>61</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Joint Branch Board, 9 February 1945, 302.

<sup>62</sup> ECA ED9/2/5, Minutes of Watching and Lodging Houses Committee, 13 December 1855; 20 March 1856.

<sup>63</sup> Laybourn and Taylor, *Policing in England and Wales*, 37.

Standing Orders had to be suspended to enable the business of the meeting to be conducted. Likewise, in 1944 it was agreed that the secretary should write to members who were absent and from whom no apology had been received.<sup>64</sup> Whilst this might readily be attributed to the additional demands of war, the pattern was similar in the pre-war period. In late 1935, and again in 1937, the chairman had drawn attention to the number of those who had failed to attend without explanation.<sup>65</sup> Throughout the 1920s and 1930s the Joint Branch Board in Edinburgh recognised that apathy was an issue and sought in a variety of ways, such as open meetings and lectures, to ‘stimulate interest’ in the activities of the Federation.<sup>66</sup> Similarly, in 1943, in contrast to the attempts by the Inspectors’ Branch Board in late 1940 to conceal the names of those voting for and against resolutions, the Joint Branch Board passed a motion asking the Joint Central Committee to include candidates’ names in its report on the basis that it would enable Federation members to vote for progressive representatives.<sup>67</sup> The Joint Branch Board also agreed to ask Morren to circulate in the Daily Information Sheets the resolutions adopted so that members could see what was ‘being done on their behalf’ and ‘consequently increase interest’ in the Federation. However, although Morren subsequently agreed, it is clear that he exercised editorial control, which further illustrates the relative impotence of the Federation at the local level.<sup>68</sup>

For the most part, the relatively minor level of issues with which the Joint Branch Board concerned itself was a reflection of the fact that whilst local boards could make representation on pay, allowances, and pensions these were established by central government and were therefore generally pursued by the national executive. Indeed, as the Oaksey Committee subsequently noted, although the rank-specific and Joint Branch Board could make representations to the Secretary of State for Scotland on national issues, ‘in practice most of their work is done by the Joint Central Committee’.<sup>69</sup> In 1942, and again in 1943, for example, the Joint Branch Board in Edinburgh passed a resolution to support the Joint Central Committee in its attempts to

<sup>64</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Joint Branch Board, 18 August, 1942, 207; 19 February 1943, 238; 5 July 1943, 239; 12 October 1944, 292.

<sup>65</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Joint Branch Board, 11 February 1935, 48; 25 October 1937, 93.

<sup>66</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Joint Branch Board, 8 February 1924, 74; 8 August 1924, 78; 4 November 1929, 161; 30 October 1935, 93; 17 May 1937, 85.

<sup>67</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Joint Branch Board, 5 August 1943, 244.

<sup>68</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Joint Branch Board, 16 February 1942, 201; 31 August 1942, 214.

<sup>69</sup> Cmd 7674, 62.

secure payment for overtime, the right to which had been lost on the outbreak of war.<sup>70</sup> In short, the Joint Branch Board was in effect power-dependant on the Joint Central Committee.

### **Factional rifts at the national level**

Notwithstanding that the Joint Branch Board in Edinburgh was power-dependant on the Joint Central Committee, the interaction between the policy communities was characterised, in large measure, by factional rifts. The explanation lay in the legacy of the creation of the Federation. In addition to structural fault lines, rank-and-file officers throughout the nineteenth and first two decades of the twentieth centuries had never had an official means of representation and therefore, by comparison with a trade union, had, even two decades later, by the Second World War, not evolved sufficiently comprehensive procedures. At the first meeting of the Scottish Central Conferences in December 1919 it was carried that the Standing Orders adopted by the English Constables' Central Conference the previous month be utilised for the conduct of business (see Appendix '9').<sup>71</sup> In this sense, there was cross-fertilisation across the UK in the development of organisational aspects of the 'new' police. The Joint Branch Board in Edinburgh, however, did not have any regulations governing procedure until a sub-committee was established to compile them in 1933.<sup>72</sup> Although the content remains unknown they were clearly insufficiently comprehensive: at the election of office bearers in 1936 a dispute arose over the legality of the chairman casting the decisive vote in his own favour.<sup>73</sup> Significantly, further regulations were not enacted to prevent similar situations from arising. As will be seen, this again became a divisive issue during the Second World War in relation to those who were members of both the Joint Branch Board in Edinburgh and the Joint Central Committee.

The interaction between the Joint Branch Board in Edinburgh and the Joint Central Committee both before and during the Second World War was characterised, in particular, by squabbling over the power of the Federation in Glasgow in the national structures. In parallel to the provisions that applied in England in respect of the

<sup>70</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Joint Branch Board, 26 May 1942, 206; 19 February 1943, 234-235.

<sup>71</sup> *Police Review*, 2 January 1920, 2-5.

<sup>72</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Joint Branch Board, 3 February 1933, 238; 15 May 1933, 4; 31 July 1933, 13.

<sup>73</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Joint Branch Board, 26 October 1936, 72, 75.

Metropolitan Police, the Schedule to the 1919 Act stipulated that two members of each Central Committee should be from Glasgow on the basis that the force had an authorised strength of about one third of the total number of police officers in Scotland. Of the remaining four, two were to be elected from county forces and two from the city and burgh forces. The Federation in the City of Glasgow Police therefore had an assured representation of one-third on the national committees. Notwithstanding the limited power of the Federation, there was clearly an advantage in having representation on the Joint Central Committee in terms of influencing national policy. The City of Edinburgh Police, which was the second largest force in Scotland by some margin, however, had no guaranteed representation. As a consequence, representatives in Edinburgh made repeated attempts to redress what they perceived to be an inequality of power in the Federation. What transpired during the Second World War must therefore be seen in the context of a continuity of activity.

At the Inspectors' Central Conference in late 1936, for example, an Edinburgh delegate questioned the legality of those from Glasgow voting for city and burgh nominees for the Inspectors' Central Committee in addition to electing the Glasgow nominees. Although section 12 of the 1919 Act specifically stated that Glasgow members should vote as a separate unit the challenge by the Edinburgh delegate was unsuccessful. As a consequence, the Joint Branch Board in Edinburgh repeatedly pressed for the secretary of the Joint Central Committee to be asked to draw up regulations to ensure that there was no repetition. The discussions of the Joint Branch Board in Edinburgh clearly divided the loyalties for those who were also members of the Joint Central Committee however. In particular, a constable who was a member of both boards repeatedly moved, against the tenor of the meeting, that no further action be taken. In the event, the Joint Branch Board appealed to the Secretary of State for Scotland who upheld the actions of the Joint Central Committee thus underscoring the relative power impotence of the Federation at the local level.<sup>74</sup>

Indeed, at the outbreak of war, following the example of England, the Joint Central Committee in consultation with the SHD suspended the Central Conferences for the

<sup>74</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Joint Branch Board 4 February 1937, 77; 17 May 1937, 86; 9 August 1937, 91; 25 October 1937, 93.



first time since the creation of the Federation.<sup>75</sup> Significantly, as a consequence, the Joint Central Committee, which had been elected in 1938, continued to hold office. The Standing Orders, which the Joint Central Committee had in common with the Central Conferences adopted at its first meeting, however, made no provision for such an arrangement.<sup>76</sup> Furthermore, whilst specific legislation covered municipal elections, no warrant or emergency procedure had been enacted to suspend the provisions of the 1919 Act with regard to the Federation. At its first meeting thereafter the Joint Branch Board in Edinburgh unanimously moved that it record its 'great alarm' at the attitude adopted by the Joint Central Committee in deviating from the 1919 Act. The Joint Central Committee, however, saw the motion as a censure and refused to accept it and posited that the Central Conferences were the appropriate bodies to deal with the motion. Given that the Central Conferences had been suspended, the Joint Central Committee clearly perceived itself to be in a sufficiently powerful position in relation to the Joint Branch Board in Edinburgh to deny the motion in such a disingenuous way.

As before, the issue divided loyalties for those who were members of both boards. In this case, the chairman and one other member of the Edinburgh Joint Branch Board were also members of the Joint Central Committee. At the vote over what further action should be taken, the chairman, in an echo of 1936, gave the casting vote in favour of no further action.<sup>77</sup> Those who were also members of the Joint Central Committee nullified criticism of the national executive against the wishes of half of the members of the Joint Branch Board in Edinburgh creating a divisive legacy at the local level and at the interface between the local and national level of the Federation.

In fact, in the decade before the Second World War Edinburgh always had one, and more often than not two, representatives on the Joint Central Committee. In 1940-1941, however, it had none. Clearly, something unprecedented occurred at the Central Conferences which, unlike in England, had been reinstated in November 1940.<sup>78</sup> No

<sup>75</sup> SPFG, Minutes of Joint Central Committee, 26 October 1939., *Police Review*, 24 November 1939, 415.

<sup>76</sup> SPFG, Minutes of Joint Central Committee, 29 & 30 December 1919, 8-10.

<sup>77</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Joint Branch Board, 8 November 1939, 143; 20 & 21 December 1939, 67-68; 5 February 1940, 145-146.

<sup>78</sup> The Conferences, however, took place on one day instead of two due to 'war conditions'. *Police Review*, 10 January 1941, 23.



delegate from Edinburgh was elected. Furthermore, delegates from Edinburgh were not well-placed on the reserve list to fill vacancies. Whilst a sergeant was second reserve and a constable fourth reserve, no inspector was even on the list. Given that this was the first election after the motion of censure of the Joint Central Committee by the Joint Branch Board in Edinburgh it was clearly a backlash.

As a consequence, the Joint Branch Board in Edinburgh made representation to the Secretary of State for Scotland to amend the 1919 Act. It pointed out that Glasgow, with an authorised strength of 2361, had six members on the Joint Central Committee giving it an assured representation of 1:393. With an authorised strength of 2503 and six representatives the county forces, meanwhile, had a ratio of 1:417. Despite having an authorised strength of 858 Edinburgh had no assured representation. The Joint Branch Board therefore requested that it be guaranteed one representative at each rank. The Secretary of State for Scotland, Tom Johnston, refused to take action, however, despite a further representation asking him to reconsider on the grounds of the ‘injustice’ and the ‘futility’ which members of the Joint Branch Board in Edinburgh felt in ‘representing the force under such conditions’.<sup>79</sup> Although Edinburgh had one representative on the Joint Central Committee in each of the subsequent years of the Second World War, Aberdeen City, for example, which had an authorised strength marginally over one-quarter of that of Edinburgh, had two in contrast to the previous decade when it more often had one. Thus the consequence of the censure of the Joint Central Committee by the Joint Branch Board in Edinburgh casts some doubt on the cohesiveness of the Federation at the national level and the notion of solidarity during the Second World War. At the same time, the squabbling over relative power clearly diverted representatives’ time and energies and, notwithstanding the structural limitations of form and function, restricted what they could achieve, which might indeed have been what those who created the Federation intended.

<sup>79</sup> SPFE, Minutes Joint Branch Board, 6 February 1941, 170; 8 May 1941, 185; 21 September 1941, 187.

### **The *zeitgeist* of dissatisfaction**

The dominant theme to emerge in relation to Police Federation during the Second World War was the growing frustration at the ineffectiveness of the negotiating machinery, both locally and nationally in Scotland as well as England and Wales. In 1940, for example, the Joint Central Committee in Scotland threatened to resign *en-masse* in protest at the manner in which it had failed to achieve little more than a formal acknowledgment from the Secretary of State for Scotland to its representations and, as the *Police Review* reported: ‘much the same sense of futility was prevalent among the police of England and Wales’.<sup>80</sup> Later that year the *Police Review* underlined the power-dependence of the Scottish Police Federation on the Secretary of State for Scotland when it reported the ‘cavalier manner’ in which representations and requests were dealt with: ‘only formal acknowledgments were sent in reply to resolutions and more or less polite negatives were answer to others’.<sup>81</sup>

At the local level in Edinburgh, whilst Morren had been prepared to receive deputations from the Joint Branch Board and approve some of its representations, there was clearly a sense by the end of the war that he had generally been obstructive and, at times, had not even acknowledged Federation communications.<sup>82</sup> At a meeting in the last months of the war the Joint Branch Board moved that, given the ‘unsatisfactory attitude’ adopted by Morren it should, in future, make representations direct to the police authority.<sup>83</sup> Much of the frustration at the local level, however, arose from issues at the national level such as the ability to appeal against the punishment imposed by the chief constable for disciplinary offences. Whilst some modifications had been made in 1927, and again in 1943, it remained a grievance that officers were ‘denied the most obvious elementary and fundamental principles of justice’.<sup>84</sup> As a consequence, the Joint Branch Board in Edinburgh asked the Joint Central Committee to pursue the issue with the Secretary of State for Scotland.<sup>85</sup>

Whilst the Federation in Scotland was frustrated by what it saw as the Secretary of State’s ‘repeated refusal to concede ... just and reasonable demands’, there was

<sup>80</sup> *Police Review*, 5 April 1940, 257.

<sup>81</sup> *Police Review*, 6 September 1940, 146.

<sup>82</sup> See, for example, SPFE, Minutes of Joint Branch Board, 3 August 1939, 134-135.

<sup>83</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Joint Branch Board, 28 March 1945, 310; 17 May 1945, 318.

<sup>84</sup> cf 17 & 18 Geo. 5, cap. 19 (1927), 6 & 7 Geo. 6, cap. 8 (1943).

<sup>85</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Joint Branch Board, 13 August 1942, 210; 19 February 1943, 231-232.

similar frustration in the relationship between the Federation in England and Wales and the Home Office.<sup>86</sup> The *Police Review* reported in mid-1942 that there was:

a growing feeling of disappointment at the apparent impotence of this organisation to effect reforms and improvements ... There can be no denying the spread of a sense of frustration and futility within the ranks of the service ... There are members who are now so disgusted with the treatment of the Federation that they are in favour of something like the old Police Union.<sup>87</sup>

The imbalance in power between the Federation at the national level and the Secretary of State for Scotland increasingly became a matter of concern for the Joint Branch Board in Edinburgh and by early 1943 it began to propose structural change. At its meetings early that year it passed a motion that, as the Federation in Scotland could find no hope of settlement in such issues as pay scale 'B', widows' pensions, and compulsory retirement after 30 years' service, the Joint Central Committee should press the Secretary of State for Scotland to amend the 1919 Act so that these and other outstanding issues could be considered by the National Arbitration Tribunal.<sup>88</sup> Similarly, in mid-1943 the Joint Branch Board in Edinburgh agreed that a resolution be forwarded to the Secretary of State for Scotland pointing out that his 'dictatorial manner of treating the police increases the feeling of frustration which in turn is inducing the feeling of bitterness which is spreading throughout the forces in Scotland'. In this respect, the meeting catalogued the outstanding issues highlighting the period of time that they had been under consideration. Furthermore, given the expression by members of the force in Edinburgh on the 'ineffectiveness of the machinery' of the Federation, it was 'more than ever convinced' that the 1919 Act should be amended and again argued that these and other issues should be put direct to the National Arbitration Tribunal.<sup>89</sup> Johnston's attitude towards the Federation clearly contrasted with his democratic instincts in relation to the police authority, for instance,

<sup>86</sup> *Police Review*, 18 December 1942, 606.

<sup>87</sup> *Police Review*, 21 August 1942, 401.

<sup>88</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Joint Branch Board, 19 February 1943, 233. The Tribunal had been established under the Defence Regulations as part of mobilising the economy in the prosecution of the war and provided for the compulsory settlement of disputes. See Otto Kahn-Freund, "Legal Framework," in *The System of Industrial Relations in Great Britain: Its History, Law, and Institutions*, ed. Allan D. Flanders and Hugh Armstrong Clegg (Oxford: Blackwell, 1954), 62.

<sup>89</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Joint Branch Board, 5 August 1943, 243.

to the extent that it suggests it might have been an aspect of 'reactive underestimation'.

As Table 4.4 shows, all the grievances that the Joint Branch Board in Edinburgh were concerned with were at the national level and related to pay and conditions, the regulation of which was the purview of the Secretary of State for Scotland. Furthermore, all but the issue of payment for overtime, which had been suspended because of the war, pre-dated the onset of hostilities by some years. Thus the ineffectiveness of the Federation at the national level was not related to the war. Indeed, the majority of the outstanding issues were, by 1943, a mean of over two decades old. On the other hand, the loss of rest days, the suspension of the right to retire, and other conditions under which the police were required to operate as a consequence of the war, undoubtedly intensified the sense of grievance and dissatisfaction with the machinery of representation.

Issue	Year first raised with Secretary of State for Scotland	Period of time unresolved by August 1943
Compulsory retirement after 30 years' service	1920	23 years
Discipline Appeals	1922	21 years
Increase in widows' pensions	1924	19 years
Scale 'B'	1935	8 years
Payment for overtime (other than during enemy action)	1941	2 years

**Table 4.4 Outstanding Federation issues**

[Source: SPFE Minutes of Joint Branch Board, 5 August 1943]

At the national level, however, the Federation resisted calls for an amendment to the 1919 Act and the resolution of the Joint Branch Board in Edinburgh was defeated – if only narrowly. As with the issue of power relative to Glasgow, the Joint Branch Board in Edinburgh was unable to effect structural change in the face of opposition by the Federation at the national level. Instead, the Joint Central Committee proposed that the Secretary of State for Scotland establish a tribunal similar to the Desborough Committee to report and make recommendations on all outstanding matters. In contrast, the position of the Federation at the national level in England and Wales was in line with that of the Joint Branch Board in Edinburgh. The Annual Conference in England and Wales in 1943 passed a resolution seeking national arbitration. Thus

there was uncertainty within the Federation in Britain during the Second World War of the best way to overcome the legacy of restrictions in the 1919 Act.

Part of the explanation for the difference in approach at the national level between Scotland and England was that, whilst much of the frustration in both countries was directed at central government, police authorities were, because of ‘reactive underestimation’, perceived to be more complicit in Scotland: ‘cheese-paring and petty meanness of local authorities’, noted the *Police Review* in late 1943, ‘is said to be more pronounced in Scotland than in England and Wales’. The consequent dissatisfaction at the ‘shabby way the police [had] been treated by police authorities’ also led to calls to nationalise the police in Scotland on the grounds that it would lead to uniformity.

Despite the clamour, the Federation at the national level in Scotland remained power-dependent on the Secretary of State. The SHD advised a Joint Central Committee deputation in early 1944 that the Secretary of State would take its views on a Desborough-type committee into account. In contrast, whilst the SHD and the Home Office consulted regularly and in detail to ensure that Regulations were as far as possible applicable throughout Britain, the Home Secretary, Herbert Morrison, announced in Parliament in late 1944 that he would meet Federation officials to discuss proposals for establishing national conciliation and arbitration machinery in England and Wales.<sup>90</sup>

Meanwhile, given the evident impotence of the Joint Branch Board in Edinburgh to effect change through procedural means, it sought what it subsequently recorded as a ‘new method’ of trying to resolve the outstanding issues. At its meeting in March 1945, it passed a resolution to hold a mass meeting of federated ranks in the force to protest at conditions of service, despite the fact that those which took place in England consequent to the report of the May Committee in the early 1930s had been banned by central government.<sup>91</sup> Its explicit aim was to demonstrate to the Secretary of State for Scotland the level of discontent given that ‘available methods of representation to the

<sup>90</sup> *Police Review*, 12 March 1943, 349; 19 November 1943, 557; 31 March 1944, 145; 15 December 1944, 601.

<sup>91</sup> Judge and Wales, *The First Fifty Years*, 31.

police are useless'. At the same time, however, the Joint Branch Board continued to utilise established Federation procedures. For example, it passed a resolution asking that the Joint Central Committee make representation to the Secretary of State to amend the 1919 Act in order to institute area conferences for the Federation and to enable local boards to meet monthly instead of quarterly so that these could synchronise with meetings of the national executive.

Some 407 officers attended the meeting in Edinburgh that April.<sup>92</sup> Given an actual strength of regular officers in the region of 587, and discounting those on duty and non-Federation members such as higher ranks, the majority of officers in Edinburgh therefore supported the tactic of a mass meeting and the implied dissatisfaction with the established mechanism of representation. In contrast to the position adopted by the Federation at its creation, the agreement that the meetings should be given publicity in the press was also a change in strategy clearly intended to enlist wider public, rather than purely political, support. Yet despite the adoption of a method outwith the structure of the 1919 Act, those attending the meeting adopted the modus operandi of a conventional Branch Board meeting. For example, the office bearers of the Joint Branch Board were appointed to parallel positions at the mass meeting and resolutions were passed. Indeed, at the subsequent Joint Branch Board meeting it was agreed that the resolutions protesting against the conditions of service that arose at the mass meeting should be 'pursued through constitutional channels'. At the same time, whilst the Joint Branch Board had advocated that outstanding matters should be resolved through the National Arbitration Tribunal, the mass meeting passed a resolution proposing the establishment of an independent tribunal which was, therefore, more in line with Federation policy at the national level.<sup>93</sup> Thus, the Joint Branch Board in Edinburgh was out of step with the wider opinion as to how the outstanding issues could best be resolved.

At the same time there was clearly support elsewhere for the Joint Branch Board's tactic of a mass meeting, which was the first of its kind to be held in Scotland since 1919. Indeed the *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch* reported that several visitors from

<sup>92</sup> *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch*, 9 April 1945. 3.

<sup>93</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Joint Branch Board, 28 March 1945, 311; 9 April 1945, 313; 17 May 1945, 315-317.

other police forces attended and similar meetings were to be held throughout Scotland. Later that month it reported that a meeting had been held in Glasgow attended by '11,000 police representatives from various parts of Scotland'.<sup>94</sup> Given that the actual whole-time police strength in Scotland is likely to have been less than 7,000, and the meeting was held in a cinema, the number attending was clearly exaggerated. Nonetheless, it is suggestive of the extent of discontent with the existing machinery of the Federation in Scotland. Yet given the context of war central government had even less of an incentive to create an effective means of collective bargaining for rank-and-file officers.

Indeed, the mass meetings did not alter the balance of power in the governance of the police and the Federation remained as impotent in relation to the Secretary of State as it had been since its creation. At its meeting in the last weeks of war, in mid-August 1945, the Joint Branch Board in Edinburgh unanimously passed a resolution requesting that the Joint Central Committee again take the necessary steps to have the 1919 Act repealed and, in an echo of the demands made in the second decade of the twentieth century, called for the right to form a union.<sup>95</sup> Whilst the Oaksey Committee, in the immediate post-war period, did lay the foundations for improved bargaining machinery and empowered it to collect subscriptions, which had, until then, been resisted in the belief they would be used as a strike fund, the effect of the 1919 Act remained essentially unaltered.<sup>96</sup>

## Conclusion

In terms of Federation personnel this research finds, contrary to the prevalent belief, no evidence that becoming a representative was a barrier to advancement. As much as senior officers and chief constables might have been suspicious of the Federation, there are examples in all-rank-specific boards in Edinburgh during the Second World War of officers being promoted whilst in office or subsequently. Similarly, there is no correlation between personal experience of having been disciplined and becoming a representative. On the other hand, there is some suggestion of a correlation with previous occupations where collective bargaining was likely to have existed.

<sup>94</sup> *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch*, 23 April 1945, 3.

<sup>95</sup> SPFE, Minutes of Joint Branch Board 16 August 1945, 325.

<sup>96</sup> Judge and Wales, *The First Fifty Years*, 76-77.



The main point, however, is that the Federation in Edinburgh was no more or no less successful in representing its members during the Second World War than it had been in the immediate pre-war era. Put simply, it remained an ineffective means of representation from its creation until at least 1949. 'Reactive underestimation' created the conditions that led to the strike in 1918 in London. The strike, together with the fear of a Bolshevik revolution, was the immediate catalyst for the creation of the Federation. 'Reactive underestimation', however, also circumscribed severely its form. In particular, the stipulation in the 1919 Act of three separate boards was a legacy of the doctrine of 'divide and rule' that had been applied to break the power of the National Union of Police and Prison Officers and was similarly intended to fragment the power of the Federation. At the same time the remit was restricted to limit its impact. For those concerned with the governance of the police it was the least-worst option. In effect, it was set up to fail.

As a consequence, the rank-specific boards in Edinburgh conducted little activity on their own account and were power-dependent on the Joint Branch Board at the local level. The issues with which the Joint Branch Board was most evidently concerned during the Second World War related to pay and conditions. The relevant regulations were, however, made at the national level and the Joint Branch Board was, in turn, therefore power-dependent on the Joint Central Committee. The Joint Branch was resultingly was therefore left with the rump of issuing resolutions in support of the Joint Central Committee or taking action over minor matters through formal meetings and deputations. In turn, the Joint Central Committee also reflected the ineffectiveness of the Federation and the imbalance of power in relation to the Secretary of State for Scotland. At the same time, interaction within the Federation policy communities was characterised by factional rifts that, together with apathy, further limited what the Federation could achieve.

Whilst there was little change in the activity of the Federation in Edinburgh during the Second World War the withdrawal of the rest day and the payment for overtime did lead to an increase in dissatisfaction at what it had been able to achieve since its creation and the existing machinery. In this sense, the chapter further supports revisionist historiography which questions the existence of a shared sacrifice and social solidarity that underpin the 'people's war' hypothesis. A difference of opinion,



however, existed between the Federation policy communities as to how best to rectify the problem. Concurrently, there was consensus over the revival of the tactic of mass meetings. In the event, all attempts to force central government to amend or supersede the 1919 Act were unsuccessful.

## 5

**War-related policing**

In November 1944 in a ‘tacit agreement that the last serious risk to internal security [had] been removed’, as the prosecution of the Second World War appeared to have turned decisively in favour of the allies, Brigadier Sir David Petrie, director general of MI5 since April 1941, paid tribute, with the endorsement of the Secretary of State for Scotland, Joseph Westwood, to Scottish police forces for their valuable contribution to ‘Defence Security’. The demands made on them, Petrie acknowledged, were ‘constant and heavy’. He pointed out that whilst there had been ‘spies and other nuisances’ in the Great War, the stream of refugees coming from occupied countries during the Second World War had offered the unprecedented opportunity ‘for the introduction of enemy agents’.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, Merrilees, famously disguised as a railway porter, arrested the spy Werner Walti at Waverley Station in Edinburgh in September 1940.<sup>2</sup>

During the war the police in Edinburgh and throughout Britain were also required to undertake the duties as outlined in the Police War Instructions. Appendix ‘1’ points to a myriad of operational requirements: billeting; requisitioning; protecting vulnerable points and prohibited places; dealing with air raids; enforcing the ‘Lighting Restrictions’; controlling aliens; and dealing with subversives. These Instructions were supplemented throughout the war by what Morren saw as a ‘flood of circulars emanating from Government Departments’, especially the SHD, relating to, for example, direction signs, maps, waste materials, and camping.<sup>3</sup>

This chapter demonstrates that much of war-related policing in Edinburgh was, however, not new. Many of the functions had been carried out in the pre-war era. Police surveillance of political groups, for example, had been in place in some instances for decades before the outbreak of the Second World War. In a similar

<sup>1</sup> NRS HH48/66/3, Circular 5849, 16 November 1944. For Petrie in MI5 see Christopher M. Andrew, *The Defence of the Realm: The Authorized History of MI5* (London; New York: Allen Lane, 2009), 236.

<sup>2</sup> *The Scotsman*, 7 August 1941, 3., Merrilees, *The Short Arm of the Law*, 140-141.

<sup>3</sup> ED006/1/11, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1944, 1.

manner, pacifists had been subject to surveillance by the police during the Great War. At the same time, some of the tasks that the police carried out during the Second World War, such as the regulation of aliens and enforcement in relation to the evasion of duty and identity fraud represented an intensification of interwar policing. On the other hand, the war did impose some entirely new requirements on the police. The enforcement of the 'Lighting Restrictions', 'War Legislation', and the investigation of suspected sabotage were solely related to the war on the home front. The chapter therefore demonstrates that operational policing in Edinburgh during the Second World War was partly an extension of that in peacetime, whilst at the same time there was indeed a paradigm shift in demands.

Much of the police activity in Edinburgh during the Second World War was a consequence of objectives set at the national level related to the prosecution of the war. At the same time, it is clear that some operational policing took place in response to priorities established locally by the chief constable, William Morren. In most cases these coalesced but in relation to strikes a difference of opinion existed between Morren and central government over the role of the police. In particular, although the 'new' police had, since their creation, been responsible for maintaining public order attendant to strikes, they disagreed as to whether they should investigate the cause of strikes.

The chapter also demonstrates that the police in Edinburgh adopted a combination of proactive and reactive, overt and covert tactics to achieve these national and local objectives. The police were, for example, proactive in gathering intelligence covertly through officers in plain clothes and the deployment of agents, whilst they overtly enforced legislation. Meanwhile, the police were, for instance, required to react overtly to the demand caused by reports of suspected sabotage and the registration of aliens.

The chapter thus examines police war-related functions in Edinburgh. Much of the analysis draws on the entries made under the various headings in the monthly reports compiled by the Special Branch in Edinburgh and, as a point of comparison, the summary compiled by the SHD of the reports submitted by Special Branches across Scotland. These summaries include numerous individual and composite entries made

under the various headings. In 1883 the Special Irish Branch was created in the Metropolitan Police in response to the Fenians' bombing campaign in London. By 1886 it was known as the Special Branch and from then variously had responsibility for dealing with political extremists, revolutionaries, and matters relating to national security.<sup>4</sup> Merrilees recalled being put in charge of the newly created Special Branch in Edinburgh in early 1939 as a detective inspector and the department making plans for the arrest of enemy nationals on the outbreak of hostilities.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, given the pervasive fear of fifth columnists in the aftermath of the fall of the Low Countries and France, the Secretary of State for Scotland, Ernest Brown, circulated chief constables in Scotland pointing out that it was 'essential', in all but the smallest of forces where this was not already in place, that detectives should be 'immediately' designated to deal 'exclusively' with investigations into possible 'fifth column activities'. Whilst the circular made no reference to a Special Branch, the subsequent reports by Scottish police forces were submitted under that title.<sup>6</sup> The reports by the Special Branch in Edinburgh and the SHD summary under a number of headings as outlined in Appendix '2' were compiled between November 1940 and June 1945.<sup>7</sup>

The reports by the Special Branch in Edinburgh are, however, inconsistent. Entries as well as updates from previous reports are reported under different headings. Those that should have been made under heading '12' relating to 'Notes on Current Enquiries', for example, have been made erroneously under heading '13' which relates to 'Sabotage'. Part of the explanation undoubtedly relates to the fact that some of the requirements of 'Defence Security' policing were new and a consequence of the emergency. It therefore seems understandable that there would have been some ambiguity around the classification of entries in the reports. For the purposes of analysis in this chapter the patently obvious error in the reports by the Special Branch

<sup>4</sup> Rupert Allason, *The Branch: A History of the Metropolitan Police Special Branch, 1883-1983* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1983), 1-108., Porter, *The Origins of Britain's Political Police*, 3.

<sup>5</sup> Merrilees, *The Short Arm of the Law*, 139.

<sup>6</sup> NRS HH52/28, Circular 4053, 1 July 1940.

<sup>7</sup> For the requirement to submit reports under headings '1' – '12' see NRS HH52/28, Circular 4246, 20 November 1940. The SHD Summary of the reports included heading '13' which was compiled from both monthly Special Branch reports and responses to a circular issued in October 1940. See NRS HH48/66/1, Circular 4193, 2 October 1940. Reports by the City of Edinburgh Police Special Branch date from November 1940 - June 1945, whilst SHD summaries were compiled from November 1940 - December 1944 and in March 1945. For the remainder of the first half of 1945 minutes record that the SHD was of the view that there was insufficient material to justify the issue of a summary. For the termination of the requirement to submit reports due to the 'changed security situation' created by the allied victory in Europe see NRS HH48/66/3, Circular 6082, 16 July 1945.

in Edinburgh where entries were made under heading '13', instead of heading '12', has been corrected. No attempt has been made, however, to rationalise the other headings or indeed the entries in the SHD summary since this would involve unpacking every incident as well as applying a degree of approximation. Figures derived from the reports by the Special Branch in Edinburgh and the SHD summary should therefore be regarded as providing an indicative rather than precise picture of activity.

The size of the Special Branch in Edinburgh in terms of manpower during the Second World War is unknown. However, judging by its reports it is likely to have been a small department of perhaps a handful of officers comprised of detectives and or supplemented by plain-clothes officers. Thus the picture of war-related duties derived from the reports by the Special Branch related to a comparatively small fraction of the actual strength of regular officers of the City of Edinburgh Police. Nonetheless, the Special Branch reports and SHD summary provide evidence of an aspect of police war-related duties that has ordinarily been unavailable to historians. That said, it is difficult to infer much about more general policing from most of the entries in the reports by the Special Branch in Edinburgh and the SHD summary. To provide a clearer picture of policing priorities and tactics the chapter therefore also draws on the Home Intelligence reports submitted by Morren during the Second World War under the headings as outlined in Appendix '3' as well as his annual reports to the town council. These further provide evidence of war-related duties undertaken by officers other than those in Special Branch. Thus, in addition to 'Defence Security', this chapter examines some of the wider aspects of policing the home front in Edinburgh.

### **Defence Security Policing: preamble**

As table 5.1 shows, the majority of entries in the reports by the Special Branch in Edinburgh were made under headings '1', '4', '5', and '12'. Together they account for some 96 per cent of all entries. Those made under headings '2', '3', '6', '8', '10', and '11' meanwhile were minimal, whilst there were none under headings '7', '9', and '13'. That said, items relating to sabotage could be submitted separately. Notwithstanding that a number of forces consistently failed to submit a report, the general pattern of reporting across Scotland, judging by the SHD summaries, was broadly similar to that which prevailed in Edinburgh. As Table 5.1 also shows, whilst

there are obvious differences, reporting under the headings '1', '4', '5', and '12' represented a large proportion of work for Special Branches across Scotland. Indeed, nearly half of all SHD summaries contained individual and composite entries by the police forces across Scotland made under these headings. This chapter will therefore focus, in part, on those four headings.

Heading	Subject	Reports by the Special Branch in Edinburgh by entries in headings		SHD Summaries by the frequency with which the heading contains entries	
		Number	%	Number	%
1	Arrests, searches, prosecutions, detentions and restrictions of movements of special importance	310	51.3	50	12.8
2	Cases of special importance in which the offender has not been traced or arrested	6	1.0	21	5.4
3	Objects of special interest (including arms and explosives) discovered on the search of the person or premises of suspects or otherwise	4	0.7	29	7.5
4	Organisations of a hostile, subversive or doubtful character	124	20.5	46	11.9
5	Publications of a hostile or subversive or doubtful character	102	16.9	38	9.8
6	Attempts to tamper with or create disaffection among members of HM forces or police or Civil Defence Services	5	0.8	14	3.6
7	Illicit signalling	0	0.0	10	2.6
8	Unusual or suspicious markings	1	0.2	14	3.6
9	False messages	0	0.0	7	1.8
10	Thefts of explosives	3	0.5	46	11.9
11	Leakage of secret information which might assist the enemy	2	0.3	36	9.3
12	Notes on current enquiries	46	7.6	46	11.9
13	Sabotage	0	0.0	31	7.9
	Other	1	0.2	0	0.0
	Total	604	100.0	388	100.0

**Table 5.1 Reports by the Special Branch in Edinburgh and Summaries by the SHD**

[Source: NAS HH55/50/1-61/1]

The largest single category of entries in the reports by the Special Branch in Edinburgh during the war related to ‘subversion’. Those made under headings ‘4’ and ‘5’ together account for some 37 per cent of the total. Judging by the frequency with which these two headings contained entries in the SHD summaries it was also the single largest category of reporting in Scotland, which was a reflection of the pervasive fear of fifth columnists. Entries in reports by the Special Branch in Edinburgh made under heading ‘5’, however, sometimes consisted of little more than a list of items published by a variety of organisations. The report for May 1942, for example, enclosed copies of the ‘*Moscow News*’ and the ‘*Western Front Special*’ by the Communist Party, ‘*Protestant Action*’ by the Protestant Action Society, and the ‘*The New Leader*’ and ‘*The Edinburgh Clarion*’ by the Revolutionary Socialist Party.<sup>8</sup> Likewise, in July 1943 the report included copies of ‘*Scots Independent*’, ‘*Scotland Declaration of Independence*’, and other pamphlets dealing with the Battle of Bannockburn, housing, and the war effort which were being sold by the Scottish National Party.<sup>9</sup> It is impossible to speculate how these publications came to be in the possession of the police. They might have been obtained by a police officer or ‘agent’ acting covertly, been handed over by members of the public, or otherwise. Thus, whilst the reports submitted by the Special Branch in Edinburgh and the SHD Summary give an indication of what the force and central government considered subversive, it is difficult to infer much about policing tactics.

### **Policing subversion: communists and the Protestant Action Society**

The largest single subject of entries in the reports by the Special Branch in Edinburgh made under this category - some 75 per cent - related to the Communist Party. Likewise, the largest single subject - some 84 per cent - of heading ‘4’ in the SHD summaries was the party. It was clearly considered a significant threat at the local and national level. As the first SHD summary noted in 1940 in relation to subversion, the Communist Party was the ‘only organisation of this nature with branches throughout the Region’.<sup>10</sup> In particular, notwithstanding that strikes and lockouts were illegal, the party was perceived to be instigating industrial unrest hindering the mobilisation of the economy, especially in the period before the Soviet Union entered the war in June 1941. In this respect the activities of the party interfered with the control of

<sup>8</sup> NRS HH55/53/1, Report by City of Edinburgh Police Special Branch, May 1942.

<sup>9</sup> NRS HH55/56/1, Report by City of Edinburgh Police Special Branch, July 1943.

<sup>10</sup> NRS HH55/50/1, Summary of Special Branch reports, November 1940.

manpower which, as Gordon Wright argued, was a 'key device in the direct central planning of the total-war economy'.<sup>11</sup> Morren's Home Intelligence Report in December 1940, for example, recorded that the party 'has its agents in all industries and ... will be very active in ... the fomenting of unrest'.<sup>12</sup> Likewise the report in January 1941 recorded with regard to the party that 'sinister influences are at work in some industrial concerns'.<sup>13</sup> As Churchill saw it following the Fall of France: 'We were left alone for a whole year while every Communist in England, under orders from Moscow, did his best to hamper our war effort.'<sup>14</sup>

The concern over communists was, however, not new. The years immediately after the Great War witnessed the culmination of a 'profound challenge to the ideological hegemony of capitalism'.<sup>15</sup> Sympathy for the Bolshevik Revolution in Britain in particular generated widespread alarm amongst the establishment and provided the context for the concessions made by the central state to the police following the strike of 1918 in the context of 'reactive underestimation'.<sup>16</sup> The Communist Party of Great Britain (hereafter CPGB), inaugurated in 1920, and associated organisations such as the National Unemployed Workers' Movement created in 1921, were therefore seen as significant targets for surveillance in an attempt to 'limit the spread of Communism at all costs'.<sup>17</sup> An extensive historiography exists in relation to the penetration of these organisations by police officers in plain-clothes, informers, and *agents provocateur* during the interwar years.<sup>18</sup> Thus, the surveillance of communists during the war represented a continuity and, perhaps, intensification of pre-existing policing.

<sup>11</sup> Wright, *The Ordeal of Total War*, 51.

<sup>12</sup> NRS HH55/25, Home Intelligence Report by City of Edinburgh Police, 20 December 1940.

<sup>13</sup> NRS HH55/26, Home Intelligence Report by City of Edinburgh Police, 31 January 1941.

<sup>14</sup> Cited in Martin Gilbert, *Finest Hour: 1939-1941*, Vol. 6, Winston S. Churchill, 8 Vols. (London: BCA, 1983), 1228.

<sup>15</sup> Robert Duncan, "Combatting the Left: Victimisation and Anti-Labour Activities on Clydeside, 1900-1939," in *Militant Workers: Labour and Class Conflict on the Clyde, 1900-1950* ed. Harry McShane, Robert Duncan, and Arthur McIvor (Edinburgh: J. Donald, 1992), 130-138.

<sup>16</sup> Raymond Challinor, *The Origins of British Bolshevism* (London: Croom Helm, 1977), 196. For a survey of why Britain did not produce a mass Marxist following see Ross McKibbin, *The Ideologies of Class: Social Relations in Britain, 1880-1950* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1994), 1-41.

<sup>17</sup> R. J. Overy, *The Inter-War Crisis 1919-1939 (Second Edition)*, Seminar Studies in History (London: Longman, 1994), 24.

<sup>18</sup> See, for example, Bernard Porter, *Plots and Paranoia: A History of Political Espionage in Britain, 1790-1988* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989), 160-169., Ralph Hayburn, "The Police and the Hunger Marchers," *International Review of Social History* 17 (1972)., Barbara Weinberger, "Police Perceptions of Labour in the Inter-War Period: The Case of the Unemployed and of Miners on Strike," in *Labour, Law and Crime: An Historical Perspective*, ed. Francis G. Snyder and Douglas Hay (London: Tavistock, 1987), 163., Thurlow, *The Secret State*, 116, 162.



In addition to ‘Criminal’, it is clear that the police in Edinburgh collated ‘Political’ and ‘Subversive’ records during the war.<sup>19</sup> A Special Branch report in May 1941, for example, recorded that an apprentice engineer suspected of using his influence to bring apprentice platers at a firm of shipbuilders out on strike was ‘known to be a member of the Communist Party’.<sup>20</sup> Part of the impetus for the identification of communists arose from a request by the SHD in late 1940 for the police to take steps to ensure persons of doubtful loyalty, such as those who were members of organisations with subversive aims, like the CPGB, were eliminated from industries or places particularly associated with the war effort.<sup>21</sup>

Almost all of the reports of CPGB activity in Edinburgh related to meetings, the majority of which were held in public. A Special Branch report for July 1941, for instance, recorded that ‘the usual outdoor meetings’ by the CPGB had taken place.<sup>22</sup> In many instances The Mound, an established location for public speakers in Edinburgh, was specifically identified.<sup>23</sup> The CPGB along with other organisations used The Mound as a political platform. As a Home Intelligence Report in October 1939 identified: ‘as many as six different organisations’ held meetings there on Sundays.<sup>24</sup> The meetings were clearly something of a preoccupation for Morren. In his Home Intelligence Report in March 1940 he referred to the ‘reckless and almost seditious utterances’ made there: ‘There is a point at which so-called liberty of speech degenerate into license, and though in time of peace it may often be sound policy to ignore it, in time of national crisis it becomes intolerable.’<sup>25</sup> In May that year he argued that: ‘the time has come for stronger measures to be taken against such persons, who cannot be described as other than dangerous pests’.<sup>26</sup> As a consequence, the meetings at The Mound became a local policing priority and subject to proactive

<sup>19</sup> NRS HH55/53/1, Report by City of Edinburgh Police Special Branch, April 1942.

<sup>20</sup> NRS HH55/51/1, Report by City of Edinburgh Police Special Branch, May 1942.

<sup>21</sup> NRS HH55/864, Circular 4180, 25 September 1940. The police were instructed to make inquiries with the ‘utmost discretion’ to, somewhat paradoxically, ensure that they could not be exposed to the ‘suspicion of having prejudiced a man because of his political views’. NRS HH48/66/2, Circular 4925, 22 May 1942.

<sup>22</sup> NRS HH55/52/1, Report by City of Edinburgh Police Special Branch, July 1941.

<sup>23</sup> See, for example, NRS HH55/54/1, Report by City of Edinburgh Police Special Branch, December 1942.

<sup>24</sup> NRS HH55/17, Home Intelligence Report by City of Edinburgh Police, 10 November 1939.

<sup>25</sup> NRS HH55/20, Home Intelligence Report by City of Edinburgh Police, 29 March 1940.

<sup>26</sup> NRS HH55/21, Home Intelligence Report by City of Edinburgh Police, 24 May 1940.

covert surveillance by police officers in plain-clothes.<sup>27</sup> The targets of the surveillance were, however, clearly aware of police tactics. At a CPGB meeting in July 1941, for example, the speaker was noted by the officer in attendance to have informed the audience that ‘members of the Intelligence Department and the CID’ attended their meetings.<sup>28</sup>

Following the German invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941 the CPGB performed an ideological *volte-face* by supporting the war effort.<sup>29</sup> Subsequent reports by the Special Branch in Edinburgh recorded, for example, that meetings were poorly attended and that nothing of importance took place. A similar trend was evident elsewhere in Scotland. The SHD summary in January 1942, for example, recorded that the CPGB was at ‘low ebb’ and as a consequence attempts were being made to obtain new recruits.<sup>30</sup> Notwithstanding, it was still perceived to have a revolutionary agenda and therefore remained subject to surveillance by the police at least until the requirement to submit reports to central government was terminated in June 1945. Special Branch and plain-clothes police officers in Edinburgh continued to infiltrate public meetings. A Special Branch report in May 1942, for instance, contained a detailed record by a Special Branch officer who, along with another detective, was present at a communist demonstration for a Second Front held at the Hibernian Football Ground, which was attended by 3,000-4,000 people. The officer took note of the content of speeches given by the speakers. He recorded that a member of the Central Committee of the CPGB gave a ‘most vigorous and militant’ speech in support of a Western Front.<sup>31</sup> A subsequent Special Branch report in December that year likewise gave a detailed account of a meeting at the Usher Hall addressed by the General Secretary of the CPGB, Harry Pollit.<sup>32</sup>

At the same time, the police in Edinburgh proactively deployed agents against organisations that were considered subversive. A Special Branch report in March 1943, for example, recorded that local communists had received instructions from the

<sup>27</sup> NRS HH55/13, Letter from Morren to SHD, 18 March 1940.

<sup>28</sup> NRS HH55/29, Home Intelligence Report by City of Edinburgh Police, 18 July 1941.

<sup>29</sup> Andrew Jeffrey, *This Present Emergency: Edinburgh, the River Forth, South-East Scotland and the Second World War* (Edinburgh: Mainstream, 1992), 144., Allason, *The Branch*, 118.

<sup>30</sup> NRS HH55/53/1, Summary of Special Branch reports, January 1942.

<sup>31</sup> NRS HH55/53/1, Report by City of Edinburgh Police Special Branch, May 1942.

<sup>32</sup> NRS HH55/59/1, Report by City of Edinburgh Police Special Branch, December 1942.

headquarters of the CPGB in Edinburgh to indulge in propaganda activity. Consequently, slogans like ‘Second Front Now’ and ‘Invade Europe Now’ were daubed on walls throughout the city.<sup>33</sup> It seems inconceivable that the police could have deduced the CPGB directive from the slogans alone. Indeed, a Home Intelligence Report in March 1945, which advised that communists were directing the strike involving dock labourers, is recorded as arising from ‘information confidentially received’.<sup>34</sup> More unequivocally, however, and unusual in the historical record, a Home Intelligence Report in May 1942 advised that a ‘police informant’ had been in attendance at a meeting at The Mound of the Independent Labour Party.<sup>35</sup>

In addition to proactively and covertly gathering intelligence, the police were also required to be overtly reactive to the threat of disorder arising from meetings of these organisations. A report of meetings at The Mound in early March 1940 in a letter from Morren to the SHD gave an example of the scale of that requirement. Given that the police were in receipt of ‘information’ that an outbreak of disorder was likely to occur between the CPGB and the Protestant Action Society, the ‘precaution’ was taken to deploy a ‘strong force’ of ten uniformed officers along with seven plain-clothes officers. A further nine officers in reserve also had to be utilised when a ‘general melee’ ensued.<sup>36</sup> Some days later nine uniformed and nine plain-clothes officers were in attendance at a meeting of the CPGB in Leith Town Hall.<sup>37</sup>

Two days before the outbreak of war the government introduced Defence Regulation 18B, which allowed the Secretary of State to make detention orders in respect of those believed to be a threat to national security. An extension in May 1940 offered the police the prospect of detaining members of the CPGB. By the provisions, detention orders could be made for members of organisations subject to foreign influence or control. It was a tactic the police in Edinburgh readily adopted. In May 1941, for example, a report was submitted advocating the detention of a ‘lad’, believed to be a communist, who was the ‘storm centre’ of widespread unrest amongst engineering and

<sup>33</sup> NRS HH55/55/1, Report by City of Edinburgh Police Special Branch, March 1943.

<sup>34</sup> NRS HH55/41, Home Intelligence Report by City of Edinburgh Police, 23 March 1945.

<sup>35</sup> NRS HH55/13, Home Intelligence Report by City of Edinburgh Police, 7 May 1942.

<sup>36</sup> NRS HH55/13, Letter from Morren to SHD, 7 March 1940.

<sup>37</sup> NRS HH55/13, Letter from Morren to SHD, 12 March 1940.

shipbuilding apprentices in a firm engaged in 'important' war work.<sup>38</sup> The local preoccupation with those Morren considered 'dangerous pests', however, could conflict with priorities at the national level. As historians have identified, there was concern in central government that, given the power of the CPGB by comparison to other organisations, the detention of members could instigate further industrial unrest. At the same time, the authorities were more relaxed about the CPGB given the level of infiltration. As a consequence, although a number of fascists and others were interned in Britain during the war, only one member of CPGB was detained.<sup>39</sup>

The second largest subject of entries - some 65 per cent - in reports by the Special Branch in Edinburgh made under the category of 'subversion' was the Protestant Action Society. It therefore represented a significant operational commitment. It was, however, mainly active in Edinburgh and therefore was not considered a threat at the national level. Indeed, whilst the Society instigated sectarian disturbances and was, therefore, a threat to public order and had a political agenda, it was not, like the CPGB, revolutionary. As a consequence, it only featured four times under heading '4' in the SHD summaries. Although there is no direct evidence that the Protestant Action Society was under surveillance by the police in the pre-war period, there was an extensive inquiry into it by the procurator fiscal and the SHD in the aftermath of the disturbances in Edinburgh in the mid-1930s. It would therefore seem reasonable to conclude that the police would, in addition to reacting to the threat of public disorder, attempt to proactively gather intelligence about the Society's activities. Indeed, David Ritchie has concluded that the approach adopted by the SHD, the town council, and the legal authorities, in relation to Cormack, the founder of the Society, was to 'ignore him as far as possible, while keeping a close watch on his activities'.<sup>40</sup> Thus, as with the CPGB, the surveillance by the police of the Protestant Action Society during the war partly represented a continuation of pre-war activity.

The reports by the Special Branch during the Second World War show that Cormack was under surveillance from at least 1940. Most of these recorded that the 'usual' meetings took place and, apart from 'Anti-Catholic rhetoric', 'nothing of interest'

<sup>38</sup> NRS HH55/25, Home Intelligence Report by City of Edinburgh Police, 14 March 1941.

<sup>39</sup> A. W. B. Simpson, *In the Highest Degree Odious: Detention Without Trial in Wartime Britain* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 173, 196-197., Thurlow, *Fascism in Britain*, 195-196.

<sup>40</sup> Ritchie, "They Do Not Become Good Scotsmen," 231.

occurred. Given the limited extent of the Society by then, this more than likely referred to Cormack giving a speech at The Mound. A Special Branch report in April 1945, for example, specifically recorded that ‘meetings’ took place there.<sup>41</sup> Given Morren’s preoccupation with meetings there, they were clearly infiltrated. Indeed, other than the interception of communications, of which there is no evidence, the option to otherwise acquire intelligence on Cormack was limited.

The Special Branch reports in 1942, and more specifically 1943, however, contained more detail of Cormack’s speeches. That in September 1943, for instance, recorded his allegation that the BBC was controlled by ‘papists’; the spread of venereal disease was caused by prostitutes, the majority of whom were Catholics; and that Catholics should be barred from holding government office or serving in the armed forces.<sup>42</sup> Likewise, the report in November 1943 contained a detailed account of his criticism of Edinburgh magistrates for attending a ‘Popish’ mass.<sup>43</sup>

The more intense scrutiny of Cormack’s rhetoric was undoubtedly a consequence of the riots that occurred in the aftermath of the internment of Italians subsequent to the entry into the war of Italy in June 1940. Whilst disorder broke out in a number of cities throughout the UK, it was especially riotous in Edinburgh.<sup>44</sup> The Archbishop of St. Andrews and Edinburgh was of the view that Cormack’s agents had instigated the disturbances in Edinburgh on the basis of anti-Catholic prejudice. As observed, Edinburgh had a legacy of violent anti-Catholic sentiment. In a letter to the Secretary of State for Scotland, Ernest Brown, in June 1940 the archbishop alleged that Cormack was making ‘a deliberate attempt to resuscitate sectarian trouble ... [and] ... openly incites to violence against Catholics in public speeches’.<sup>45</sup> Whilst the police in Edinburgh subsequently advised the SHD that the claims could not be substantiated, it nevertheless reported that ‘strict observation [was] being kept on the [organisation]’.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>41</sup> NRS HH55/61/1, Report by City of Edinburgh Police Special Branch, April 1945.

<sup>42</sup> NRS HH55/56/1, Report by City of Edinburgh Police Special Branch, September 1943.

<sup>43</sup> NRS HH55/57/1, Report by City of Edinburgh Police Special Branch, November 1943.

<sup>44</sup> See, for example, Wendy Ugolini, *Experiencing War as the 'Enemy Other': Italian Scottish Experience in World War II* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011), 122-130., Terri Colpi, *The Italian Factor: The Italian Community in Great Britain* (Edinburgh: Mainstream Publishing, 1991), 105-108.

<sup>45</sup> NRS HH1/777, Letter from Archbishop of St. Andrews and Edinburgh to Secretary of State for Scotland, 25 June 1940.

<sup>46</sup> NRS HH1/777, Report by City of Edinburgh Police, 16 July 1940.

SHD minutes suggest that it viewed Cormack as a threat to public order rather than a political subversive and, as in the 1930s, the objective was to obtain the basis for a criminal prosecution under Section 5 of the Public Order Act 1936. As an SHD official recorded: ‘we have been watching and waiting for Cormack to give himself away for a long time but so far have failed to get a feasible case. We shall continue to do so.’<sup>47</sup> In late 1941 local newspapers reported that Cormack had been convicted and fined £10 in camera at Edinburgh Sheriff Court for a contravention of the Defence Regulations arising from comments made at an open-air meeting at The Mound.<sup>48</sup> Whilst there is no reference to the incident in either Special Branch or Home Intelligence reports by the police in Edinburgh, given Morren’s preoccupation with speakers at The Mound it is reasonable to conclude that the evidence arose from police surveillance. Indeed, it is clear that Cormack remained under surveillance for the duration of the war in Europe.

### **Policing subversion: the Campaign Pension League and pacifists**

In contrast to the surveillance of the CPGB and Cormack, other policing requirements arose solely as a consequence of the war. Whilst it does not feature until December 1942 in the reports by the Special Branch in Edinburgh, the third largest subject of entries made under the category of ‘subversion’ - some 49 per cent - related to the Campaign Pension League. Like the Protestant Action Society it was, however, small scale and of purely local interest. Only three speakers are named in the reports and it featured only three times under heading ‘4’ in the SHD summaries, even then merely noting that a meeting took place.

It is difficult to discern exactly what the objective of the League was. Most of the detail noted in the reports of what transpired at the meetings is related to criticism of the conduct of the war and, in particular, the mistreatment of those in the armed services. The Special Branch report for August 1943, for example, recorded that the speaker criticised central government for: the preferential treatment given to Churchill’s daughter in the ATS; food queues; and for doing nothing for ‘the heroes who came back to poverty and empty promises’.<sup>49</sup> Similarly, in April 1945 the report

<sup>47</sup> NRS HH1/777, SHD minutes, 4 & 25 July 1940.

<sup>48</sup> *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch*, 6 October 1941, 5.

<sup>49</sup> NRS HH55/56/1, Report by City of Edinburgh Police Special Branch, August 1943.

noted that the speaker stated the men returning from active service were being 'treated in the same miserable way' as those returning from the Great War.<sup>50</sup>

Thus, whilst the agenda of the league was neither revolutionary nor a threat to public order, given the context of a total war, its activities were perceived to be inimical to the effort and it therefore became a target for surveillance until at least July 1945. Indeed, in April 1940 in a parallel request made by the Home Office to police forces in England and Wales, the SHD asked chief constables in Scotland to develop their Home Intelligence reports in relation to pacifist and subversive organisations. Richard Thurlow has argued that this was the consequence of a concern that fascists had infiltrated pacifist organisations.<sup>51</sup> The SHD requested information on 'all kinds of public meetings concerned with the prosecution of the war' to identify 'tendencies among particular classes of the community, or in particular areas, which, if unchecked, might have prejudicial effects'.<sup>52</sup> As a consequence, coterminous with the first reference to the League in reports by the Special Branch in Edinburgh, the report recorded that the speaker had been reported for a contravention of the Defence Regulations in relation to comments made at an open-air meeting, most probably at The Mound, that were likely to influence public opinion in a manner likely to be prejudicial to the efficient prosecution of the war or the defence of the realm.<sup>53</sup> The tactics used to maintain surveillance and gather evidence against the League were, therefore, similar to those used against Cormack the year previously.

Whilst the League was not a policing priority nationally, central government was concerned about organisations that were in some way pacifist.<sup>54</sup> In particular, this included those who sought to undermine military conscription, which had been introduced in April 1939 and successively widened to include women by December 1941. In the Great War a number of organisations had similarly been founded with

<sup>50</sup> NRS HH55/61/1, Report by City of Edinburgh Police Special Branch, April 1945.

<sup>51</sup> Thurlow, "The Evolution of the Mythical British Fifth Column," 492.

<sup>52</sup> NRS HH48/66/1, Circular 3918, 15 April 1940.

<sup>53</sup> NRS HH55/54/1, Report by City of Edinburgh Police Special Branch, December 1942.

<sup>54</sup> For examples of different pacifist perspectives see Martin Ceadel, *Pacifism in Britain, 1914-1945: The Defining of a Faith* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), 3.



the ‘avowed object of resisting conscription’ and had been subject to surveillance by the police.<sup>55</sup>

The Peace Pledge Union (hereafter PPU), which advised conscripts on the right to claim conscientious objection during the Second World War, appeared in some 12 per cent of the SHD summaries that included entries made under heading ‘4’. By contrast only two reports by the Special Branch in Edinburgh contained details of activity by the PPU. A report in February 1942, for example, noted that a member of the PPU had arrived in Edinburgh and had established a local headquarters in Frederick Street, which would also be used by other pacifist organisations.<sup>56</sup> Thus, whilst surveillance of the PPU made demands on some Scottish police forces, it clearly did not in Edinburgh.

Jehovah’s Witnesses, who urged their co-religionists to be neutral and resist conscription, were considered especially seditious by central government.<sup>57</sup> By mid-1942 the majority of men amongst its 12,000 active members in the UK claimed to be conscientious objectors. Over 100 had been imprisoned in connection with failing to comply with National Service directives.<sup>58</sup> Duff Cooper, chairman of the Security Executive, perceived Jehovah’s Witnesses as having a ‘near-subversive’ policy of ‘propagating defeatism and “conscientious objection”’.<sup>59</sup> As a consequence, the Home Secretary, Herbert Morrison, advised Parliament that a ‘watch is, of course, kept on its activities’.<sup>60</sup> Jehovah’s Witnesses featured in some 30 per cent of the SHD summaries that included entries made under heading ‘4’ but not in any reports by the Special Branch in Edinburgh under the category of ‘subversion’. Indeed, although the *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch* reported in 1942 that there were 120 members in the Edinburgh Company of Jehovah’s Witnesses, the police advised the SHD that its following was ‘slight’ and that the ‘organisation was ‘not viewed with any great concern’.<sup>61</sup> Part of the explanation for the relaxed attitude in Edinburgh might be

<sup>55</sup> Herbert T. Fitch, *Traitors Within: The Adventures of Detective Inspector Herbert T. Fitch* (London, 1933), 60.

<sup>56</sup> NRS HH55/53/1, Report by City of Edinburgh Police Special Branch, February 1942.

<sup>57</sup> NRS HH55/556, Excerpt from *The Watchtower*, 1 November 1939.

<sup>58</sup> NRS HH55/556, Report by Metropolitan Police Special Branch, 17 August 1942.

<sup>59</sup> NRS HH55/556, Letter from Duff Cooper to Home Office, 12 August 1942.

<sup>60</sup> NRS HH55/556, Excerpt from Hansard, 8 January 1941.

<sup>61</sup> NRS HH55/556, Excerpt from *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch*, 14 March 1942., SHD note, 4 September 1942.



related to the fact that the planned Scottish convention in late 1942, which so exercised the SHD, was held in Glasgow.<sup>62</sup> Thus, as with the PPU, whilst Jehovah's Witnesses were clearly an issue for the police elsewhere in Scotland, they did not become one in Edinburgh. The surveillance of pacifists by the police in Edinburgh during the Second World War was therefore very slight.

### **Policing subversion: Scottish nationalists and other political groups**

In terms of impeding the war effort Scottish nationalists, however, were considered a policing priority in Edinburgh. Keith Webb has identified a 'strong element' of pacifism within Scottish nationalism in the first half of the twentieth century. In 1934 there was, for example, a nationalist Anti-Conscription League. Furthermore, the Scottish National Party (hereafter SNP) conference in 1937 passed a resolution that all male members should refuse to 'serve with any section of the Crown forces until the programme of the SNP had been fulfilled'. Members who were radically opposed to cooperation with the war effort, and particularly conscription, moreover, won control of the party in 1942. The Scottish Neutrality League, composed of hard-line nationalists, meanwhile, maintained an even more militant position.<sup>63</sup> There was also a strong socialist tendency in Scottish nationalism that further alarmed the central state. At the foundation meeting of the Scottish Socialist Republican Party in May 1940, for instance, a resolution was passed to the effect that it would 'do all within its power to assist those bodies working for the earliest possible cessation of hostilities, and the establishment of a socialist peace'.<sup>64</sup>

Prominent Scottish nationalists like Hugh MacDiarmid (Christopher Murray Grieve), who was viewed by MI5 as a 'menace' to the British state, were subject to surveillance in the 1930s.<sup>65</sup> Thus, as with the CPGB, surveillance by the police during the Second World War represented a continuation and perhaps intensification of existing policing. The activities of nationalist organisations featured in some 20 per cent of entries in reports by the Special Branch in Edinburgh under the category of 'subversion' and 25 per cent of the SHD summaries that contained entries made under

<sup>62</sup> NRS HH55/556, SHD minute, 29 August 1942.

<sup>63</sup> Keith Webb, *The Growth of Nationalism in Scotland* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977), 56-61.

<sup>64</sup> NRS HH55/557, Scottish Socialist Republican Party draft constitution, 16 May 1940.

<sup>65</sup> Scott Lyall, "The Man is a Menace: MacDiarmid and Military Intelligence," *Scottish Studies Review* 8, no. 1 (2007).

heading '4'. Scottish nationalists were therefore also a policing priority elsewhere in Scotland. Indeed, the SHD summary in November 1940 pointed out that, apart from the CPGB, the only organisation with 'more than local influence' were those associated with Scottish nationalism.<sup>66</sup> The report by the Special Branch in Edinburgh, meanwhile, noted that the objective of nationalist organisations like the Edinburgh University Nationalist Association was to 'cause discontent and dissatisfaction [sic] with the present Government on nationalistic bases and ... object to conscription and generally assist' conscientious objectors.<sup>67</sup>

The surveillance of Scottish nationalists by the police during the Second World War was, however, most intense in 1942-1943. Some 80 per cent of the entries in the reports by the Special Branch in Edinburgh that related to Scottish nationalists occurred between March 1942 and the last entry in September 1943. Similarly, some 83 per cent of the entries under heading '4' in the SHD Summary that related to Scottish nationalists, some of which were based solely on Edinburgh reports, occurred between October 1941 and the last entry in September 1943. The intensification of surveillance was the consequence of raids conducted by the police in Edinburgh and elsewhere in Scotland in May 1941 on 17 premises occupied by Scottish nationalists. Judging by the content of subsequent reports the police were responding to intelligence that active assistance was being given to those seeking to evade conscription. Although the search of four houses in Edinburgh was unproductive, the police in Glasgow recovered documents showing that Scottish nationalists were providing logistical and financial aid to conscientious objectors, and, moreover, were in correspondence with a known Nazi agent.<sup>68</sup> In the immediate aftermath nationalists became subject to especial scrutiny by the police in Edinburgh and elsewhere in Scotland.

Although just over half the entries in the reports by the Special Branch in Edinburgh thereafter merely referred to a meeting having taken place where nothing of interest occurred, some of the rest contained detailed accounts of public meetings. A report of a meeting in October 1942 in the Gorgie Memorial Hall, for example, recorded that

<sup>66</sup> NRS HH55/50/1, Summary of Special Branch reports, November 1940.

<sup>67</sup> NRS HH55/50/1, Report by City of Edinburgh Police Special Branch, November 1940.

<sup>68</sup> NRS HH55/558, Letter from City of Edinburgh Police, May 1941., NRS HH55/557, Letter from City of Glasgow Police, 17 May 1941.

the speaker criticised the government for sending Scottish women to work in English factories.<sup>69</sup> As with other organisations subject to surveillance during the Second World War, the police infiltrated public meetings of Scottish nationalists. From late 1942, however, the requirement for the police to maintain surveillance on Scottish nationalists receded. Reports by the Special Branch in Edinburgh suggested that the SNP in particular was struggling to attract support. The report of the meeting in the Masonic Halls in Leith in March 1943, for instance, recorded that the response to form an SNP branch in Leith was ‘poor’.<sup>70</sup> Special Branches elsewhere in Scotland noted a similar tendency. Part of the explanation related to fractures within the membership of the SNP that reduced it as a political and social force. The last related report by the Special Branch in Edinburgh in September 1943 recorded that there was internal ‘discontent’ over whether a demonstration on St. Andrew’s day should be used as a platform to attack central government.<sup>71</sup> Thus, unlike the CPGB, Scottish nationalists were not subject to police surveillance in Edinburgh for the duration of the war.

Together, some 69 per cent of the entries in the reports by the Special Branch in Edinburgh made under the category of ‘subversion’ related to the Independent Labour Party (hereafter ILP), the Revolutionary Communist Party, and the Anarchist Federation (hereafter AF). The ILP and AF also feature in some 47 per cent of the SHD summaries that contained entries made under heading ‘4’. These groups were therefore subject to surveillance by Special Branches elsewhere in Scotland. As with other organisations subject to surveillance during the war this represented a continuity in policing from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>72</sup> By comparison with some others considered subversive in the Second World War, however, their membership was small. The ILP, whose complex ideology was in any event more pacifist than revolutionary was, for example, only significant in Glasgow. As a consequence, the first SHD Summary concluded that the influence of these organisations ‘does not extend beyond their members, who are few in number’.<sup>73</sup> Notwithstanding, whilst the potential of these organisations to impede the war effort

<sup>69</sup> NRS HH55/54/1, Report by City of Edinburgh Police Special Branch, October 1942.

<sup>70</sup> NRS HH55/55/1, Report by City of Edinburgh Police Special Branch, March 1943

<sup>71</sup> NRS HH55/56/1, Report by City of Edinburgh Police Special Branch, September 1943.

<sup>72</sup> See, for example, Porter, *Plots and Paranoia* 156., Rawlings, *Policing*, 174., Allason, *The Branch*, 8.

<sup>73</sup> NRS HH55/50/1, Summary of Special Branch reports, November 1940.

was limited compared to some others, they continued to be a policing priority for the Special Branch in Edinburgh and elsewhere in Scotland for the duration.

Most of the reports by the Special Branch in Edinburgh that related to ‘subversion’ referred to meetings, many of which took place at The Mound. As such, the established tactic of infiltration was undoubtedly the source of the reports. The report for June 1944, for example, contained a detailed record from someone who was clearly in attendance at a speech given by a member of the AF in relation to the Second Front.<sup>74</sup> As with other groups it is clear that the police tactic was recognised by the target of surveillance. At an anarchist meeting in August 1944 the speaker stated that he would have exposed the true extent of casualties caused by flying bombs to prove the degree to which people had been deceived by central government had ‘the boys in blue ... not [been] present at [the] meeting’.<sup>75</sup>

Given that UK’s war was against National Socialism, it might, at first, seem surprising that none of the reports by the Special Branch in Edinburgh or the SHD summaries refer to a fascist organisation. Part of the explanation relates to the fact that the British Union (until 1936, the British Union of Fascists) failed to gain a mass following in Scotland in the interwar period. Furthermore, whilst organisations like the Right Club had gone to ground at the outbreak of war, the British Union were proscribed and some 750 people associated with the organisation were interned as a consequence of the extension to Defence Regulation 18 in mid-1940.<sup>76</sup> Thus, by the time of the first reports by the Special Branches in November 1940, domestic fascism as a political and social force was largely an irrelevance, especially in Scotland, and it therefore did not become a policing priority for the remainder of the duration.

<sup>74</sup> NRS HH55/59/1, Report by City of Edinburgh Police Special Branch, June 1944.

<sup>75</sup> NRS HH55/59/1, Report by City of Edinburgh Police Special Branch, August 1944.

<sup>76</sup> See, for example, Stephen M Cullen, "The Fasces and the Saltire: The Failure of the British Union of Fascists in Scotland, 1932-1940," *The Scottish Historical Review* LXXXVII, 2, no. 224 (2008)., Thurlow, *Fascism in Britain*, 63, 93., Gardiner, *Wartime*, 280-282.

### **Policing identity fraud and the evasion of duty**

In addition to the largely covert gathering of intelligence in relation to subversion, the police in Edinburgh and elsewhere in Scotland carried out overt policing in relation to war-related duties. The SHD summaries made under heading '1' of the Special Branch reports are a digest of the wide variety of arrests, searches, and prosecutions made by forces from late-1940 to mid-1945. Apparently similar incidents are, however, reported by forces in a variety of narratives and under different headings. Of the entries made under heading '1' in the reports by the Special Branch in Edinburgh the largest subject - some 89 per cent - representing any number of incidents, related to offences in connection with 'registration'. A brief survey of the SHD summaries suggests that the pattern was broadly similar across Scotland.

As part of the preparations for total war, the National Registration Act, introduced on 1 September 1939, established a national register and made it compulsory for everyone to carry an identity card that had to be produced on demand to police officers, amongst others.<sup>77</sup> Many of the incidents reported by the Special Branch in Edinburgh related to individuals being in possession of cards belonging to someone else. The report of June 1941, for example, recorded that a man had been charged with stealing a card.<sup>78</sup> The following month the report noted that a probationary nurse at the Royal Edinburgh Hospital had been charged for using her sister's card, whilst a member of a ship's crew was charged for using his son's.<sup>79</sup> The report in September, meanwhile, listed five separate incidents of individuals in possession of 'false' or 'falsified' cards.<sup>80</sup> Coterminous to these incidents, approximately 44 per cent of entries in the reports by the Special Branch made under heading '1' related to contraventions of the Defence Regulations. Of these, the single largest subject - some 48 per cent - related to Regulation 20, which referred to adopting a name other than that by which the individual was known prior to the Regulations coming into force. The report for January 1944, for instance, recorded that a disqualified motor driver had been arrested for assuming another name in order to obtain a driving licence.<sup>81</sup>

<sup>77</sup> Mill, *The Scottish Police*, 186.

<sup>78</sup> NRS HH55/51/1, Report by City of Edinburgh Police Special Branch, June 1941.

<sup>79</sup> NRS HH55/52/1, Report by City of Edinburgh Police Special Branch, July 1941.

<sup>80</sup> NRS HH55/52/1, Report by City of Edinburgh Police Special Branch, September 1941.

<sup>81</sup> NRS HH55/58/1, Report by City of Edinburgh Police Special Branch, January 1944.

In addition, some 27 per cent of entries in the reports by the Special Branch in Edinburgh made under heading '1' related to impersonators of members of the armed forces, which was also an offence under the Defence Regulations. That for April 1943, for example, recorded the arrest of an Edinburgh man who 'through sheer vanity had been in the habit of going about in the uniform of a naval captain'.<sup>82</sup> Similarly, the report in May 1944 noted the arrest of a sergeant glider pilot for wearing the uniform of a captain, along with that of an unemployed man for wearing the uniform of a squadron leader.<sup>83</sup>

Most entries in the Special Branch reports are silent about how the incidents came to the attention of the police and therefore there is a limit to what can be inferred about police tactics. Unusually, the report by the Special Branch in Edinburgh in September 1943 recorded that offences were identified when an individual was 'questioned by two detective officers regarding his identity'.<sup>84</sup> It might be assumed that the police would have undertaken an identity check for those arrested or charged with any offences. As an example, the report for October 1942 recorded incidents where individuals arrested for crimes of dishonesty were also charged with registration offences.<sup>85</sup> In that sense, part of policing of identity fraud during the war remained reactive and was therefore not entirely a new requirement. At the same time the prosecution of total war created an impetus for proactive activity. A circular in late 1940, for example, requested that the police in Edinburgh and a number of other specified forces, institute periodic roadblocks to check the identity of people in the area.<sup>86</sup>

The majority of incidents of identity fraud dealt with by the police in Edinburgh related to members of the armed forces who were in some way absent without leave (hereafter AWOL). The Special Branch report for February 1942, for example, noted that a man was arrested for desertion from the army, bigamy, and joining the Royal Navy under an assumed name.<sup>87</sup> Whilst the police had, since the nineteenth century, power to arrest a person suspected of being a deserter, the introduction of conscription

<sup>82</sup> NRS HH55/55/1, Report by City of Edinburgh Police Special Branch, April 1943.

<sup>83</sup> NRS HH55/59/1, Report by City of Edinburgh Police Special Branch, May 1944.

<sup>84</sup> NRS HH55/56/1, Report by City of Edinburgh Police Special Branch, September 1943.

<sup>85</sup> NRS HH55/54/1, Report by City of Edinburgh Police Special Branch, October 1942.

<sup>86</sup> NRS HH48/66/1, Circular 4165, 13 September 1940.

<sup>87</sup> NRS HH55/53/1, Report by City of Edinburgh Police Special Branch, February 1942.

in preparation for the Second World War increased the demand. By the end of the war about 20,000 deserters were at large.<sup>88</sup> Given that some 64 per cent of the entries in the reports by the Special Branch in Edinburgh made under heading '1' related to those who were AWOL, it appears that it was a police priority to support the armed forces in apprehending deserters. One of Donaldson's interviewees recalled that the police in Manchester raided public houses specifically for deserters and it seems reasonable to conclude that the tactic was used by police forces elsewhere.<sup>89</sup> Thus proactive overt police activity supported covert surveillance to combat the evasion of duty. At the same time there was a local imperative to identify deserters. Without an identity card it was impossible to obtain a ration book and therefore there was little alternative to turning to crime. Colquhoun recalled that Glasgow in the blackout was turned into a 'shadowy cesspool of crime, thickened in violence and intensity by a constant addition of deserters and men on the run from military service notices'.<sup>90</sup>

As part of policing the evasion of duty the police in Edinburgh were not only required to deal with those going AWOL from the armed services. Some 81 per cent of the entries in the reports by the Special Branch made under heading '1' referred to a contravention of Defence Regulation 47A, which related to merchant seamen deserting or absenting themselves from a ship. Of these, some 88 per cent of incidents, involving nearly 200 individuals, were specifically identified as merchant seamen. The report in December 1941, for example, recorded that the police in Edinburgh dealt with an offence committed in the Soviet Union involving 19 merchant seamen, nine of whom were from the same crew.<sup>91</sup> Similarly, in January 1942 another 19 merchant seamen were arrested, where 10 were members of the same crew.<sup>92</sup> Whilst the police had power under Merchant Shipping Acts in the pre-war era to arrest seamen for neglect of duty, the outbreak of hostilities increased this aspect of police work as merchant seamen refused to board ships, particularly in 1942, when merchant shipping losses in the Atlantic were at their highest.<sup>93</sup>

<sup>88</sup> Thomas, *An Underworld at War*, 11., Ingleton, *The Gentlemen at War*, 277.

<sup>89</sup> Donaldson, "Policing the War," 309.

<sup>90</sup> Colquhoun, *Life Begins at Midnight*, 58.

<sup>91</sup> NRS HH55/52/1, Report by City of Edinburgh Police Special Branch, December 1941.

<sup>92</sup> NRS HH55/53/1, Report by City of Edinburgh Police Special Branch, January 1942.

<sup>93</sup> See Ian Dear and M. R. D. Foot, eds., *The Oxford Companion to World War II* New ed.(Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 49.



### **Policing suspected sabotage and strikes**

The joint highest number - some 50 per cent of entries – in the reports by the Special Branch in Edinburgh made under heading ‘12’ related to policing suspected sabotage. As in the First World War, it was imagined that many thousands of agents were plotting acts of sabotage. Spy ‘mania’, as Basil Thomson, Head of CID in the Metropolitan Police in the Great War, observed ‘assumed a virulent epidemic form accompanied by delusions which defied treatment’.<sup>94</sup> As a consequence, the police in Edinburgh during the Second World War were called to investigate apparently minor incidents of damage and suspected damage to, amongst others, shipping and industrial machinery. In this sense, police activity was reactive and overt rather than proactive. The report for November 1943, for example, recorded that the police had interviewed the crew of the SS *Cromarty* after a piece of wood was found in the sounding pipe of the oil tank, even although no damage could have transpired.<sup>95</sup> In a similar vein, in August 1944, the police interviewed ‘several persons’ after a leak was found in a boiler of the SS *Empire Wyclif*.<sup>96</sup>

Given that actual incidents of sabotage should have been submitted to the SHD separately, and notwithstanding the inconsistencies in reporting, it is an axiom that entries made under heading ‘12’ in relation to sabotage were likely to be unfounded. Indeed, the incidents investigated by the Special Branch in Edinburgh were found to be either unsubstantiated or the consequence of something other than political sabotage. The report for August 1942, for example, noted that the inquiry into the cause of damaged steering gear on-board a vessel established that it was due to a lack of proper examination at overhaul. Likewise, the investigation of the cause of a hole in the circulating water inlet of the condenser on the SS *Baranda* found that it was the consequence of ‘ordinary wear and tear’.<sup>97</sup> In a similar fashion, the investigation in November 1943 following the discovery that two iron levers had been placed in the coal breaker of a gas works concluded that there was no evidence of discontent within

<sup>94</sup> Christopher M. Andrew, *Secret Service: The Making of the British Intelligence Community* (London: Heinemann, 1985), 177-178.

<sup>95</sup> NRS HH55/57/1, Report by City of Edinburgh Police Special Branch, November 1943.

<sup>96</sup> NRS HH55/59/1, Report by City of Edinburgh Police Special Branch, August 1944.

<sup>97</sup> NRS HH55/54/1, Report by City of Edinburgh Police Special Branch, August 1942.



the workforce or apparent motive and that ‘no person would have made such a trifling attempt to commit sabotage’.<sup>98</sup>

Thus, whilst the police in Edinburgh responded in the pre-war era to complaints of malicious mischief as part of the core duty of protecting property, the paranoia during the Second World War surrounding fifth columnists increased the demand to investigate incidents, the cause of which would otherwise have been viewed as arising from something less sinister and therefore unlikely to have been made known to the police. As a Home Intelligence Report in this regard concluded in July 1941: ‘A good deal of police time is taken up with fruitless investigations.’<sup>99</sup> The SHD summaries of Special Branch reports under heading ‘13’ indicated that this was a common requirement for forces in Scotland. That for July 1941, for instance, noted: ‘in all cases so far investigated it has been found that the minor damage caused was due to carelessness or mischief and not with any intention to assist the enemy’.<sup>100</sup> Indeed, in the immediate aftermath of the war HMICS praised the ‘security work’ of detectives that ‘prevented sabotage’, which suggests that genuine incidence was minimal at most.<sup>101</sup>

The remaining joint highest number of entries in the reports by the Special Branch in Edinburgh - also some 50 per cent - made under heading ‘12’ related to strikes. The ‘new’ police had, since their creation, been involved in policing the conflict arising from strikes as part of their core operational role to maintain public order. In the Great War, although unions accepted compulsory arbitration, it did not stop strikes. The National Arbitration Tribunal was introduced in the Second World War to prevent a recrudescence. Whilst it did not go as far as the Emergency Regulations made in 1921 and 1926, it made strikes and lockouts illegal and provided machinery for collective agreements. Yet despite the Order being reinforced in 1944 by Defence Regulation 1AA, there was, as Figure 5.1 illustrates, a record number of strikes in Great Britain, which further questions the existence of social solidarity and notions of a people’s

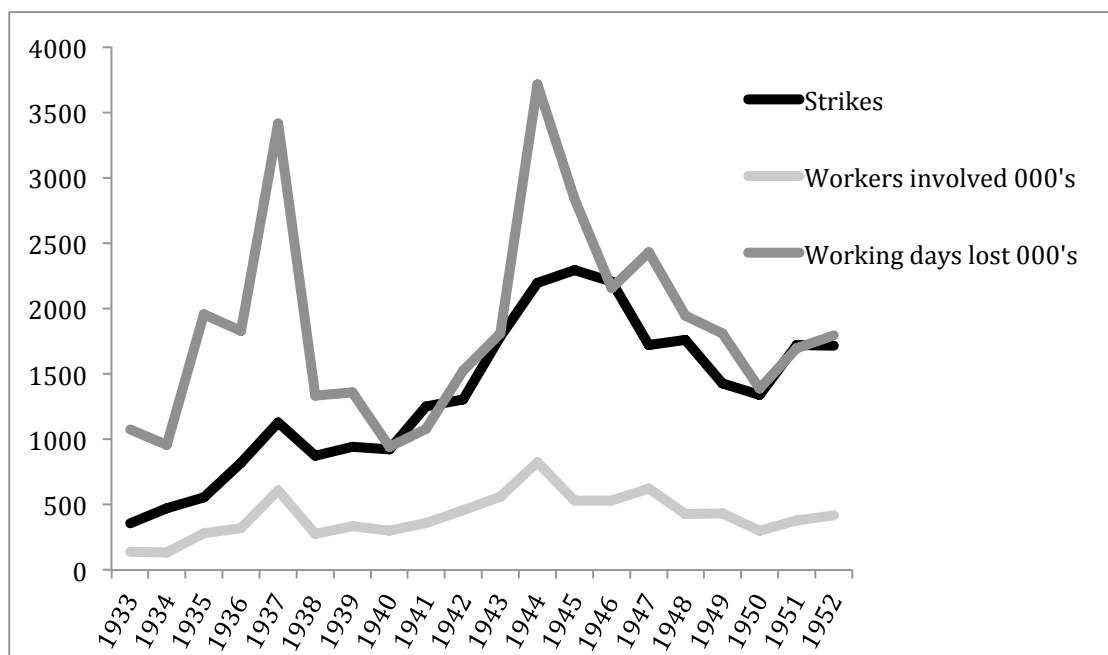
<sup>98</sup> NRS HH55/57/1, Report by City of Edinburgh Police Special Branch, November 1943.

<sup>99</sup> NRS HH55/22, Home Intelligence Report by City of Edinburgh Police, 5 July 1940.

<sup>100</sup> NRS HH55/52/1, Summary of Special Branch reports, July 1941.

<sup>101</sup> Eighty-Third Report of HMICS, 4.

war'. Indeed, as Neil Stammers has pointed out, the strikes were seen as a 'real threat to the production programmes necessary to support the invasion of Europe'.<sup>102</sup>



**Figure 5.1** Number of strikes, workers involved, and working days lost in Great Britain, 1933-1952

[Source: Ministry of Labour Gazette, May 1953<sup>103</sup>]

The reports by the Special Branch in Edinburgh confirm that the police regularly investigated the cause of strikes. Thus, although there had been a long continuity of policing any attendant disorder, interceding in the strike itself embroiled the police in what had hitherto principally been a civil matter. In this sense, police activity was reactive and overt. The report for August 1943, for example, recorded that a police inquiry into a complaint from a firm of shipbuilders that 52 riveters and holders-on had gone on strike established that it was a consequence of a refusal by the Shipbuilders' Federation to grant an increase in wages.<sup>104</sup> In a similar fashion, a police inquiry into information received from a firm of Fellmongers or Skinners that 10 employees had gone on strike for no apparent reason in April 1944 established that

<sup>102</sup> Stammers, *Civil Liberties*, 208., John Price, *Organised Labour in the War* (Harmondsworth; New York: A. Lane, Penguin 1940), 140-142., Kahn-Freund, "Legal Framework," 42-127., Knowles, *Strikes*, 118.

<sup>103</sup> In Allan D. Flanders, "Collective Bargaining," in *The System of Industrial Relations in Great Britain: Its History, Law, and Institutions*, ed. Allan D. Flanders and Hugh Armstrong Clegg (Oxford: Blackwell, 1954).

<sup>104</sup> NRS HH55/56/1, Report by City of Edinburgh Police Special Branch, August 1943.

the immediate cause was a grievance over defective heating apparatus in the business premises.<sup>105</sup>

The objective of most police activity was to determine whether there was a contravention of the prohibiting legislation. The Special Branch report of a strike involving 19 employees of a wool merchant who were contracted to work on behalf of the Minister of Supply in February 1943, for example, noted that the police had reported the circumstances to the procurator fiscal.<sup>106</sup> The Home Intelligence reports, however, show that the police in Edinburgh sometimes intervened in strikes in an unprecedented way.

In the early weeks of 1942, the manager of the Scottish Motor Traction depot in Roseburn contacted the police asking for officers to be present whilst he interviewed workers involved in a trade dispute. Officers attended and one worker was sacked. The following day the manager telephoned the Special Branch to advise that the dispute was impeding the war effort and again requested the presence of the police. Two plain-clothes officers attended and took statements from workers, two of whom were sacked. In consequence, a number of organisations wrote to the Secretary of State for Scotland, Tom Johnston, and the Regional Commissioner regarding the 'illegal' use of the police to intimidate workers for 'private purposes'. Morren explained that the procurator fiscal had instructed that officers be deployed to determine whether there was a contravention of the Defence Regulations and to prevent a breach of the peace. More significantly for an understanding of police tactics, however, he also advised: 'it has always been the procedure in this department, on receipt of information that a stoppage of work has taken place, or is likely to take place, to dispatch officers at once so that they can report to the various officials as soon as possible'.<sup>107</sup> Morren's statement suggests intervention was appropriate even in circumstances where no offence was evident. Given Tom Johnston's Fabian background, this was probably at variance with the Secretary of State's view of the police role. In his reply to the Edinburgh and District Trades Council regarding the intervention, Johnston advised that he 'held strongly to the view that the police should

<sup>105</sup> NRS HH55/58/1, Report by City of Edinburgh Police Special Branch, April 1944.

<sup>106</sup> NRS HH55/55/1, Report by City of Edinburgh Police Special Branch, February 1943.

<sup>107</sup> NRS HH55/13, Letters from Morren to Johnston, 10 February 1942, 23 February 1942.

not be present at meetings between employers and employees unless for purposes connected with the preservation of law and order or the detection of offences'.<sup>108</sup>

The strident tone in a succession of entries in Morren's Home Intelligence reports suggests that strikes and related government inaction was, however, something of a personal preoccupation. In July 1941, for example, he reported that despite having submitted 'many' reports on strike meetings no action had been taken. The 'ringleaders', he argued, needed to be 'taught' that they 'cannot wantonly and with impunity disrupt the efforts of a country that is fighting for its life'.<sup>109</sup> Again in October 1943, he reported that there was a public perception that the government had shown weakness in its 'manifest reluctance to exercise the powers it possesses' in response to a 'wave of unrest' and the 'defiance by the rank and file of industry'.<sup>110</sup> Similarly, following the introduction of Defence Regulation 1AA in 1944, he reported that there would be the 'fullest support everywhere' for the 'vigorous enforcement' against 'those who instigate strikes'.<sup>111</sup> Whilst none of the reports suggested that employers were culpable, one entry under heading '1' in a Special Branch report in September 1943 recorded that, following a report to the procurator fiscal of a strike of 90 platers in a number of shipbuilding firms, the police were instructed to charge them all with a contravention of the Order.<sup>112</sup> The SHD summaries confirm that similar requirements were made on forces elsewhere in Scotland. That in March 1942 noted that the police in Dundee, for example, reported 116 riveters and holders-on employed in shipbuilding to the procurator fiscal.<sup>113</sup> Stammers has argued that of the 6,300 strikers prosecuted during the war the majority were in Scotland.<sup>114</sup> The requirement on the police was clearly greater in this regard in Scotland than elsewhere in Britain.

### **Policing the 'Lighting Restrictions' and aliens**

In the days immediately before the outbreak of war the blackout was imposed throughout the UK as a precaution against enemy air raids. 'All car head-lamps had to be hooded', recalled St. Johnston in Oxfordshire, 'while lighted street lamps became a

<sup>108</sup> NRS HH55/13, Letter from Johnston to Edinburgh and District Trades Council, 9 March 1942.

<sup>109</sup> NRS HH55/29, Home Intelligence Report by City of Edinburgh Police, 4 July, 1941.

<sup>110</sup> NRS HH55/38, Home Intelligence Report by City of Edinburgh Police, 8 October 1943.

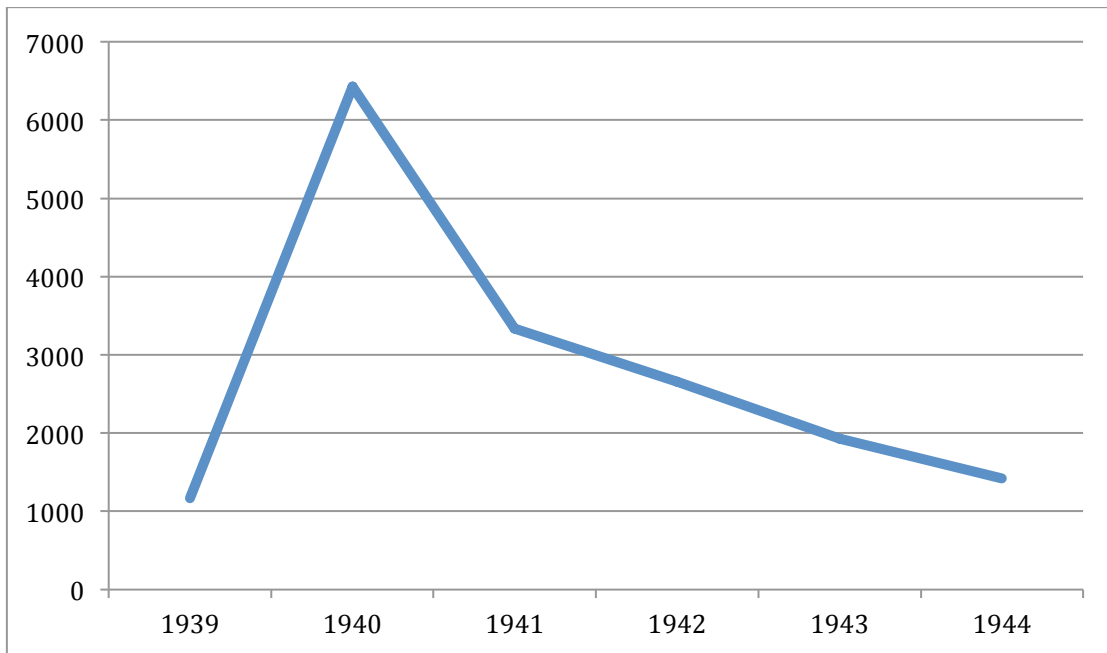
<sup>111</sup> NRS HH55/39, Home Intelligence Report by City of Edinburgh Police, 21 April 1944.

<sup>112</sup> NRS HH55/56/1, Report by City of Edinburgh Police Special Branch, September 1943.

<sup>113</sup> NRS HH55/53/1, Summary of Special Branch reports, March 1942.

<sup>114</sup> Stammers, *Civil Liberties*, 208.

thing of the past'.<sup>115</sup> Enforcement of the manifold and technical restrictions thus became a major preoccupation for the police. The restrictions covered, for example, the time of operation, obligatory lights, the limitations as to type, position, and number in vehicles, as well as traffic signs and street lighting.<sup>116</sup> In that sense, police activity was reactive and overt and in support of a national objective. Smale found, for example, that contraventions of the 'Lighting Restrictions' were the largest category of offences dealt with by the police in the Scottish Borders during the war.<sup>117</sup>



**Figure 5.2** Number of crimes and offences related to the 'Lighting Restrictions' made known to the police in Edinburgh, 1939-1944  
[Source: ECA ED006/1/10-11]

In contrast to some other aspects of policing during the war, that related to the 'Lighting Restrictions' was solely a wartime task. As Figure 5.2 shows, there was a sharp increase in police activity in relation to 'Lighting Restrictions' in Edinburgh in the first year of the war. Put another way, under the classification of crimes and offences reported annually to the town council there was an increase in policing in relation to the 'Lighting Restrictions' as a percentage of all Class VII, 'Miscellaneous Offences'. A similar pattern was evident in England and Wales, and Northern

<sup>115</sup> St. Johnston, *One Policeman's Story*, 57.

<sup>116</sup> See Baker, *Emergency Law Summary*, 84-103.

<sup>117</sup> David Martin Smale, "To What Extent did the Second World War Impact on Policing in the Scottish Borders?" (Unpublished MSc Dissertation, University of Edinburgh, 2013), 21, 28.

Ireland.<sup>118</sup> The explanation in Edinburgh relates to the increasing ‘vigilance’ by the police as a consequence of what Morren saw as the ‘laxity’ of members of the public to observance.<sup>119</sup> In the first three months of the ‘Phoney War’, 578 contraventions had been reported in Edinburgh.<sup>120</sup> Norman Longmate observed that courts throughout the UK became ‘choked with black-out cases’ and that the police had a ‘thankless job’ in this regard.<sup>121</sup> The demand on policing decreased after the first year of the war and for the remainder of the duration due to three factors unrelated to enforcement however: firstly, central government extended the daylight hours by introducing ‘Summer Time’ and ‘Double Summer Time’ which reduced the potential for offending;<sup>122</sup> secondly, as Morren explained in a Home Intelligence Report in late 1943, ‘the public ... [became] ... habituated to black-out conditions’;<sup>123</sup> and lastly, as the war turned decisively in favour of the allies, some of the restrictions were relaxed. Some lighting was resumed in Edinburgh in 1944 for example.<sup>124</sup>

Thus, whilst enforcing the ‘Lighting Restrictions’ was a significant part of policing in Edinburgh it did not, as in the Borders, become the largest category of offences dealt with by the police. Part of the explanation might be related to the fact that, given they lived in largely rural areas, some of the population in the Borders were of the view that they were less likely to be a target of air raids and therefore more readily flouted the restrictions. At the same time, police in rural areas were not otherwise engaged otherwise on war-related duties to the same extent as their urban colleagues and therefore had more time for enforcement.

In contrast to policing the ‘Lighting Restrictions’, which was a wartime expedient, that in relation to aliens during the Second World War was an intensification of existing requirements. As a consequence of the Great War, Acts of 1914 and 1919 and an

<sup>118</sup> cf Great Britain. Central Statistical Office., *Statistical Digest of the War*, History of the Second World War United Kingdom civil series (London: HMSO, 1951), 48, 50. A comparable figure is not given in the Criminal Statistics Scotland: Summary of Statistics relating to Police Apprehensions and Criminal Proceedings for the years 1939-1945. Cmd 7505, 1948.

<sup>119</sup> NRS HH55/17, Home Intelligence Report by City of Edinburgh Police, 10 November 1939.

<sup>120</sup> NRS HH55/17, Home Intelligence Report by City of Edinburgh Police, 24 November 1939.

<sup>121</sup> Norman Longmate, *How We Lived Then: A History of Everyday Life During the Second World War* (London: Pimlico, 2002), 42-43.

<sup>122</sup> *How We Lived Then*, 47.

<sup>123</sup> NRS HH55/38, Home Intelligence Report by City of Edinburgh Police, 3 December 1943.

<sup>124</sup> ECA ED006/1/11, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1944, 12.

Order of 1920 placed restrictions on aliens in the UK.<sup>125</sup> They were, for example, required to register with the police whilst requirements were also imposed on those who, for example, provided lodgings. As Colin Holmes has argued, this ‘swept aside the vestiges of the traditional laissez-faire approach which had generally prevailed during periods of peace’ with regard to aliens.<sup>126</sup>

	Number		Number of crimes and offences related to aliens made known to the police as % of number of aliens registered
	Aliens registered	Crimes and offences related to aliens made known to the police	
1935	1472	6	0.4
1936	1443	24	1.7
1937	1537	77	5.0
1938	1547	92	5.9
1939	1401	23	1.6
1940	834	272	32.6
1941	1427	110	7.7
1942	1655	112	6.8
1943	1851	290	15.7
1944	2216	158	7.1
1945	2288	3	0.1
1946	2108	9	0.4
1947	2571	7	0.3
1948	3003	111	3.7

**Table 5.2 Aliens registered with the police and crimes and offences related to aliens in Edinburgh, 1935-1948**

[Source: ECA ED006/1/10-12]

As Table 5.2 shows, police activity in Edinburgh in respect of aliens increased sharply during the Second World War by comparison with the pre-war era. In the period 1935-1938 the mean number of crimes or offences made known to the police as a percentage of the number of aliens registered with the police was 3.3, whilst in the period 1946-1948 it was 1.5. During the war, however, it was 10.2. Put simply, the policing of aliens, which had increased in the immediate pre-war years as a consequence of the immigration into Britain of around 60,000 German, Austrian, and Czech refugees, intensified further, most notably between 1939 and 1940 and between

<sup>125</sup> *Police Manual for Scotland*, 47-51.

<sup>126</sup> Colin Holmes, *John Bull's Island: Immigration and British Society, 1871-1971* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1988), 95.



1942 and 1943.<sup>127</sup> As a percentage of all Class VII 'Miscellaneous Offences', there was an increase in policing in Edinburgh with regard to aliens during the war and the pattern was repeated in general terms across Scotland as a whole.<sup>128</sup>

Part of the explanation relates to the additional restrictions placed on aliens.<sup>129</sup> Immediately on the outbreak of war, the Order of 1920 was amended, as the Home Secretary, John Anderson, advised Parliament, with the intention of rendering 'harmless all aliens who might be hostile to this country'.<sup>130</sup> Aliens were further restricted with regard to residence and travel. By June 1940, in the context of the panic surrounding fifth columnists, these were extended to include, for example, a night-time curfew and a prohibition on possession of bicycles and motor cars, especially in 'Protected Areas' like the Firth of Forth.<sup>131</sup> In short, the consequence of the closer scrutiny paid to aliens by the police meant that there was more likelihood of being found to have contravened the myriad of restrictions. Indeed, Ingleton has argued that they were enforced with 'desperate severity' in places.<sup>132</sup> In this context, the reduction in police activity in Edinburgh after 1940 can be seen as a consequence of the reduction in the number of aliens at large as a result of the introduction of internment for Germans and Austrians following the Fall of France, and Italians after Italy's declaration of war.<sup>133</sup>

As a consequence of the sweeping additional requirements with regard to registration, the Aliens Department of the City of Edinburgh Police was inundated to the extent that extra staff had to be brought in and additional buildings utilised. The *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch* reported that nearly 1,000 aliens had been registered in Edinburgh in the three days after the outbreak of war and the department 'dealing with this branch of registration has been kept busy all the time ... there have been occasions

<sup>127</sup> cf Hylton, *Their Darkest Hour*, 2., Calder, *The People's War*, 130.

<sup>128</sup> cf Cmd 7505, 14-15.

<sup>129</sup> *The Scotsman*, 4 September 1939, 5.

<sup>130</sup> *The Scotsman*, 5 September 1939, 4.

<sup>131</sup> *The Scotsman*, 13 May 1940, 5; 17 May 1940, 6.

<sup>132</sup> Ingleton, *The Gentlemen at War*, 89.

<sup>133</sup> For the internment of aliens see, for example, François Lafitte, *The Internment of Aliens* (London: Libris, 1988), Peter Gillman and Leni Gillman, *'Collar the Lot!' How Britain Interned and Expelled its Wartime Refugees* (London: Quartet, 1980), Richard Dove, "Totally un-English?": Britain's Internment of "Enemy Aliens" in Two World Wars, Yearbook of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2005), Matthew Stibbe, "Civilian Internment and Civilian Internees in Europe, 1914-20," *Immigrants & Minorities* 26, no. 1:2 (2008).



when the rush was so great that staff, to use their own words, have been “snowed under”.<sup>134</sup> Furthermore, as Morren noted in his annual reports to the town council, his appointment as coordinating officer for the Protected Areas of both the Firth of Forth and the Firth of Tay led to a large increase in work as the Aliens Department in Edinburgh assumed responsibility for applications to enter both areas. That year it dealt with 9,000 applications, whilst in 1941 it dealt with 7,000. In addition the department dealt with the registration of seamen engaged on coastal traffic as well as refugees from Europe and the re-registration on British-born women who had lost their nationality by marrying aliens.<sup>135</sup> Yet as Table 5.2 also shows the work intensified in the post-war era in relation to the number of aliens registered. Part of the explanation relates to de-militarisation and the Polish Resettlement Corps in particular.<sup>136</sup> By contrast, the number of related crimes and offences reduced due to the rescinding, with the cessation of hostilities, of many of the prohibitions.

### **Policing ‘War Legislation’ and military laws**

In a similar manner to the ‘Lighting Restrictions’, that with regards to ‘War Legislation’ was a function that arose solely as a consequence of the war. Whilst it is unknown what was otherwise included in this category, it partly related to the continually evolving Defence Regulations. In 1941 Morren commented in his annual report on the ‘ever increasing mass of legislation and the resultant additional new types of offences thereby created’.<sup>137</sup> As Table 5.3 shows there was an increase in policing demand in Edinburgh in that regard between 1940 and 1941 and between 1944 and 1945. As with some other aspects of Class VII ‘Miscellaneous Offences’, there was an increase in policing with regard to ‘War Legislation’. Many of the Defence Regulations were intended to prohibit actions deemed to be prejudicial to the efficient prosecution of the war or the defence of the realm and were thus part of the mobilisation for total war. Edward Smithies found, for instance, that after the Fall of France there was a wave of prosecutions for talk deemed careless or likely to

<sup>134</sup> *Edinburgh Evening Dispatch*, 7 September 1939, 3.

<sup>135</sup> ECA ED006/1/10, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1940, 6; ED006/1/11, 1941, 6.

<sup>136</sup> ECA ED006/1/11, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1946, 16; 1947, 18. For the Polish Resettlement Corps, see, for example, Keith Sword, Norman Davies, and Jan M. Ciechanowski, *The Formation of the Polish community in Great Britain: 1939-1950* (London: School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University of London, 1989).

<sup>137</sup> ECA ED006/1/11, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1941, 1.

undermine morale that were as much related to deterrence as punishment. Similarly, as the war progressed and the threat of invasion receded, the objective of prosecutions was to maintain 'industrial and political discipline'.<sup>138</sup> In this sense, local police activity was reactive and overt in response to national objectives that reflected the progress of the war. In that regard, although the Defence Regulations expired in 1946, the continued demand on the police in the post-war period might have been related to the continuation of conscription.<sup>139</sup>

	Number made known to the police	
	'War Legislation'	Military laws
1935		31
1936		29
1937		41
1938		45
1939		57
1940	104	339
1941	966	565
1942	58	484
1943	15	360
1944	73	334
1945	478	243
1946	317	132
1947	179	123
1948	207	142
1949	152	122

**Table 5.3 Crimes and offences related to 'War Legislation'\* and military laws in Edinburgh, 1935-1949.**

\* Other than the 'Lighting Restrictions'

[Source: ECA ED006/1/10-12]

1938	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945
1.97	2.43	10.99	15.85	18.54	21.36	22.56	23.51

**Table 5.4 Total working population in the armed forces and auxiliary services in Great Britain, 1938-1945 (%)**

[Source: Statistical Digest of the War, 8]

Policing with regard to military personnel in the Second World War, which included impressment, billeting, deserters, and absentees, was, in contrast, a continuation of peacetime activity. Yet as Table 5.3 also shows the demand increased dramatically in Edinburgh with the outbreak of war and a similar pattern was evident across Scotland

<sup>138</sup> Smithies, *Crime in Wartime*, 14-20.

<sup>139</sup> Conscription continued until the end of the 1950s. Calder, *The People's War*, 569.

as a whole.<sup>140</sup> Table 5.4 reveals that, as a consequence of conscription, the percentage of the total working population in the armed forces and auxiliary services in Great Britain increased from 1.97 per cent in 1938 to 23.51 per cent by 1945. Furthermore, during the war there were millions of allied service personnel in the UK, particularly in preparation for 'D-Day'. There was therefore a greater potential for offences related to military laws, like desertion, to occur. In 1941, for example, the ratio of those going AWOL from the armed forces was about 1:100. At the same time, central government required a local policing response. In that sense, policing was again reactive and overt in support of national objectives.

### Conclusion

In his message to police forces in England and Wales at the end of the war in Europe the Home Secretary, Herbert Morrison, paid tribute to the 'innumerable tasks' performed by the police which 'were of the 'greatest importance to the Home Front'. These duties were, he acknowledged, 'sometimes unspectacular'.<sup>141</sup> In contrast to Petrie's suggestion of the threat posed by enemy agents, this chapter has demonstrated that war-related policing in Edinburgh was largely mundane.

Much of what the police were required to do was intended to support the prosecution of the war on the home front. However, notwithstanding the introduction of the Police War Instructions, a great deal was a continuation and intensification of existing policing practice. Police surveillance of the CPGB and SNP, for example, had taken place in the interwar period because of their respective revolutionary and secessionist agendas. During the war their activities were perceived to be inimical to the war effort. In a similar vein, whilst the police did enforce military laws and those relating to the evasion of duty in the interwar period, police activity increased during the war to support the mobilisation of the economy generally and enforce conscription. Concurrently, the war did impose new demands on the police in relation to 'War Legislation', including the 'Lighting Restrictions' and, notably, the investigation of suspected sabotage which was a consequence of the milieu of paranoia around fifth columnists. Thus the hypothesis that operational policing in Edinburgh during the Second World War represented both continuity and change withstands historical

<sup>140</sup> cf Cmd 7505, 14-16.

<sup>141</sup> Cited in Dixon, "The Emergency Work of the Police Forces," 224-225.

analysis. Notwithstanding the recruitment of police auxiliaries, with a limited capacity, the question thus arises as to the extent to which this affected core policing demands and that relating to the regulation of road traffic.



## 6

**Core policing**

As part of his tribute to police forces in England and Wales in 1945 the Home Secretary, Herbert Morrison, acknowledged that the police had, in addition to the many war-related duties, 'cheerfully carried on [their] ordinary day-to-day work'.<sup>1</sup> Along with political, economic, social, and intellectual factors, the creation of the 'new' police in Scotland was premised on the desire for a more effective means of protecting property.<sup>2</sup> From the outset, the core duty was therefore to overtly and proactively fulfil this function, as well as protecting life and keeping the peace.<sup>3</sup>

The purpose of this chapter is to assess whether these core functions changed in Edinburgh during the Second World War from that which prevailed in the pre- and immediate post-war eras. It is argued that policing with regard to core functions represented both continuity and change. For example, policing with regard to the protection of property and life remained largely unchanged during the war from that which prevailed in the pre-war period. On the other hand, there was an intensification of police activity with regard to some crimes and offences within these classifications, in particular housebreaking, sexual offences, the mistreatment of children, and assaults. At the same time, there was a sharp decline in police activity in relation to the maintenance of order and civic regulation during the war by comparison with the pre-war period.

As this chapter will demonstrate, changes in the pattern of policing during the war were a consequence of the legacy of pre-war political, social, and economic factors that were specific to Edinburgh. In particular, suburbanisation increased the opportunities for housebreakers, whilst the failure to reintroduce a system for warning juvenile offenders likely compounded the increased demands on the police. The introduction of police boxes in the 1930s, meanwhile, eroded police capacity and

<sup>1</sup> Cited in Dixon, "The Emergency Work of the Police Forces," 224-225.

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, Barrie, "Patrick Colquhoun, the Scottish Enlightenment and Police Reform in Glasgow," 71-73., McGowan, *Policing the Metropolis of Scotland*, 80.

<sup>3</sup> The 1805 Act in Edinburgh, for example, provided regulations to establish a system of police, for apprehending vagrants and disorderly persons, preserving the peace, suppressing common begging, removing nuisances, and for cleansing and lighting the streets. 45 Geo. 3, cap. 21 (1805).

effectiveness. To add to this, policing was affected by factors associated with the war. In particular, the introduction of the blackout increased the incidence of housebreaking and sudden deaths from accidents. Concurrently, the blackout obscured victimless offences, such as street betting, that only became known at the point of detection, thereby reducing the demand on the police. In a similar vein, military conscription and essential war work relocated some young adult males who would otherwise have committed offences.<sup>4</sup>

Policing during the war was also affected by the release of regular officers to the armed forces. Together with the pressure of war-related duties, and notwithstanding the recruitment of police auxiliaries, this reduced the visibility of the police, particularly in relation to those with experience and local knowledge. In this context officers were more likely to exercise their discretion to ignore some crimes and offences, especially those that were victimless or ones to which they were otherwise apathetic. As a consequence, there was an increase in the use of summons rather than apprehension as a means of dealing with incidents relating to all crimes and offences.

The chapter examines core policing in Edinburgh during the Second World War. For the most part, the analysis is based on the annual reports by the chief constable to the town council on the state of crime and the police establishment. These reports contain statistics relating to the number of crimes and offences made known to the police, and cases where one or more persons were arrested or cited, and thus provide an overview of operational policing.

### **The legacy of interwar policing**

In many respects the general picture of operational policing on the eve of the Second World War was similar to the nineteenth century. In an echo of instructions given to officers of the 'new' police forces in the nineteenth century, the 1931 *Manual* reminded Scottish officers that their primary object, to which their efforts must be 'constantly directed' was the 'prevention of crime', the 'preservation of peace and

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<sup>4</sup> In his study of Glasgow in the interwar period, Andrew Davies identified that the average age of men who were members of the criminal gang the 'Beehive Boys' was just under the age of twenty-four. Andrew Davies, "Street Gangs, Crime and Policing in Glasgow during the 1930s: The Case of the Beehive Boys," *Social History* 23, no. 3 (1998): 257.

good order', the 'safety of the lives and property of the Lieges', and the 'detection of offenders'.<sup>5</sup>

The basis of the system of rigid preventive surveillance in Edinburgh, as in other urban areas, remained the policeman patrolling a beat on foot. As English-based studies have identified, mechanisation of the police before the war was 'rudimentary'.<sup>6</sup> In Edinburgh the use of motor vehicles throughout the early 1930s was restricted to traffic patrols and the conveyance of prisoners and the injured, whilst detectives did not regularly use cars until April 1934 when three were purchased.<sup>7</sup> Michael Brogden found that for ninety per cent of officers in Liverpool in the interwar period the beat represented the 'reality of the normal working day'.<sup>8</sup> On joining the police in Glasgow in the early 1920s, Colquhoun recalled being told that 'the beat man formed the first line of defence against crime' and that 'when [he] came tramping down the street [he] should be a walking crime prevention campaign'.<sup>9</sup> During the war, and notwithstanding the additional war-related tasks, the City Prosecutor in Edinburgh reminded officers that their first function 'to prevent crime and to maintain unbroken the public peace' was to be achieved by 'patrolling the streets' in a 'scrupulous and diligent' manner.<sup>10</sup>

As Klein found in her study of three English forces, beyond their core duties, the police in the interwar period also carried out a 'baffling variety of activities that appeared to have little to do with lawbreaking'.<sup>11</sup> The police in Scotland were, for example, responsible for a range of regulations related to civic well-being, which was a legacy of the improvement legislation that gave rise to the creation of the 'new' police forces. Between 1930 and 1938 the Edinburgh police made a mean annual 12,619 reports to municipal and central government agencies such as the Road, Burgh, and Water Engineers relating to lighting, cleansing, and sanitation. Furthermore, the Coal Weighing Inspector, who was responsible for visiting depots from which coal was sold, weighed, and delivered to the public, was, until 1934, attached to the

<sup>5</sup> *Police Manual for Scotland*, 19.

<sup>6</sup> Weinberger, *The Best Police in the World*, 37.

<sup>7</sup> ECA ED06/1/10, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1934, 32.

<sup>8</sup> Brogden, *On the Mersey Beat*, 36.

<sup>9</sup> Colquhoun, *Life Begins at Midnight*, 19.

<sup>10</sup> Mill, *The Scottish Police*, 38.

<sup>11</sup> Klein, *Invisible Men*, 43.



Watching Department. Indeed, during the early decades of the twentieth century the responsibility of the police for a range of public services increased. In the late 1920s HMICS commented on the ‘constantly increasing demands for the services of the police on work other than ordinary patrol duty’.<sup>12</sup> Klein has argued that part of the explanation related to the increased availability of the telephone ‘as more and more of the public decided that calling the police was the simplest way to resolve a problem, regardless of its relationship to law and order’.<sup>13</sup> For instance, lost and found property increasingly became an issue for the police. Between 1930 and 1935 the police in Edinburgh dealt with a mean annual 23,772 items of found property and 9,856 reports of lost property. Over the same period, they also dealt with a mean 1,131 stray dogs, returned 1,036 lost children to their parents, and assisted 2,289 people to their homes or other institutions. At the same time, as will be seen in chapter seven, dealing with traffic created the exponential demand.

All this created a problem of capacity. At a strategic level police authorities and chief constables in urban areas rationalised their infrastructure and, drawing on the experience in England, widely adopted the police box system.<sup>14</sup> In Edinburgh 141 boxes and 13 pillars were introduced between 1931 and 1933, whilst the five territorial divisions were reduced to four and 25 of the 31 police stations were closed. The police authority in Edinburgh took this as an opportunity to save money and dispensed with the services of three inspectors, 10 sergeants, and 18 constables. Whilst HMICS advised that the value of the police boxes could ‘hardly be overestimated’, the consequences of their introduction in Edinburgh aggravated the problem of capacity and eroded further the ability of the police to discharge their core functions.<sup>15</sup> Indeed, the chief constable, Roderick Ross, ‘deprecated’ the ‘very serious reduction’ and pointed out to the police authority that any advantage gained from the introduction of the police boxes had thus been ‘nullified’. Furthermore, he reasoned, suburbanisation, together with the deployment of officers to specialist areas of policing, should have led to an increase in strength. It is a ‘fundamental fact’, he argued, ‘that good patrol work carried out by an adequate personnel and resulting in crime prevention, is

<sup>12</sup> Seventy-First Report of His Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary for Scotland, 1929, 5.

<sup>13</sup> *Invisible Men*, 54.

<sup>14</sup> Williams, *Police Control Systems*, 131.

<sup>15</sup> Seventy-Ninth Report of His Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary for Scotland, 1937, 4.

infinitely more efficacious than a highly efficient department wholly engaged in detection'.<sup>16</sup>

In response to the problem of capacity police officers exercised discretion in enforcement. As the 1928 Royal Commission on Police Powers and Procedure in England and Wales concluded, given the 'variety and complexity' of the police role, and that a constable's power was not delegated, it would be 'impossible to issue hard and fast instructions'.<sup>17</sup> As a consequence, officers adopted a variety of procedures. The situation was even more imprecise in Scotland due to the absence of the Judges' Rules that originated in England and Wales in 1906 which was binding in practice if not law.<sup>18</sup> At the tactical level, English-based studies have identified that meting out physical violence was rationalised by police officers as a legitimate punishment and means of preventing crime.<sup>19</sup> One of the features of policing in Britain in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries was violence. As Emsley argued in relation to England in the nineteenth century:

With little training, little concept of status, and subjected to both verbal abuse and physical violence, the temptation to lash out at tormentors and potential tormentors must have been enormous for members of the new police; and fragmentary evidence suggests that, throughout the century, illicit violence was not uncommon.<sup>20</sup>

Colquhoun recalled that in Glasgow in the 1920s: 'a man on the beat ... had to be ready to use his fists and his baton at a moment's notice'.<sup>21</sup> Likewise, at a strategic level, Sillitoe saw the streets as a 'battleground' and legitimised violence by the police as an effective way of dealing with gangs in Sheffield and Glasgow in the 1930s.<sup>22</sup> The relationship between the police and gangs like the 'Beehive Boys' was, according

<sup>16</sup> ECA ED0006/1/9, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1933, 24.

<sup>17</sup> Cmd 3297, 8, 18, 33.

<sup>18</sup> Robert Mark, *In the Office of Constable* (London: Collins, 1978), 57. For jurisprudence in Scotland see, for example, Andrew Gibb, "Scottish Criminal Procedure Comparatively Considered," *The Police Journal* 1, no. 4 (1928).

<sup>19</sup> Clapson and Emsley, "Street, Beat and Respectability," 123.

<sup>20</sup> Clive Emsley, "'The Thump of Wood on a Swede Turnip': Police Violence in Nineteenth-Century England," *Criminal Justice History* 66 (1985): 130.

<sup>21</sup> Colquhoun, *Life Begins at Midnight*, 20.

<sup>22</sup> Percy Joseph Sillitoe, *Cloak without Dagger* (London: Cassell, 1955), 64-67.

to one historian, consequently 'characterised by violence'.<sup>23</sup> 'Rough handling' was an 'accepted and integral style of policing' in Scotland.<sup>24</sup>

Mark Roodhouse has pointed out correctly that it is difficult to study the exercise of discretion.<sup>25</sup> In practice, it is impossible to discern in the historical record where it was exercised at the tactical level. Occasional glimpses are afforded in some memoirs by police officers. Robert Mark described the discretion used by the police in, for example, arresting bookies in Manchester in the interwar period.<sup>26</sup> Nevertheless, given the additional demands in connection with policing the home front during the Second World War, and the shortage of regular officers there was clearly greater pressure to turn a 'blind eye' to some offences and this undoubtedly helps explain differences in the pattern of policing during the war from that of the immediate pre-war years.

	Number			%		
	Apprehended	Summoned	Total	Apprehended	Summoned	Total
1934	4243	4097	8340	50.9	49.1	100.0
1935	4446	4523	8969	49.5	50.5	100.0
1936	4650	4829	9479	49.0	51.0	100.0
1937	4951	4970	9921	49.9	50.1	100.0
1938	4390	5803	10193	43.1	56.9	100.0
1939	4381	4423	8804	49.8	50.2	100.0
1940	3945	5593	9538	41.4	58.6	100.0
1941	3959	5394	9353	42.3	57.7	100.0
1942	3508	4658	8166	43.0	57.0	100.0
1943	3053	3785	6838	44.6	55.4	100.0
1944	*2720	3108	5828	46.7	53.3	100.0

\*Not including 114 persons apprehended for other forces.

**Table 6.1 Persons proceeded against at the instance of the police in Edinburgh, 1934-1944**

[Source: ECA ED006/1/11]

As Table 6.1 shows, the headline figures identify a decrease in the number of persons proceeded against in Edinburgh at the instance of the police during the war by comparison with the pre-war period when it was increasing. Indeed, the figures in 1943 and 1944 together include 337 persons who were subject to proceedings at the instance of other authorities for contraventions of the Defence (Home Guard)

<sup>23</sup> Davies, "Street Gangs, Crime and Policing in Glasgow," 253.

<sup>24</sup> Bartie and Jackson, "Youth Crime and Preventive Policing" 99.

<sup>25</sup> Roodhouse, *Black Market Britain*, 159.

<sup>26</sup> Mark, *In the Office of Constable*, 30.

Regulations, Edinburgh Corporation Act, education acts, factory acts, food and drugs acts, Petroleum Act, Poor Law Act, public health acts, roads acts, weights and measures acts, and for cruelty to children. Put another way, the mean number of person proceeded against in the war years 1939-1944 was some 14 per cent less than in the immediate pre-war years 1934-1938. By comparison with the immediate pre-war era, there was also a mean increase of some eight per cent in the use of summons during the war with a corresponding decrease in apprehensions. In the context of the reduced visibility of the police, and the additional war-related functions, officers were more likely to view processing an apprehension as an avoidable distraction. It was, as will be seen, similar to the increased use of a caution by traffic officers as a means of disposal in dealing with the regulation of road traffic.

### **Policing in relation to the protection of property**

Under the classification of crimes and offences in reports made by the chief constable to the town council, Class II, 'Crimes Against Property with Violence', Class III, 'Crimes Against Property without Violence', and Class IV, 'Malicious Injuries to Property' have the most bearing on the protection of property. As Table 6.2 suggests, the pattern of crime and offences made known to the police, and those cases where one or more persons were arrested or cited, remained relatively stable in the period 1935-1949. Thus, despite Mannheim's prediction, the figures suggest some support for Weinberger's finding, in relation to crime rates in general in England, that 'the war appears to have had very little immediate effect'.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Weinberger, *The Best Police in the World*, 135.

	Number								Detection/Solution rate (%)		
	Made known to the police				Cases where one or more persons were arrested or cited						
	Class II	Class III	Class IV	Total	Class II	Class III	Class IV	Total	Class II	Class III	Class IV
1935	1810	6073	61	7944	557	1315	61	1933	30.8	21.7	100.0
1936	2001	6341	265	8607	779	1557	265	2601	38.9	24.6	100.0
1937	2009	6961	394	9364	595	1674	393	2662	29.6	24.0	99.7
1938	2274	6419	345	9038	828	1613	345	2786	36.4	25.1	100.0
1939	2549	6503	405	9457	785	1290	402	2477	30.8	19.8	99.3
1940	2151	6394	591	9136	537	1324	591	2452	25.0	20.7	100.0
1941	2303	6749	485	9537	561	1495	485	2541	22.4	22.2	100.0
1942	2348	6758	244	9350	645	1503	244	2392	27.5	22.2	100.0
1943	2330	6928	227	9485	1087	1769	227	3083	46.7	25.5	100.0
1944	2650	6411	617	9678	914	1486	615	3015	34.5	23.2	99.7
1945	3658	6457	96	10211	928	1477	96	2501	25.4	22.9	100.0
1946	3373	5969	115	9457	1083	1724	107	2914	32.1	28.9	93.0
1947	2653	6339	83	9075	683	2066	70	2819	25.7	32.6	84.3
1948	3197	6260	107	9564	821	2055	99	2975	25.7	32.8	92.5
1949	2929	5655	118	8702	765	1911	117	2793	26.1	33.8	99.2

**Table 6.2 Class II, 'Crimes Against Property with Violence', Class III, 'Crimes Against Property without Violence' and, Class IV, 'Malicious Injuries to Property' in Edinburgh, 1935-1949**

[Source: ECA ED006/1/10-12]

The table also shows the percentage difference in each Class between the number of crimes and offences made known to the police and the number of cases where one or more persons were arrested or cited, and suggests what could be characterised as the detection or solution rate. In very broad terms, the mean detection rate for all Classes during the war years 1939-1945 remained reasonably consistent with the pre-war era, 1935-1938 in particular.<sup>28</sup> Whilst the rates for Classes II and III are similar, that for Class IV is, however, markedly different. The explanation was probably related to the fact that complainers were unlikely to report some minor offences where there was little chance of the offender being traced. Furthermore, even if a complainer reported offences of malicious mischief or damage, officers did not record it officially as a crime unless there was a culprit. In effect, almost all these recorded offences were solved.

<sup>28</sup> Notably, the mean detection/solution rate for Class III increased from 22.4 per cent during the war to 32.0 per cent in the period 1946-1949, whilst the mean number of crimes and offences made known to the police was 8.2 per cent less than during the war. Put simply, the detection rate increased in the post-war period even though there were fewer crimes and offences being reported which suggests that it had become something of an operational priority.

Yet the figures conceal a significant trend. As a percentage of all crimes and offences, the police were increasingly active with regard to those related to the protection of property as the war progressed. In Class II, the majority of crimes and offences made known to the police, and cases where one or more persons were arrested or cited, were: Theft by Housebreaking; Housebreaking with Intent to Steal; Theft by opening Lockfast Places; and, Opening Lockfast Places with Intent to Steal. Likewise, in Class III the majority related to Theft, whilst in Class IV the majority were Malicious Mischief. In this regard, Table 6.3 shows the number of crimes and offences made known to the police, and cases where one or more persons were arrested or cited, together with the detection/solution rate.

The significant point to be drawn here is that police activity during the war with regard to crimes and offences related to housebreaking and, to a much lesser numerical extent, Malicious Mischief, increased by comparison with either or both the pre- and the post-war eras. In contrast, the pattern of police activity during the war with regard to crimes and offences related to Opening Lockfast Places declined whilst that for Theft remained stable. Although fluctuations in the number of cases where one or more persons were arrested or cited in relation to housebreaking are noted in passing in Morren's reports to the town council during the war, there was no explanation given for the increase in the number of crimes and offences made known to the police. Indeed, the mean annual number made known to the police during the war was 27.8 per cent greater than in the period 1935-1938. There was a similar increase in reports made known to the police in relation to housebreaking across Scotland during the war, whilst in the rest of the UK there was an increase in offences made known to the police, and persons proceeded against and found guilty, of Breaking and Entering.<sup>29</sup> In short, there was an increased demand on the police throughout the UK during the war because of housebreaking.

<sup>29</sup> cf Cmd 7505, 12-13., *Statistical Digest of the War*, 48. The figure relating to the rest of the UK obviously excludes those offences made known to the police where either no one was proceeded against or was not convicted.

	Number made known to the police			
	Theft by Housebreaking; Housebreaking with Intent to Steal	Theft by Opening Lockfast Places; Opening Lockfast Places with Intent to Steal	Theft	Malicious Mischief
1935	1368	424	5277	61
1936	1514	461	5644	264
1937	1510	492	6405	392
1938	1657	600	5837	341
1939	1729	817	5972	400
1940	1619	530	6011	591
1941	1617	686	6449	485
1942	1834	511	6496	244
1943	1251	415	6632	227
1944	2266	346	6082	609
1945	3215	411	6025	89
1946	3049	280	5468	104
1947	2360	264	5564	80
1948	2827	328	5627	104
1949	2586	295	4902	114
	Number of cases where one or more persons were arrested or cited			
1935	420	130	866	61
1936	656	115	1120	264
1937	479	114	1309	392
1938	678	133	1207	341
1939	657	126	973	400
1940	464	71	1097	591
1941	440	121	1210	485
1942	546	96	1253	244
1943	793	125	1534	227
1944	823	91	1163	609
1945	841	77	1050	89
1946	979	99	1299	103
1947	624	49	1347	70
1948	696	110	1531	98
1949	652	96	1256	113
	Detection/Solution rate (%)			
1935	30.7	30.7	16.4	100.0
1936	43.3	24.9	19.8	100.0
1937	31.7	23.1	20.4	100.0
1938	40.9	22.1	20.7	100.0
1939	38.0	15.4	16.3	100.0
1940	28.7	13.4	18.2	100.0
1941	27.2	17.6	18.8	100.0
1942	29.8	18.8	19.3	100.0
1943	63.4	30.1	23.1	100.0
1944	36.3	26.3	19.1	100.0
1945	26.1	18.8	17.4	100.0
1946	32.1	35.4	23.8	99.0
1947	26.4	18.6	24.2	87.5
1948	24.6	33.5	27.2	94.2
1949	25.2	32.5	25.6	99.1

**Table 6.3 Crimes and offences of: Theft by Housebreaking and Housebreaking with Intent to Steal; Theft by Opening Lockfast Places and Opening Lockfast Places with Intent to Steal; Theft; and Malicious Mischief in Edinburgh, 1935-1949**

[Source: ECA ED006/1/10-12]

By its very nature, housebreaking is more or less confined to the public domain and the level is, therefore, more likely to be influenced by preventative policing. Although in 1937 Robert Mark in Manchester saw the 'futility of shaking hands with doorknobs all night' as a means of preventing crime, checking property had been seen as a sacrosanct element of patrolling the beat and protecting property throughout Britain from the outset.<sup>30</sup> As Goldsmith found, constables in Glasgow in the 1880s were instructed to stick small pieces of paper over the gap between the door and lintel of unoccupied premises so that any breach of security might readily be seen.<sup>31</sup> In Edinburgh, checking property was seen as of such significance that it was included in the chief constable's annual report. In comparison to reacting to and investigating reports of housebreaking, it was intended to show the extent to which the police were proactive. Between 1930 and 1939, for example, the police recorded that they had found a mean annual 8,171 insecurities, mostly in shops and warehouses.<sup>32</sup> Similarly, between 1930 and 1938 the police visited a mean annual of 5,000 unoccupied dwelling houses between May and October, when presumably some occupiers were taking a summer holiday. By 1938 the police were checking 59 per cent more unoccupied houses than they were in 1930.

However, after 1940 no figures relating to the checking of property are given in the chief constable's annual reports to the town council for the remainder of the period under consideration. Given the limited content of the reports during the war it is possible that the detail was merely omitted. In that event, it would have been reasonable to expect it to have reappeared in the immediate post-war reports. It seems likely, however, that given the pressure of war-related duties, the police were not required to carry out checks on property or at least not record them. Thus, it seems probable that the police did not proactively protect property during the war to the same extent that they did during the 1930s and therefore this contributed to the increase in housebreaking.

A degree of protection of business premises was, however, still regarded as an aspect of policing during the war. For the duration, the police continued to hold some shop

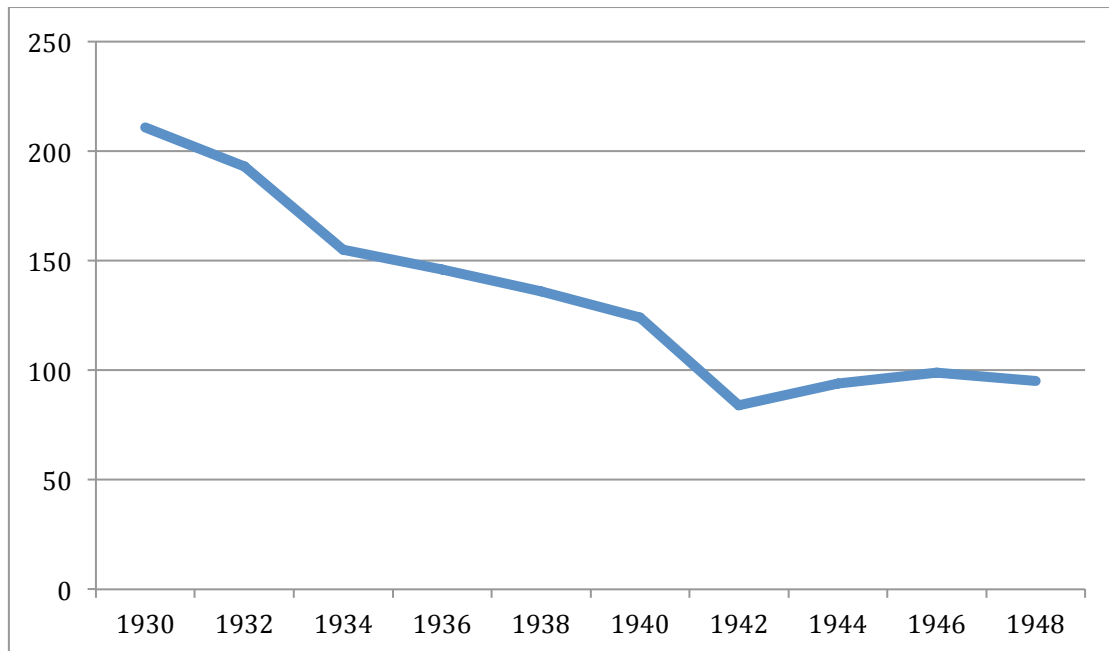
<sup>30</sup> Mark, *In the Office of Constable*, 25.

<sup>31</sup> Goldsmith, "The Development of the City of Glasgow Police," 187.

<sup>32</sup> cf ECA ED006/1/9-10, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1930, 52; 1931, 42; 1932, 42; 1933, 48; 1934, 60; 1935, 28; 1936, 30; 1937, 34; 1938, 35.



and warehouse keys at police stations where the time of delivery and deposit were recorded. Given, however, that each business paid one guinea annually there might have been a financial imperative for the police to continue to provide the service. At the same time, in contrast to unoccupied houses, businesses increasingly saw the security of their premises as less of a police responsibility. As Figure 6.1 shows, the general trend over the period 1930-1942 was a steady decline in the requirement for the police to hold keys for business premises. Whilst there was a small increase from 1943, the number for the remainder of the period under consideration was less than half that which prevailed in the period 1930-1933. The trough in numbers was at its lowest in 1942, which might suggest that proprietors recognised the police were preoccupied by more significant war-related duties.

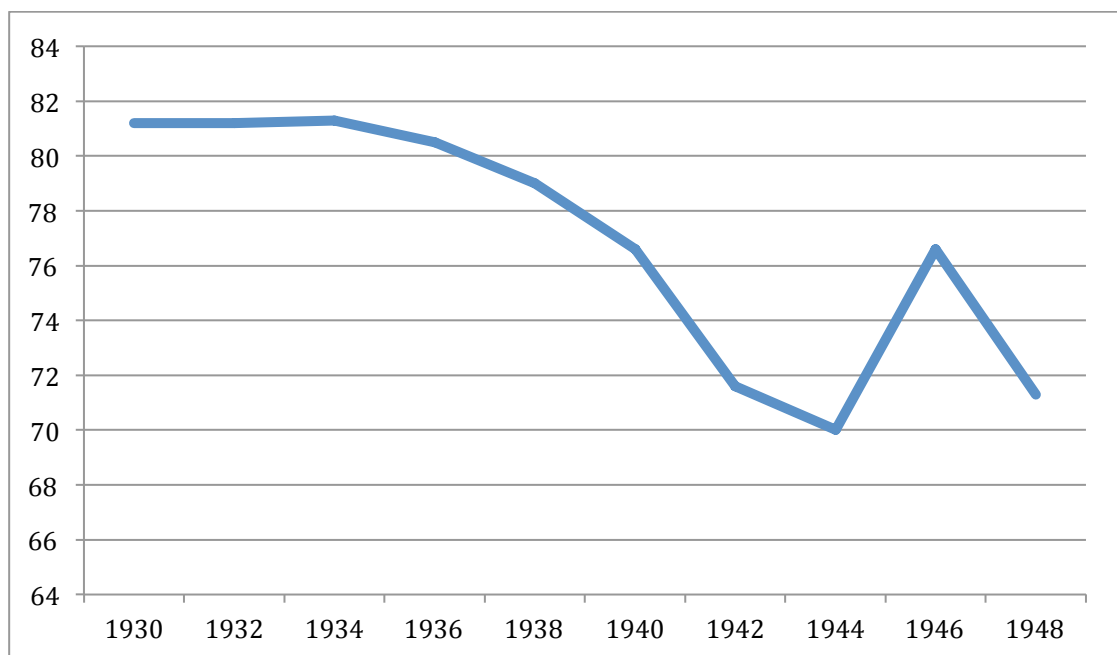


**Figure 6.1** Number of shop and warehouse keys held by the police in Edinburgh, 1930-1948

[Source: ECA, ED/006/1/9-12]

Part of the explanation for the increase in housebreaking undoubtedly relates to the reduction in the number of regular male constables. As Figure 6.2 demonstrates, the proportion of regular male constables as a percentage of the actual regular strength declined dramatically during the war. Although auxiliaries were recruited to replace regular officers, they did not, for the most part, have the same experience or intimate local knowledge of beats and thus potential insecurities in domestic and business premises. Morren records that in 1944, for example, only 13 of the 259 auxiliaries

were in the First Police Reserve, which was comprised of retired regular officers. Of the remainder, 179 were members of the Police War Reserve who had, in their first year, received a mere three hours' instruction on beat patrol with a regular constable.<sup>33</sup> The majority of police auxiliaries who were members of the Police War Reserve were not therefore as experienced as either regular male constables or the First Police Reserve. At the same time, the requirement to undertake war-related duties was, as observed, significant. Although not patrolling a beat in Edinburgh, Merrilees recalled: 'the multiplicity of war-time duties kept me, like other police officers, constantly busy'.<sup>34</sup> In Oxfordshire, St. Johnston remembered that as a consequence of the war 'much ordinary police work had to go by the board'.<sup>35</sup> Within a month of the end of the war, A.M. Struthers, the regional officer in Glasgow for the National Council for Social Service, had attributed the increase in housebreaking in Scotland to the depletion of police forces, and the extra demands, which had reduced the amount of time available for beat patrol.<sup>36</sup>



**Figure 6.2 Actual regular male constables as a percentage of the total actual regular police strength in Edinburgh, 1930-1948**

[Source: ECA ED006/1/9-12]

<sup>33</sup> ECA ED0006/1/11, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1944, 5., NRS HH52/27/1, Circular 3545, 18 May 1939.

<sup>34</sup> Merrilees, *The Short Arm of the Law*, 147.

<sup>35</sup> St. Johnston, *One Policeman's Story*, 76.

<sup>36</sup> A.M. Struthers, "Juvenile Delinquency in Scotland," *American Sociological Review* 10, no. 5 (1945): 659.

Furthermore, whilst the introduction of police boxes in the pre-war era had exacerbated the problem of capacity in Edinburgh, they had also affected efficiency. As Morren admitted during the war: ‘the public has not taken to the Boxes or used them to the extent envisaged’. As a consequence, officers were losing ‘local contacts’, public ‘good-will’, and the co-operation necessary for the effective operation of the ‘Police machine’. In addition, officers could not discuss police trends and exchange intelligence with each other to the same extent that they had done when deployed from police stations before the introduction of the police boxes. As Morren put it: ‘The men themselves also deplore the loss of benefits which formerly accrued by daily intercourse and discussion on Police Matters with their colleagues’. As a consequence, whilst he did not advocate re-opening the closed police stations, he considered proposing to the police authority what would be known as a ‘Sergeant’s Sections Box, on the lines of a miniature Police Station, at several strategic points throughout the City’.<sup>37</sup> There is no evidence that the scheme was ever progressed in the period under consideration however.

The legacy of more extrinsic social factors also had an impact on policing capacity during the war, in particular suburbanisation and the opportunities this afforded housebreakers. As Morren pointed out in 1935:

The increase in the number of housebreakings can only be accounted for by the continued ‘ribbon’ development. It is found that the housebreaker has very little difficulty in breaking into this class of dwelling-house as the doors, windows etc., are easily opened and there is not the same likelihood of unusual noise being heard by neighbours.<sup>38</sup>

The problem of suburbanisation was compounded by the fact that many of the developments did not have street lighting. Roderick Ross, the chief constable in 1933, noted that this ‘provided a decided advantage to the evil-doer’ and ‘greatly handicapped’ the police in discharging their role of protecting property: ‘There is no doubt that the thief and housebreaker hesitate to pursue their nefarious callings without the cloak of semi-darkness’.<sup>39</sup> The imposition of the blackout at the outbreak

<sup>37</sup> ECA ED006/1/11, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1943, 7.

<sup>38</sup> ECA ED006/1/10, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1935, 15.

<sup>39</sup> ECA ED006/1/9, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1933, 7.

of the war clearly enhanced the opportunities for housebreakers. As the *Edinburgh Evening News* reported after the first week of hostilities: 'An unprecedented crime-wave has swept the city during the last week since the blackout came into force' and that the police had been 'badly hampered in their investigations by the black-out restrictions'.<sup>40</sup> At the same time, Morren thought that part of the explanation for housebreakings lay in the carelessness of the occupiers. Before and after the war he made repeated appeals in his annual reports to householders not to leave doors and windows insecure and to install burglar catches. It is reasonable to assume that similar pleas were only omitted from his wartime reports to the town council because these were condensed.

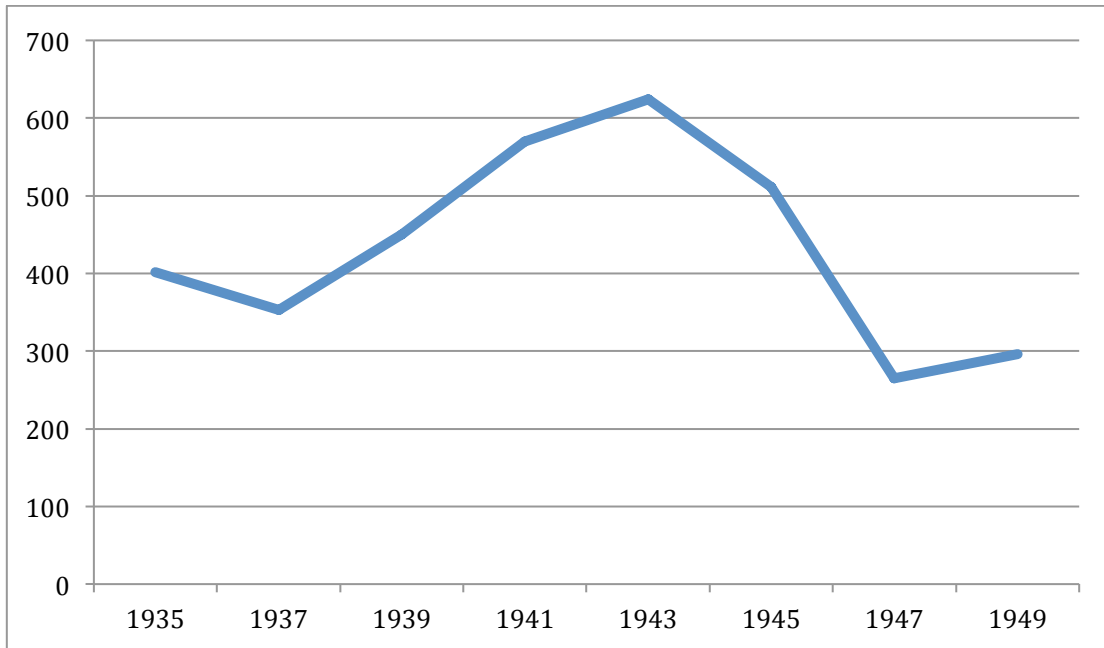
In his study of the black-market during the war, Roodhouse identified that, in contrast to 'contingent consent', which might explain 'voluntary compliance', individuals utilised the discourse of 'fair shares' or 'entitlement' to justify their involvement in criminal activity. In this sense, a 'little bit extra', or a 'decent return', was perceived as 'compensation for the many personal sacrifices that they made at central government's behest'.<sup>41</sup> Thus from this perspective the increase in housebreaking was a consequence of total war and further questions the existence of social solidarity on which the concept of a 'people's war' is premised.

Many of those who committed the housebreakings in Edinburgh during the war were, however, juveniles. Morren's first report during the war period pointed out, for example, that 'two young brothers' were charged with 85 offences and that the number of housebreakings in which boys aged 14-17 years were involved had 'greatly increased'.<sup>42</sup> Likewise, after the first full year of war, Morren pointed out that the number of juveniles convicted, especially in relation to housebreaking, had reached an unprecedented level. As Figure 6.3 demonstrates, the number of juveniles convicted for all crimes and offences increased dramatically during the war by comparison with the immediate pre- and post-war eras.

<sup>40</sup> In France and Germany the death penalty had been imposed for crimes committed during the blackout. *Edinburgh Evening News*, 16 September 1939, 8.

<sup>41</sup> Roodhouse, "Popular Morality and the Black Market in Britain, 1939-55," 244-258.

<sup>42</sup> ECA ED006/1/10, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1939, 13.



**Figure 6.3 Number of juveniles convicted for all crimes and offences in Edinburgh, 1935-1949**

[Source: ECA, ED/006/1/10-12]

David Smith has identified a similar trend throughout Scotland during the Second World War. He found that ‘nearly twice as many children and young persons were proceeded against for housebreaking in 1943 as in 1937, while housebreaking arrests of adults hardly increased during that same period’. The increase in housebreaking was, he identified, contemporarily attributed by experts to a number of factors including the introduction of the blackout, the scarcity of household goods, and the fact that the police were preoccupied with other war-related duties.<sup>43</sup> From his perspective, Morren saw the increased demand on the police caused by juvenile housebreakers as a consequence of external social factors associated with the emergency. In his report for 1939, for example, he identified the ‘misplaced leniency’ and ‘clemency’ of the Probation System as contributory factors and cited the case where three youths committed three separate series of housebreakings whilst on suspended sentence and probation.<sup>44</sup> In 1943 he opined: ‘one of the main causes is lack of parental control, either through apathy or the unfortunate absences of one or other of the parents on war service’. He recommended the establishment of youth

<sup>43</sup> Smith, "Official Responses to Juvenile Delinquency " 83, note 23; 89. For a study of juvenile delinquency in the Great War see, for example, David Smith, "Juvenile Delinquency in Britain in the First World War," *Criminal Justice History* 11 (1990). For the post-war era see Louise A. Jackson and Angela Bartie, *Policing Youth: Britain, 1945-70* (Manchester; New York: Manchester University Press, 2014).

<sup>44</sup> ECA ED006/1/10, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1939, 13-14.

clubs to 'counteract juvenile delinquency and afford youngsters legitimate channels in which to expand their surplus energy, as well as giving them an opportunity to study and practice good citizenship'.<sup>45</sup>

Policing capacity in Edinburgh in relation to juvenile offenders was, however, also likely to have been affected by the legacy of a strategic police policy decision. In particular, processing them formally through the Sheriff and Burgh Police court system, rather than utilising, until the last months of the war, an extra-legal system of warnings.<sup>46</sup> Forces that operated a system of warning juvenile offenders claimed to have reduced the level of recidivism. Indeed, Smithies argued that the different rate of juvenile delinquency between towns, and over time, in the Second World War was a reflection of different approaches to criminal justice.<sup>47</sup> In response to the increase in juvenile offending across Scotland the Secretary of State for Scotland, Tom Johnston, instituted a number of inquiries including a convention in Edinburgh in January 1944. As a consequence, he established the Scottish Advisory Council on the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Offenders in September that year and asked it to consider whether the system of police warnings of juvenile offenders as an alternative to prosecution should be extended.

The Advisory Council established that the practice of police warnings operated in six of the 18 large burghs with separate police forces and in 20 of the 31 county forces. It further found that about 90 per cent of juveniles who had been warned in Glasgow had not reoffended, whilst the figure was 88 per cent in Dundee and Kilmarnock, and 97 per cent in Coatbridge.<sup>48</sup> Yet although it did issue formal warnings on the instructions of the procurator fiscal, the police in Edinburgh did not operate an informal system where the decision to warn as an alternative to prosecution was taken by a police officer. In evidence before the Advisory Council in December 1944, Morren reported that an informal scheme had been in operation until at least 1905 but his predecessor, Ross, had stopped it at some unknown time as a consequence of a question over its

<sup>45</sup> ECA ED006/1/11, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1943, 9.

<sup>46</sup> Juvenile courts under the provisions of 1 Edw. 8 & 1 Geo. 6, cap. 37 (1937) were set up only in the counties of Ayr, Fife, and Renfrew and, the city of Aberdeen. See Jackson and Bartie, *Policing Youth*, 25.

<sup>47</sup> Smithies, *Crime in Wartime*, 181.

<sup>48</sup> NRS HH57/288, 'Police Warnings'. Report by the Scottish Advisory Council on Treatment and Rehabilitation of Offenders, 1945, 1-2.

legality.<sup>49</sup> Indeed, a minute by the SHD in early 1944 cautioned that an informal scheme of warnings involved the police in ‘deciding whether or not a particular offender is to be dealt with in the way prescribed by Parliament or by an informal method of administering justice which has no Parliamentary sanction’ and was ‘usurping a function which ought to be exercised by a court’.<sup>50</sup>

Nonetheless, the Advisory Council argued that the ‘case for the general adoption of a system showing so great a measure of success is difficult to resist’ in relation to first-time offenders.<sup>51</sup> As a consequence, Johnston issued a draft circular commending its general adoption to ‘the sympathetic consideration’ of police authorities and chief constables, which again underscores the power-dependence of the Secretary of State for Scotland on the other agents in the system of police governance.<sup>52</sup> But the tone of Morren’s response suggests some resistance to the scheme. In a letter to the SHD he advised that most of the reports against young offenders arose from a complaint from a member of the public who generally insisted that the culprit should be dealt with in court: ‘if the Police were to inform them that the offender was warned ... they would be far from satisfied and would consider the delinquent had been let off ... particularly where the complainer has suffered financially as a result of the delinquency’. He also pointed to the ‘absence of detailed information as to the efficacy of the proposed procedure in other areas’. Notwithstanding these issues, he advised that ‘only good would accrue if it were adopted’ and saw no difficulties in making the arrangements effective if the circular was approved. Whilst this might appear ultimately to be approving, he concluded by advising that ‘should any exception be taken to the procedure, I would be able to quote the circular as conveying the necessary authority’, which suggests that he was, to a degree, absolving himself of responsibility for the scheme.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>49</sup> NRS HH57/288, Scottish Advisory Council on the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Offenders: Police Warning System, Notes of evidence, 7 December 1944, 5-6.

<sup>50</sup> NRS HH60/434, Minute to the Lord Advocate, 24 February 1944.

<sup>51</sup> ‘Police Warnings’. Report by the Scottish Advisory Council, 2, 4.

<sup>52</sup> NRS HH60/434, draft Circular, undated.

<sup>53</sup> NRS HH60/434, Letter from Morren to SHD, 17 March 1944.

	Number		
	Warned by the police	Warned for crimes of dishonesty	Warned for crimes of dishonesty that reoffended *
1946	115	88	2
1947	248	177	11
1948	321	231	14
1949	334	279	7

\* The number of those warned for other crimes or offences that reoffended is unknown.

**Table 6.4 Juvenile offenders warned by the police in Edinburgh, 1947-1949**  
[Source: ECA, ED/006/1/11-12]

In the event, the circular was issued in mid-June 1945 and the scheme was adopted in Edinburgh in July.<sup>54</sup> In his annual reports to the town council in the immediate post-war years Morren repeatedly recorded that the ‘police warning system continues to prove effective as an initial deterrent to juveniles who are implicated in minor crimes or offences’.<sup>55</sup> As a consequence, in 1947 he advised that the scheme was being extended and more than double the number of juveniles were warned that year. Table 6.4 shows that of those warned for crimes of dishonesty the rate of reoffending declined from 6.2 per cent in 1947 to 2.5 per cent in 1949. This suggests that it would have done likewise had it been in operation in Edinburgh during the war as it was in other forces. This indicates some corroboration for Weinberger’s finding that there was a connection between police discretion in the procedures adopted and the level of delinquency.<sup>56</sup> At the same time, however, Morren continued to argue that the ‘high figures for juvenile delinquency during the war were due in no small measure to an unavoidable lack of parental control’.<sup>57</sup> The point is that, notwithstanding the additional requirements of administering an informal system of cautioning juvenile offenders, the consequences of continuing to adhere to the formal judicial process most likely increased the demand on the police in Edinburgh during the Second World War in relation to juvenile offenders.

<sup>54</sup> NRS HH60/434, Circular 6042, 19 June 1945., ECA ED006/1/11, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1946, 15.

<sup>55</sup> cf ECA ED006/1/12, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1948, 11; 1949, 12.

<sup>56</sup> Weinberger, *The Best Police in the World*, 149.

<sup>57</sup> ECA ED006/1/11, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1947, 16.



### **Policing in relation to the protection of life**

Along with property, the protection of life was a core duty for the 'new' police. Drawing on the experience in England, historians have argued that violent crime did not, however, make significant demands on policing in the early decades of the twentieth century. Emsley, for example, found that notwithstanding an increase in the statistics for crime after the Great War, 'violent offences did not figure significantly ... during the first half of the twentieth century'.<sup>58</sup> Likewise, Weinberger found that 'violence was not regarded as a major social problem' from the 1930s to the 1960s. Part of the explanation relates to the 'decline and acceptability of violence as a means of social interaction' in Britain in the nineteenth century. As Williams concluded: 'A society which had seen violence as an essential prop of the social order and source of power changed into one that condemned most of its manifestations and sought to limit their effect.'<sup>59</sup> Part of the explanation also relates to the exercise of discretion by police officers. Rather than processing some offences officially through the court system, some police officers utilised illicit violence against offenders and this might have been particularly the case when dealing with some crimes of violence. Indeed, Weinberger found that 'the threat, and reality, of physical force by the police [was] regarded as a vital ingredient of the qualities needed to make a good copper'. Some violent crimes and offences therefore became part of the 'dark figure' of hidden crime. Domestic assault, for example, 'did not figure in the statistics or the public consciousness as a criminal act'.<sup>60</sup>

Smithies found that during the Second World War, however, in parallel to an increase in pilfering and robbery as a consequence of the demands of the black-market, there was an 'alarming increase in violence' which created problems of capacity for policing given the additional war-related demands and the shortage of regular officers.<sup>61</sup> Indeed, the statistics between 1939 and 1945 in England and Wales show an increase of 18.7 per cent in the total number of indictable crimes of violence

<sup>58</sup> Emsley, *Hard Men*, 19, 25.

<sup>59</sup> Williams, "Police Governance: Community, Policing, and Justice in the Modern UK," 52.

<sup>60</sup> Weinberger, *The Best Police in the World*, 156-158.

<sup>61</sup> Smithies, *Crime in Wartime*, 4.

against the person and non-indictable assaults made known to the police and persons proceeded against and found guilty.<sup>62</sup>

Under the classification of crimes and offences in reports by chief constables in Scotland, Class I, 'Crimes Against the Person', clearly relates to the protection of life. Between 1939 and 1945 there was, contrastingly, a decrease of 12.3 per cent in the number of Class I crimes and offences made known to the police.<sup>63</sup> This was part of a more general trend that suggests Scotland was becoming less violent by the mid-twentieth century, which lends support to both Emsley's and Weinberger's broad arguments. There were clearly differences across Scotland however. As Smithies concluded in relation to Glasgow during the Second World War: 'the problems of violence, gang warfare, drunkenness and juvenile delinquency were more serious than in any other large city' in the UK.<sup>64</sup> Thus, policing demand in relation to the protection of life during the war was different across Scotland, and between Scotland and England and Wales.

In relation to Edinburgh, as Table 6.5 demonstrates, there was no significant increase during the Second World War in the number of Class 1 crimes and offences made known to the police and those cases where one or more persons were arrested or cited. Furthermore, in very broad terms at this point, the mean detection rate during the war years 1939-1945 remained consistent with the pre-war era, in particular 1935-1938. As Morren reported repeatedly throughout the war: 'there had been comparatively little serious crime in the City during the year, and it is gratifying to note that of the number of crimes in this category a creditably high proportion of solutions was obtained'.<sup>65</sup> It is safe to assume that Morren would have associated his comments with significant crimes or offences against the protection of life. Indeed, historians have argued that, in comparison to other offences of violence, statistics relating to homicide bear 'the closest relationship' to actual incidences of violence. Thus, changes in the rate can be seen as 'an indicator of a society becoming more or less

<sup>62</sup> *Statistical Digest of the War*, 48. Again, this excludes crimes and offences made known to the police where either no one was proceeded against or was not convicted.

<sup>63</sup> Cmd 7505, 12.

<sup>64</sup> Smithies, *Crime in Wartime*, 181.

<sup>65</sup> ECA ED006/1/10, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1940, 4; ED006/1/11, 1941, 4; 1942, 6; 1943, 8.

violent'.<sup>66</sup> The mean annual rate of Murder, Attempted Murder, and Culpable Homicide in Edinburgh made known to the police in Edinburgh in the period 1940-1945 was 3.5, which was marginally less than the period 1935-1939 when it was 4.0, whilst in the period 1946-1949 it was 2.2.<sup>67</sup> That said, the differences are clearly small in real terms. Thus, this research finds that the demands on the police in Edinburgh with regard to the most serious crimes associated with the protection of life cannot be said to have increased during the war.

	Number		Detection/Solution rate (%)
	Made known to the police	Cases where one or more persons were arrested or cited	
1935	301	198	65.8
1936	260	174	66.9
1937	292	202	69.2
1938	479	335	69.9
1939	275	177	64.3
1940	220	136	61.8
1941	233	120	51.5
1942	244	133	54.5
1943	201	149	74.1
1944	285	154	54.0
1945	238	160	67.2
1946	232	139	59.9
1947	251	157	62.5
1948	237	129	54.4
1949	250	147	58.8

**Table 6.5 Class I, 'Crimes Against the Person' in Edinburgh, 1935-1949**  
[Source: ECA ED006/1/10-12]

In contrast to housebreaking, caution is, however, required in ascribing the pattern of statistics in relation to Class I crimes and offences to the character of policing. The most numerical categories in the classification relate to Sexual Crimes and Offences, Assault, and Cruel and Unnatural Treatment of Children. Whilst some will have been committed in the public domain, many, by the intrinsic nature of the offences, will have occurred in the private where there was a domestic relationship between the victim and the offender. As Table 6.6 demonstrates, the difference between the number of cases of Assault and Cruel and Unnatural Treatment made known to the police, and the number of cases where one or more persons was arrested or cited, was

<sup>66</sup> Jackson and Bartie, *Policing Youth*, 91.

<sup>67</sup> Culpable Homicide refers to causing death by an unlawful act, or a lawful act negligently performed where there is no intention to kill. See *Police Manual for Scotland*, 111-112.

minimal, if any. The explanation for the high mean detection or solution rate of 99.6 per cent for both categories over the period under consideration, by comparison with housebreaking for example, was probably related to the fact that the victim knew the culprit. Indeed, from 1930-1936 Assaults by Husbands on Wives was a separate and, apart from 1935 and 1936, the largest single category of crime or offence in Class I. From 1937 onwards, however, it does not feature in the reports and clearly became included in the general category of Assault. Put simply, many of the crimes and offences recorded as Assault after 1937 were domestic-type incidents.

Notwithstanding the general pattern indicated by the statistics in relation to all Class I crimes and offences, there was an increase in policing demand with regard to the protection of life during the Second World War. As a percentage of all crimes and offences made known to the police there was a steady increase in police activity in relation to those in Class I from 1.0 in 1939 to 1.6 in 1945, whilst the percentage of those cases where one or more persons were arrested or cited increased from 0.9 to 2.5. As Table 6.6 shows, although small in real terms, at some points in the war there was an increase in the number of crimes and offences made known to the police, and cases where one or more persons were arrested or cited, in the three most numerical categories in Class I, although, with the notable exception of sexual offences, this was a temporary phenomenon with the general pattern of decline continuing in the immediate post-war years.

Number made known to the police			
	Sexual Crimes and Offences	Assault	Cruel and Unnatural Treatment of Children
1935	168	85	28
1936	145	65	28
1937	133	102	44
1938	186	90	74
1939	152	91	15
1940	120	49	23
1941	142	47	20
1942	148	37	38
1943	107	32	32
1944	180	50	28
1945	126	61	25
1946	157	23	19
1947	171	25	19
1948	181	16	22
1949	192	13	24
Number of cases where one or more persons were arrested or cited			
1935	50	85	43
1936	45	65	42
1937	47	102	44
1938	142	90	74
1939	54	91	15
1940	36	49	23
1941	29	47	20
1942	37	37	38
1943	55	32	32
1944	54	48	28
1945	57	52	25
1946	73	14	19
1947	82	21	18
1948	76	14	22
1949	92	10	24
Detection/Solution rate (%)			
1935	29.8	100.0	153.6
1936	31.0	100.0	150.0
1937	35.3	100.0	100.0
1938	76.3	100.0	100.0
1939	35.5	100.0	100.0
1940	30.0	100.0	100.0
1941	20.4	100.0	100.0
1942	25.0	100.0	100.0
1943	51.4	100.0	100.0
1944	30.0	96.0	100.0
1945	45.2	85.2	100.0
1946	46.5	60.9	100.0
1947	48.0	84.0	94.7
1948	42.0	87.5	100.0
1949	47.9	76.9	100.0

**Table 6.6 Sexual crimes and offences; Assault; and Cruel and Unnatural Treatment of Children in Edinburgh, 1935-1949**

*Note: No explanation is given in Morren's annual reports to the town council as to why the number of cases where one or more persons were arrested or cited for Cruel and Unnatural Treatment of Children in 1935 and 1936 is greater than the number of crimes and offences made known to the police. It might be that these figures are, in some way, a reflection of historical incidents.*

[Source: ECA ED006/1/10-12]

Given the inherent nature of the offences it is difficult to perceive what this might suggest about the character of wartime policing. Part of the explanation with regard to assaults, for example, might be related to the increased presence of armed forces personnel, particularly in relation to the preparation for 'D-Day'. Juliet Gardiner found that by 1943 there were 'some 25,000 Polish servicemen in the UK, 3,200 Czechs, around 1,750 Norwegians, approximately 2,000 Belgians and the same number of Dutch, and 35,000 Free French'. By 1944 1.5 million Americans were also stationed in the UK. Although many were based in England, Edinburgh was a popular destination for those on leave.<sup>68</sup> In his annual report to the town council in 1942 Morren complimented the good behaviour of the citizens of Edinburgh and specifically included 'the members of the armed forces stationed in and around the City or who spend their leave periods in our midst, including the men from H.M. Dominions and other nationals'.<sup>69</sup>

However, a number of historians point to acrimony between units and nationalities in the various armed forces in the UK during the Second World War. C. P. Stacey and Barbara Wilson, for example, found that about half a million Canadians were posted to Britain and fighting between them and the British armed services was reported almost as soon as the first arrived. Whilst many were stationed in England, some spent their leave in Edinburgh.<sup>70</sup> Likewise, Peter Lewis found that there was a bitter anti-British feeling amongst American service personnel whilst, at the same time, the British armed forces resented the fact that their American counterparts were paid more.<sup>71</sup> Donald Serrell Thomas has argued that American servicemen thus had more to offer women. A prime reason for the hostility between the British and Americans was 'sexual jealousy'.<sup>72</sup>

<sup>68</sup> Juliet Gardiner, *'Over Here': The GIs in Wartime Britain* (London: Collins & Brown, 1992), 6, 92., *Wartime*, 541.

<sup>69</sup> ECA ED006/1/11, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1942, 1.

<sup>70</sup> C. P. Stacey and Barbara M. Wilson, *The Half Million: The Canadians in Britain, 1939-1946* (Toronto; London: University of Toronto Press, 1987), 77, 106.

<sup>71</sup> Peter Lewis, *A People's War* (London: Thames Methuen, 1986), 206-208. George Orwell contemporarily observed that American soldiers' rate of pay was five times that of their British counterparts. George Orwell, Sonia Orwell, and Ian Angus, *The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell. Vol. 3, As I Please, 1943-1945* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1969), 55.

<sup>72</sup> Thomas, *An Underworld at War*, 237.

Violence between members of the various armed forces may therefore go some way to explaining the increased policing demand in relation to assaults in Edinburgh during the Second World War. In mid-1943, for example, a naval rating stabbed another sailor to death in Princes Street Gardens, whilst in 1944 three soldiers assaulted and robbed a Canadian soldier on Calton Hill.<sup>73</sup> Significantly, however, crimes or offences committed by American service personnel were not likely to have been included in the statistics in Morren's annual reports to the town council. Whilst members of the American armed forces could be arrested, unlike those of all other nationalities in the UK during the war, they were not subject to prosecution for criminal offences. Historians have argued that US domestic opinion would have resented the principle of its troops being held accountable by a foreign court.<sup>74</sup> As a consequence, the United States of America (Visiting Forces) Act was passed in 1942 and provided that US Service Courts had 'exclusive jurisdiction' in respect of members of the American forces alleged to have committed a criminal offence in the UK. As the Schedule to the Act recognised, this represented a 'very considerable departure ... from the traditional system and practice of the United Kingdom'.<sup>75</sup> As a consequence, a 'dark figure' of hidden police activity undoubtedly exists in this regard in relation to Edinburgh and elsewhere in the UK.

By the same token the social dislocation of war might help explain the increased demand on the police in Edinburgh in 1941-1942 in relation to the Cruel and Unnatural Treatment of Children. Whilst this was less than in 1937-1938, which was probably a consequence of the introduction of the Children and Young Persons Act in 1937, it stands in contrast to the remainder of the period 1930-1949.<sup>76</sup> In addition to the absence of parents on war-related service there were, for example, some 60 million changes of address during the Second World War amongst a population of 38 million.<sup>77</sup> It is therefore not difficult to envisage how children might have been

<sup>73</sup> ECA ED006/1/11, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1944, 8; 1945, 9.

<sup>74</sup> Thomas, *An Underworld at War*, 227., Stacey and Wilson, *The Half Million*, 157., Smithies, *Crime in Wartime*, 156.

<sup>75</sup> 5 & 6 Geo. 6, cap. 31 (1942). The procedure was not widely known during the war. As George Orwell contemporarily observed: 'not one English person in ten knows of the existence of this agreement; the newspapers barely reported it and refrained from commenting on it'. See Orwell, Orwell, and Angus, *As I Please*, 55.

<sup>76</sup> 1 Edw. 8 & 1 Geo. 6, cap. 37 (1937). The introduction of the Act might also explain the increase in the number of sexual offences made known to the police in 1938 by comparison with 1937.

<sup>77</sup> Calder, *The People's War*, 315.

neglected. More specifically, however, historians have argued that the evacuation of children led to an increase in the number of prosecutions for cruelty and neglect, if not necessarily an increase in the incidence of offences. Something in the vicinity of 10 per cent of evacuated children were physically or sexually abused by their hosts.<sup>78</sup> As Gardiner has argued: ‘evacuation schemes opened to the official gaze cases of gross neglect often amounting to deliberate cruelty ... And there was a righteous demand that once such atrocities had been brought out into the open, the perpetrators should be prosecuted’.<sup>79</sup> In England and Wales the number of persons found guilty in court of the cruelty and neglect of children between 1939 and 1945 more than doubled.<sup>80</sup> In Scotland over the same period there was an increase of nearly eight per cent in the number of crimes and offences related to Cruel and Unnatural Treatment of Children made known to the police.<sup>81</sup> Thus, the growing concern about neglect and cruelty to children during the Second World War, which was highlighted by evacuation, helps explain the increase in the number of incidents reported to the police in Edinburgh.

In addition to these crimes, the police in Edinburgh continued to investigate sudden deaths, including suicides, throughout the war. The 1931 *Manual* reminded Scottish officers that it was their duty to investigate and report all such cases to the procurator fiscal.<sup>82</sup> As the City Prosecutor explained, a sudden death, ‘is one which has happened unexpectedly – so that the safeguards afforded by regular visits of a doctor over a period of time before the death are absent’. They could have been due to accident, natural causes, suicide, or violence.<sup>83</sup> As Table 6.7 shows, by comparison with other sudden deaths, the demand made on the police in relation to the investigation and reporting of suicides remained stable in the period 1930-1949.<sup>84</sup> The demand in relation to other sudden deaths, however, increased sharply during the Second World War. The rate of sudden deaths other than suicides in 1942, for example, was 132 per cent greater than that in 1930, whilst the mean number in 1940-1945 was some 60 per cent greater than in the immediate pre-war years 1934-1939. In his annual report for

<sup>78</sup> Mackay, *Half the Battle: Civilian Morale in Britain during the Second World War* 47.

<sup>79</sup> Gardiner, *Wartime*, 601.

<sup>80</sup> Smithies, *Crime in Wartime*, 165.

<sup>81</sup> Cmd 7505, 13.

<sup>82</sup> *Police Manual for Scotland*, 118.

<sup>83</sup> Mill, *The Scottish Police*, 58-59.

<sup>84</sup> The figures from 1930 are included since, it is assumed, there would not appear to be any reason for them to have been edited to the same extent as those in respect of crimes and offences were up until 1935.



1945 Morren advised the town council that 16 adults and four children had been killed in Edinburgh as a consequence of 16 air raids during the Second World War.<sup>85</sup> Murder and Culpable Homicide killed a further 17 or 18 people during the war.<sup>86</sup> Yet neither air raids nor crimes and offences can explain the sharp rise in the number of sudden deaths during the Second World War.

	Number		Index 1930=100	
	Suicides	Sudden Deaths	Suicides	Sudden Deaths
1930	65	312	100	100
1931	60	290	92	93
1932	95	319	146	102
1933	65	276	100	88
1934	88	291	135	93
1935	71	370	109	119
1936	80	403	123	129
1937	63	495	97	159
1938	83	373	128	120
1939	94	397	145	127
1940	66	480	102	154
1941	60	598	92	192
1942	37	723	57	232
1943	61	647	94	207
1944	48	674	74	216
1945	49	616	75	197
1947	46	681	71	218
1948	60	471	92	151
1949	78	476	120	153

**Table 6.7 Suicides and Sudden Deaths in Edinburgh, 1930-1949**

Note: Figures for 1946 are not given in Morren's annual report to the town council.

[Source: ECA ED006/1/9-12]

Part of the explanation was undoubtedly related to the blackout. Calder catalogued the types of accidents where people were killed as a consequence of the blackout: 'those who walked into canals, fell down steps, plunged through glass roofs and toppled from railway platforms'. A poll in January 1940 showed that about one person in five had been injured due to the blackout.<sup>87</sup> More specifically, however, as will be seen in next chapter, the blackout led to an increase in the number of road accidents and those that proved fatal. The *Police Review* reported that the number of those killed as a result of road accidents in Britain in the first month of the war was more than double the figure

<sup>85</sup> ECA ED006/1/11, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1945, 18.

<sup>86</sup> The date of one incident of culpable homicide in 1945 is not given in Morren's Annual Report to the town council.

<sup>87</sup> Calder, *The People's War*, 63.

for the whole of 1938, and the increase was mainly amongst pedestrians.<sup>88</sup> The *Edinburgh Evening News* reported that 39 people had been killed in road accidents in Edinburgh in the first four months of war compared to 25 between January and August 1939.<sup>89</sup> Thus the increase in sudden deaths in Edinburgh during the Second World War was a consequence of war conditions rather than the character of policing.

### **Policing in relation to the maintenance of order**

In the reports made by the chief constable to the town council the largest classification of crimes and offences made known to the police, and those where someone was arrested or cited, during the Second World War related to Class VII, 'Miscellaneous Offences'. All of the crimes and offences relating to public order were in categories in this classification. Indeed, nearly half of the crimes and offences in Class VII related to public order. This task was therefore a significant aspect of operational policing in Edinburgh. As Table 6.8 demonstrates, the difference between the number of crimes and offences made known to the police in relation to public order, and cases where one or more persons were arrested or cited, was minimal, if any. The high mean solution rate of 99.7 for all crimes and offences related to public order over the period under consideration, by comparison with housebreaking for example, was undoubtedly a reflection of the fact that they generally only became known at the point of detection. In effect, there were few crimes or offences related to public order made known to the police as a consequence of a complaint made by a member of the public.

From a Marxist perspective, one of the main aims of the development of the 'new' police was related to public order, specifically to maintain discipline amongst the working class. Robert Storch, for example, has argued that the 'new' police arose from the need to create 'a professional, bureaucratically organised lever of urban discipline' in working class communities. The police therefore became the 'guardians of unfettered capitalist economic development and of free labour market as defined by orthodox political economy'.<sup>90</sup> From other perspectives, historians have pointed to the significance of the desire to control vagrancy. Barrie, for example, has argued that the concern over vagrancy 'played an important role' in the spread of police

<sup>88</sup> The *Police Review*, 27 October 1939, 349.

<sup>89</sup> *Edinburgh Evening News*, 19 January 1940, 3.

<sup>90</sup> Storch, "The Plague of Blue Locusts," 61, 69.

development throughout Scotland.<sup>91</sup> John McGowan has pointed to the lack of poor relief and hardening attitudes to vagrancy in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries as major factors in police reform in Edinburgh.<sup>92</sup>

As Table 6.8 shows, despite the burden of additional duties and a reduction in the strength of regular officers, the police in Edinburgh continued throughout the Second World War to arrest and cite individuals for crimes and offences of vagrancy and trespass. Indeed, in general terms, whereas police activity in this regard decreased in the immediate pre- and post-war periods, it increased during the war. As a percentage of all Class VII crimes and offences police activity in relation to vagrancy and trespass increased sharply from 0.43 per cent in 1940 to 3.92 per cent in 1945. Part of the explanation relates to the dislocation of family life. As observed, wartime conditions caused significant disruption to living arrangements which might have increased the perception of itinerancy. At the same time, the mobilisation for total war undoubtedly increased the pressure on vagrancy. Whereas large numbers of the labour force were diverted to wartime employment, vagrants, although they could be conscripted or compelled to work, were, by definition, unlikely to contribute otherwise to the war effort.<sup>93</sup> Given the context, there might therefore have been something of a concerted effort by the police against vagrancy during the war, possibly in response to a directive from central government. This being the case, it would be reasonable to expect the pattern of enforcement to be approximate throughout the UK.

<sup>91</sup> Barrie, *Police in the Age of Improvement*, 113.

<sup>92</sup> McGowan, *Policing the Metropolis of Scotland*, 41.

<sup>93</sup> Vagrants were subject to the National Registration Act. See NRS HH52/27/1, Circular 3718, 23 September 1939.

	Number made known to the police				
	Vagrancy and Trespass	Intoxicating Liquor Laws	Breach of the Peace	Betting, Gaming, and Lotteries	Prostitution
1935	81	1860	654	419	134
1936	84	2098	850	416	236
1937	99	2346	1009	360	239
1938	132	2045	848	372	218
1939	89	2371	768	256	155
1940	69	2063	594	40	32
1941	80	1745	539	13	124
1942	103	1334	355	12	11
1943	72	1115	499	28	106
1944	125	660	510	40	104
1945	143	634	520	41	1
1946	84	769	646	193	17
1947	75	918	635	207	30
1948	82	933	657	169	26
1949	59	954	582	153	41
	Number of cases where one or more persons were arrested or cited				
1935	81	1860	654	419	134
1936	84	2098	850	416	236
1937	99	2346	1009	360	239
1938	132	2045	848	372	218
1939	89	2371	768	256	155
1940	69	2063	594	40	32
1941	80	1745	539	13	124
1942	103	1334	355	12	11
1943	72	1115	499	28	106
1944	125	660	458	40	104
1945	143	634	480	41	1
1946	84	769	645	193	17
1947	75	918	619	207	30
1948	82	933	650	169	26
1949	59	954	560	153	41
	Detection/Solution rate (%)				
1935	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1936	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1937	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1938	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1939	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1940	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1941	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1942	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1943	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1944	100.0	100.0	89.8	100.0	100.0
1945	100.0	100.0	92.3	100.0	100.0
1946	100.0	100.0	99.8	100.0	100.0
1947	100.0	100.0	97.5	100.0	100.0
1948	100.0	100.0	98.9	100.0	100.0
1949	100.0	100.0	96.2	100.0	100.0

**Table 6.8 Crimes and offences of and against: Vagrancy and Trespass; Intoxicating Liquor Laws; Breach of the Peace; Betting, Gaming, and Lotteries; and Prostitution in Edinburgh, 1935-1949**

[Source: ECA ED006/1/10-12]

However, across Scotland as a whole, as well as England, Wales, and Northern Ireland, the general pattern of enforcement during the war, apart from a modest increase around 1942-1943, was declining.<sup>94</sup> Given the additional demands on the police during the war and the release of regular officers it might be expected that some less serious and victimless crimes and offences would be subject to reduced police activity. Indeed, as will be seen, this partly explains the lower number of arrests for drunkenness throughout the UK during the war. It is therefore difficult to explain why the general trend appears to be different in Edinburgh, and the number of cases where one or more persons were arrested or cited doubled between 1943 and 1945. Given, as McGowan has argued, reform of the police in Edinburgh was premised on controlling vagrancy, the pattern of enforcement might be a consequence of an ethos more particular to the capital than elsewhere. On the other hand, it might be the consequence of the exercise of discretion by officers at a strategic or tactical level.

By comparison with vagrancy, drunkenness was clearly perceived to be more of a threat to the maintenance of public order. One writer has argued that the expenditure on intoxicating liquor in the nineteenth century was 'regarded above all others as the major obstacle to improvement'.<sup>95</sup> Throughout the 1930s the reports by the chief constable in Edinburgh to the town council evince an obsession with the consumption of alcohol and related police activity. In addition to statistics relating to crimes and offences against 'Intoxicating Liquor Laws', the reports between 1930 and 1936, for example, contain detailed information on the effect of the Forbes Mackenzie Act and, in particular, drunkenness on Sundays.<sup>96</sup> Likewise, from 1935-1938 they contain charts showing the wards in which arrests were made as well as statistics relating to the number of arrests for drinking methylated spirits and eau de cologne.<sup>97</sup> The majority of those arrested or cited in relation to 'Intoxicating Liquor Laws' during the

<sup>94</sup> cf Cmd 7505, 14-15., *Statistical Digest of the War*, 48, 50.

<sup>95</sup> Dingle, "Drink and Working-Class Living Standards" 608.

<sup>96</sup> Forbes Mackenzie, a nineteenth century Scottish Conservative politician and ardent temperance reformer, was the originator of the Act for the Regulation of Public Houses in Scotland. See H. C. G. Matthew, "Mackenzie, William Forbes (1807-1862)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: 2004). The Act provided for the closing of public houses on Sundays and at 10pm on Weekdays. 16 & 17 Vict, cap. 67 (1853).

<sup>97</sup> Efforts were made to 'render methylated spirits unfit for use as a beverage without destroying its usefulness for commercial and household purposes, but with doubtful success'. See *Police Manual for Scotland*, 217. In 1938 methylated and surgical spirits became controlled under 1 Edw. 8 & 1 Geo. 6, cap. 48 (1937). As a consequence, habitual drinkers turned to eau de cologne made with industrial methylated spirits which could be purchased without restrictions. See ECA ED006/1/10, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1938, 17.

war were related to 'drunkenness' but it is impossible to conclude whether this was a consequence of proactive or reactive police activity.

In contrast to vagrancy, however, as Table 6.8 shows, police activity in relation to alcohol declined sharply with the outbreak of war and progressively until 1945 when it increased. As a percentage of all Class VII crimes and offences, police activity declined from 14.3 per cent in 1939 to 7.6 per cent in 1944. In successive reports to the town council Morren pointed out that the number of arrests for drunkenness had declined and commended the public for their sobriety, given that the majority of arrests were repeat offenders. In 1942, for example, he reported that apprehensions were the lowest since 1918. Similarly, in 1944 it was the 'lowest ever recorded', and in 1945 the 'lowest on record'.<sup>98</sup> A similar pattern was evident in Scotland as a whole as well as in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland.<sup>99</sup>

Part of the explanation undoubtedly relates to the reduced visibility of the police caused by the decrease in manpower and the pressure of additional war-related duties. On the other hand, a Home Intelligence Report in February 1940 suggested that offenders escaped detection in the blackout.<sup>100</sup> Nevertheless, a reduction in drunkenness during the Second World War was part of a long-term trend. Alcohol consumption in Britain declined from the beginning of the twentieth century. In his 1944 report to the town council Morren commented on the sharp fall in the number of apprehensions for drunkenness over the previous 40 years. Although the population in Edinburgh had increased 'very considerably' over the period, the number of apprehensions for drunkenness per 1000 of the population had fallen from 20.9 in 1908 to 1.5 in 1944.<sup>101</sup>

At the same time, many of those who would otherwise have consumed alcohol locally had been conscripted. By 1944, for example, nearly one-third of the male working population in the UK was in the armed forces and auxiliary services.<sup>102</sup> Some had undoubtedly been employed in the manufacture of alcohol. As a consequence,

<sup>98</sup> ECA ED006/1/10, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1940, 6; ED006/1/11, 1942, 7; 1944, 1; 1945, 13.

<sup>99</sup> cf Cmd 7505, 14-15., *Statistical Digest of the War*, 48, 50.

<sup>100</sup> NRS HH55/19, Home Intelligence Report by City of Edinburgh Police, 16 February 1940.

<sup>101</sup> ECA ED006/1/11, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1944, 11-12.

<sup>102</sup> *Statistical Digest of the War*, 8.

supplies were scarce and erratic and that which was available was expensive and had, at times, been watered down.<sup>103</sup> During the war grocers selling alcohol in Edinburgh either closed down or allowed their licences to lapse, whilst public houses restricted their opening hours in response to the lack of trade thereby restricting the supply of alcohol further.<sup>104</sup> In his annual report to the town council in 1945 Morren pointed out that the reduction in the number of arrests for drunkenness had been ‘due in large measure to the scarcity of supplies of intoxicating liquor, and possibly to labour shortage in the “Trade”’.<sup>105</sup> The reduction in policing in relation to drunkenness during the Second World War was thus a consequence of a combination of internal and external factors that were both specific to wartime and a legacy of the pre-war era. Indeed, when some of these were removed in the immediate post-war period policing demand in this field increased. The demobilisation of four million servicemen between June 1945 and January 1947, for example, precipitated an increase in drunkenness and hence policing demand in Edinburgh, particularly in relation to associated social celebrations.<sup>106</sup>

Despite the wartime decrease in drunkenness in Edinburgh, Home Intelligence Reports during the last third of the war suggest that there was concern within the police that drinking and drunkenness was becoming less a largely male and working class activity and was, as a consequence, undermining both the social and public order. The report in September 1943, for example, recorded that notwithstanding the larger number of service personnel and the ‘normal’ level of drunkenness:

There are many indications that the habit is spreading amongst classes hitherto more or less immune. In former years ... a young woman of what might be termed respectable class was never seen in a public house or in a state of intoxication in the streets. Now that sight is all too common.<sup>107</sup>

<sup>103</sup> Edward Smithies, *The Black Economy in England Since 1914* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1984), 65.

<sup>104</sup> cf NRS HH55/21, Home Intelligence Report by City of Edinburgh Police, 26 April 1940; NRS HH55/23, 13 September 1940; NRS HH55/35, 4 December 1942; NRS HH55/39, 28 January 1944; NRS HH55/42, 30 June 1945.

<sup>105</sup> ECA ED006/1/11, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1945, 13.

<sup>106</sup> ECA ED006/1/11, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1946, 15., David Kynaston, *Austerity Britain: 1945-51* (London: Bloomsbury, 2007), 97.

<sup>107</sup> NRS HH55/38, Home Intelligence Report by City of Edinburgh Police, 10 September 1943.



Again, in June 1944 Morren highlighted the issue of young women in licensed premises: ‘War conditions no doubt largely account for this, but it also indicates a change, and as many hold, a deterioration in the social habits of the people’.<sup>108</sup> These comments must, however, be viewed in the context of wider fears of social disintegration. As observed, a ‘panic of moral laxity’ developed in the UK during the Second World War over ‘amateur prostitutes’ and the spread of venereal disease, especially amongst the armed services, which led to uniformed women police patrolling the streets of Edinburgh for the first time in late 1943.<sup>109</sup>

Notwithstanding the long-term decline in drunkenness, there was also clearly concern in government circles at the potential for alcohol consumption to have an adverse effect on the war effort on the home front. In the first weeks of war, the Secretary of State for Scotland, David Colville, asked police forces to provide reports of incidences of excessive and sustained consumption of alcohol.<sup>110</sup> In June 1941, the then Secretary of State for Scotland, Tom Johnston, asked chief constables to provide reports on Sunday drinking.<sup>111</sup> In consequence, six Orders were made throughout the war under the Defence Regulations to restrict the supply of alcohol on Sunday. The first, made in 1941, applied to the areas and burghs of, among others, the Lothians, except Edinburgh, and was intended to secure ‘the maintenance of public order and for maintaining essential services or supplies essential to the life of the community’.<sup>112</sup> The SHD subsequently reported that Sunday drinking had decreased in those areas where Orders had been applied.<sup>113</sup>

An unintended consequence of the policy, however, was the displacement of those seeking to drink on Sunday from places throughout Scotland that were subject to an

<sup>108</sup> NRS HH55/40, Home Intelligence Report by City of Edinburgh Police, 16 June 1944.

<sup>109</sup> Sonya O. Rose, *Which People's War?: National Identity and Citizenship in Britain 1939-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 75-80., Roger Davidson, *Dangerous Liaisons: A Social History of Venereal Disease in Twentieth-Century Scotland*, Clio medica (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2000), 207.

<sup>110</sup> NRS HH52/27/1, Circular 3715, 22 September 1939.

<sup>111</sup> NRS HH52/31, Circular 4489, 24 June 1941. Under the Licensing (Scotland) Act, 1921 public houses in Scotland were permitted to open between 11.30am-3.00pm and 5.30-10.00pm on days except Sunday. Other than to persons resident in seven- or six-day license hotels and clubs and to travellers in seven-day licence hotels, the sale of alcohol on Sunday was illegal. *Police Manual for Scotland*, 189, 192.

<sup>112</sup> NRS HH52/30, Circular 4541, 7 August 1941. The Orders made it illegal to supply alcohol on Sunday except for consumption with a meal and in a room set apart from the service of meals to Sunday travellers.

<sup>113</sup> NRS HH55/30, Summary of Home Intelligence Reports, 24 October 1941.



Order to contiguous areas where there were no restrictions.<sup>114</sup> Those from East Lothian, for example, travelled to Edinburgh.<sup>115</sup> In October 1941 Morren reported that ‘a comprehensive survey’ had shown that a ‘very substantial number of people’ were frequenting hotels in Edinburgh on Sundays, ‘presumably with the object of obtaining drink’. One hotel had over 700 visitors on a Sunday: ‘a large number of them coming from outside areas’. Despite an appeal by him and the town council an Order was not applied to the city during the war.<sup>116</sup> As a consequence, the police in Edinburgh covertly or overtly monitored hotels on Sundays. A Home Intelligence Report in March 1943, for example, advised that observations had been carried out on twelve of the principal seven-day licensed hotels on a Sunday. Almost 1,000 of the 1,553 people entering the premises were found to have come from outside the city, which was a decrease of about 500 in the number entering ‘compared with a similar check-up a year ago’. The following month’s report recorded that ‘recent observations’ on the hotels showed a decrease in the total Sunday visitors and in those giving addresses outwith the city.<sup>117</sup> It is unknown whether police tactics involved verifying the address of every person entering the hotels or if visitors were obliged to sign a register which the police audited. In any event, although police activity in Edinburgh in relation to drunkenness declined throughout the war, the introduction of Orders in contiguous areas increased policing demand in Edinburgh on Sundays in relation to the maintenance of order.<sup>118</sup>

Following on from drunkenness, the category of crime or offence most directly associated with disorderly conduct was Breach of the Peace.<sup>119</sup> As Table 6.8 shows, there was a decline in policing demand in Edinburgh in the Second World War in relation to Breach of the Peace by comparison with the immediate pre-war and post-

<sup>114</sup> cf NRS HH55/34, Summary of Home Intelligence Reports, 11 September 1942; NRS HH55/35, 6 November 1942; NRS HH55/35, 4 December 1942.

<sup>115</sup> NRS HH55/35, Home Intelligence Report by City of Edinburgh Police, 4 December 1942.

<sup>116</sup> NRS HH55/30, Home Intelligence Report by City of Edinburgh Police, 10 October 1941; 24 October 1941.

<sup>117</sup> NRS HH55/36, Home Intelligence Report by City of Edinburgh Police, 26 March 1943; 23 April 1943.

<sup>118</sup> Whilst the issue of policing Sunday drinkers was displaced in areas where Orders had been applied, they could still create a local policing demand. The SHD summary of Home Intelligence Reports for March 1942, for example, recorded that the police in the Scottish Borders were required to give assistance to maintain order after local transport facilities were unable to cope with the number of returning travellers on a Sunday. NRS HH55/33, Summary of Home Intelligence Reports, 27 March 1942.

<sup>119</sup> *Police Manual for Scotland*, 71.

war periods, which largely corresponds to the pattern for drunkenness. By a similar token, the increase in policing activity in relation to Breach of the Peace towards the end of the war can be associated with the increase in drunkenness. As a percentage of all Class VII crimes and offences, police activity in respect of Breach of the Peace increased from 2.4 per cent in 1942 to 13.3 per cent in 1945. Statistics show that the pattern for Scotland as a whole was broadly similar.<sup>120</sup>

Some of those arrested or cited by the police in Edinburgh for breach of the peace in 1940 were related to the riots that occurred in the aftermath of the declaration of war by Italy and the detention of Italians for internment. *The Scotsman* reported that a crowd of over 1,000 gathered and ‘anti-Italian feeling found vent in an orgy of window breaking and looting in different parts of the city’.<sup>121</sup> Dominic Crolla remembered: ‘the feelings of the local population, to put it mildly, was deep anger against us. Where they could they smashed shops, looted the goods’. Joseph Pia recalled that ‘there was rioting against Italian shops, window-smashing, looting of goods, and so on ... I would say half the Italian shops in Edinburgh got it’.<sup>122</sup> As a consequence, the police had to make a number of baton charges to disperse the rioters.<sup>123</sup> Thus, the increase in policing demand in this regard was a direct consequence of the war. At the same time, a legacy of fierce anti-Catholicism existed in Edinburgh which might have been a contributory factor. In the mid-1930s anti-Catholic riots broke out in the city. In 1935, for example, a number of people were arrested after, as *The Scotsman* reported, ‘sectarian feeling’ led to ‘exciting’ and ‘disorderly’ street scenes on occasion of the Roman Catholic Eucharist Congress: ‘almost the entire force of police in Edinburgh was drafted to the disturbed area, where the handling of the crowds was supervised by Chief Constable Ross’.<sup>124</sup> In that sense, policing of the riots in 1940 represented a continuity of responding to large-scale sectarian disorder.

<sup>120</sup> Cmd 7505, 14-15. There is no common law equivalent in the rest of the UK and therefore a comparative figure cannot be extrapolated from statistics.

<sup>121</sup> *The Scotsman*, 11 June 1940, 6.

<sup>122</sup> Ian MacDougall, *Voices from War: and Some Labour Struggles; Personal Recollections of War in our Century by Scottish Men and Women* (Edinburgh: Mercat Press, 1995), 291, 308.

<sup>123</sup> *Edinburgh Evening News*, 11 June 1940, 6.

<sup>124</sup> *The Scotsman*, 25 June 1935, 9. 26 June 1935, 9.

As observed, from a Marxist perspective one of the main functions of the 'new' police was to control the working class for the needs of the capitalist mode of production. In the era before the Great War, street betting was seen by some to have replaced drunkenness as the prevalent moral vice. Stefan Petrow has argued that betting 'excited moral guardians'.<sup>125</sup> Because of its perceived destructive effects on working class life, it became the target for a moral crusade through legislation and strategic police action. At the same time, as the 1928 Royal Commission on Police Powers and Procedure in England and Wales found, offences like street betting did not command the 'general or convinced support of public opinion'.<sup>126</sup> Indeed, at the tactical level, many policemen, who themselves came from working class backgrounds, did not regard street betting as a problem and chose to ignore it.<sup>127</sup> Smithies has argued that the public became hostile to street betting during the Second World War, however, because of its adverse effect on family incomes and therefore the war effort on the home front.<sup>128</sup>

As Table 6.8 shows, there was a sharp decline in police activity in relation to crimes and offences associated with Betting, Gaming, and Lotteries during the Second World War by comparison with the immediate pre-war and post-war periods. As a percentage of all class VII crimes and offences, police activity in relation to Betting, Gaming, and Lotteries declined from 6.17 per cent in 1935 to 0.08 per cent by 1942. A broadly similar pattern prevailed in relation to Scotland as a whole and the rest of the UK.<sup>129</sup> As with other aspects of policing during the Second World War part of the explanation for the decline in police activity relates to the reduction of regular officers, combined with the pressure of war-related duties, especially given the suggestion that the police were disinclined to enforce the law in relation to street betting in normal circumstances. At the same time, given public opposition it might be that fewer offences were committed. Certainly, many of those who would otherwise have been involved in street betting had been relocated as a consequence of being conscripted into the armed services or otherwise deployed on essential war work. On the other

<sup>125</sup> Stefan Petrow, *Policing Morals: The Metropolitan Police and the Home Office, 1870-1914* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 239-293.

<sup>126</sup> Cmd 3297, 76-80.

<sup>127</sup> Klein, *Invisible Men*, 100.

<sup>128</sup> Smithies, *Crime in Wartime*, 123.

<sup>129</sup> cf Cmd 7505, 14-15., *Statistical Digest of the War*, 48, 50.

hand, as with drunkenness, it might be that offenders escaped detection in the blackout.

Meanwhile, from the outset of the creation and development of the 'new' police, the control of prostitutes was seen as an essential component in the maintenance of public order. From a Marxist perspective the control of prostitutes was related to the imposition of 'new standards of urban discipline' and the control of public spaces.<sup>130</sup> List's *Treatise*, which became the blueprint for policing the rural border counties of Scotland in the early nineteenth century, included, for example, the gathering of intelligence and surveillance of prostitutes.<sup>131</sup> During the Great War women police patrols were introduced in some police forces for the first time in response to 'khaki fever' and 'amateur' prostitutes, together with concerns about the spread of venereal disease and moral decay.<sup>132</sup> At the same time, in comparatively recent research in relation to Edinburgh in the interwar period, Louise Settle has argued that, notwithstanding public concerns regarding immorality in the city, police officers were 'often apathetic towards policing prostitution'. On the one hand, police officers did not consider it a 'real' crime because it was victimless. On the other, police officers in the aftermath of the Savidge case in 1928 were cautious about accusing potentially innocent women. As a consequence, it was 'complaints from the public about the annoyance caused by a particular prostitute woman that provided the main motivation for police action'.<sup>133</sup> In that sense, police activity was largely reactive rather than proactive.

As Table 6.8 shows, police activity in relation to prostitution in Edinburgh declined sharply during the war by comparison with the pre-war period. Indeed, the mean

<sup>130</sup> Robert D Storch, "Police Control of Street Prostitution in Victorian London: A Study in the Contexts of Police Action," in *Police and Society*, ed. David H. Bayley (Beverly Hills: Sage 1977), 50-51.

<sup>131</sup> David Martin Smale, "Alfred John List and the Development of Policing in the Counties of Scotland, c.1832-77," *Scottish Historical Studies* 33, no. 1 (2013): 3.

<sup>132</sup> Angela Woollacott, "'Khaki Fever' and its Control: Gender, Class, Age and Sexual Morality on the British Homefront in the First World War," *Journal of Contemporary History* 29, no. 2 (1994): 327, 331., Lucy Bland, "In the Name of Protection: The Policing of Women in the First World War," in *Women-in-Law: Explorations in Law, Family and Sexuality*, ed. Julia Brophy and Carol Smart (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1985), 28.

<sup>133</sup> Louise Settle, "The Social Geography of Prostitution in Edinburgh, 1900-1939," *Journal of Scottish Historical Studies* 33, no. 2 (2013): 252-254., "The Kosmo Club Case: Clandestine Prostitution during the Interwar Period," *Twentieth Century British History* 25, no. 4 (2014): 577. For the Savidge case see Report of the Tribunal appointed under the Tribunals of Inquiry (Evidence) Act, 1921 in regard to the interrogation by the Police of Miss Savidge. Cmd 3147, 1928.

annual number of crimes and offences made known to the police, and cases where one or more persons were arrested or cited. in the period 1939-1945 was nearly two-thirds less than that in 1935-1938. Part of the explanation relates to the shortage of women engaged in prostitution. Part of the explanation might relate to the fact that some local prostitutes were called up for war service. By 1943, for example, some 99.7 per cent of the total female working population was either in the armed forces and auxiliary services or in civil employment.<sup>134</sup> At the same time, some street prostitution, given its inherent nature, undoubtedly escaped detection in the blackout, especially given the reduction in the visibility of the police, the pressure of war-related duties, and the potential to exercise discretion. Indeed, Donaldson found in his oral history study of two English forces during the war that police officers had an ambivalent attitude towards prostitutes.<sup>135</sup>

Smithies, however, has argued that there was a 'fierce campaign' against prostitution in England during the Second World War, which reached its peak in 1943-1945.<sup>136</sup> Indeed, Table 6.8 demonstrates that there were spikes of increased police activity in Edinburgh in relation to prostitution between 1940 and 1941 and again between 1942 and 1944. As a percentage of all class VII crimes and offences police activity in relation to prostitution increased from 0.2 per cent in 1940 to 0.93 per cent in 1941 and again from 0.07 per cent in 1942 to 1.19 per cent in 1944. A similar pattern in relation to the number of crimes and offences made known to the police, and cases where one or more persons were arrested or cited, was evident across Scotland as a whole.<sup>137</sup>

The explanation is undoubtedly related to the periodic moral panics over 'amateur prostitutes' and promiscuity, especially during the blackout, and the increase in venereal disease.<sup>138</sup> In a repeat of the Great War, there was increasing public comment about declining morals. Furthermore, by 1941, the rates of syphilis in

<sup>134</sup> Smithies, *Crime in Wartime*, 143., Gardiner, *Wartime*, 125-126., *Statistical Digest of the War*, 8.

<sup>135</sup> Donaldson, "Policing the War," 176.

<sup>136</sup> Smithies, *Crime in Wartime*, 138.

<sup>137</sup> Cmd 7505, 14-15. Figures for the rest of the UK are not given in the *Statistical Digest of the War*.

<sup>138</sup> Louise A. Jackson, "'Lady Cops' and 'Decoy Doras': Gender, Surveillance and the Construction of Urban Knowledge 1919-1959," *London Journal* 27, no. 1 (2002): 70.

Britain had increased 13 per cent among males and 63 per cent among females.<sup>139</sup> As a consequence, Defence Regulation 33B was issued in late 1942 and provided for the detention for treatment of sexually active females suspected of transmitting venereal disease. In line with this, Roger Davidson has pointed to evidence in the Second World War that ‘in certain localities in Scotland, police surveillance of suspected female contacts and, on occasions, physical restraint for examination and treatment’ took place.<sup>140</sup> Whilst it is unknown whether this occurred in Edinburgh, there was thus clearly pressure on the police to respond proactively to the perceived problem. In that regard the visibility of the police was increased by the introduction of women police with police powers patrolling the streets of Edinburgh for the first time in late 1943.

### **Policing in relation to civic regulation**

Part of core policing functions in the early twentieth century was, as noted, civic regulation. In one respect, this was a legacy of the wider concept of ‘police’ that had been in existence in Scotland since at least the early seventeenth century. As McGowan pointed out, the City Constables that were established in Edinburgh in 1606 were not only charged with apprehending offenders but also ‘had wider powers relating to public safety and well-being’.<sup>141</sup> It was also a legacy of the importation in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries from France of a concept of ‘police’ related to the regulation of local communities.<sup>142</sup> Alan Williams has argued that the police in Paris in the eighteenth century became a model because of its reputation for efficiency. The lieutenant of police, for example, had, since the creation of the office in 1667, wide responsibility for many areas of civic regulation, including preserving life from ‘disease and natural disaster, from accidents and fire, from hunger and unwholesome food’.<sup>143</sup> Goldsmith has also pointed to the significance of the tradition of ‘medical policing’ in Imperial Germany for the police acts in Glasgow in the nineteenth century.<sup>144</sup> As Laxton and Rodger concluded in relation to nineteenth-

<sup>139</sup> Sonya O. Rose, "Sex, Citizenship, and the Nation in World War II Britain," *The American Historical Review* 103, no. 4 (1998): 1147-1150.

<sup>140</sup> Davidson, *Dangerous Liaisons*, 209.

<sup>141</sup> McGowan, *Policing the Metropolis of Scotland*, 66.

<sup>142</sup> Barrie, *Police in the Age of Improvement*, 12-15, 267.

<sup>143</sup> Alan Williams, *The Police of Paris, 1718-1789* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1979), xvi, 238.

<sup>144</sup> Goldsmith, "The Development of the City of Glasgow Police," 297.

century Edinburgh: ‘the concept of “police” went far beyond watching property to watching a range of environmental health concerns, and so demonstrated that the term “public health” was deeply rooted in a broad Scottish vision of civic responsibility’.<sup>145</sup> For their part, police authorities saw the police as a cheaper alternative than employing inspectors for a range of functions associated with civic regulation.

Much of the legislation in the nineteenth century that created many of the ‘new’ police forces therefore contained provisions relating to community life. The Burgh Police (Scotland) Act 1892, for example, which created many of the burgh forces, also contained provisions relating to, among others, the regulation of buildings, carts and carriages, footpaths, bathing, and skating.<sup>146</sup> In Edinburgh, the 1933 Corporation Order provided for the adoption of some sections of the 1892 Act in addition to, for example, regulating electricity markets, slaughterhouses, public health, cleansing, lighting, parks, bathing, washhouses, seashore, strand, and municipal buildings.<sup>147</sup> Both acts remained in force throughout the Second World War and came under the category of ‘Police Acts’ in classification VII, ‘Miscellaneous Offences’, in official statistics.

As Figure 6.4 shows, police activity in Edinburgh in relation to ‘Police Acts’ declined during the Second World War, especially by comparison with the period 1936-1938. Indeed, as a percentage of all Class VII crimes and offences it declined from a high of 17.5 per cent in 1936 to 5.1 per cent in 1945. Statistics show the pattern for Scotland as a whole also declined during the period 1940-1945.<sup>148</sup> As with the decline in other aspects of core policing during the war, part of the explanation relates to the reduction in the visibility of the police and pressure of other tasks associated with the war on the home front, especially given the crimes and offences were largely victimless and therefore largely a consequence of proactive police activity. In that respect, police officers clearly exercised discretion. In addition, many of those who would otherwise be involved in municipal maintenance had been conscripted or relocated for essential war service, whilst those who remained were deployed to allow the corporation to

<sup>145</sup> Laxton, Rodger, and Littlejohn, *Insanitary City*, 31.

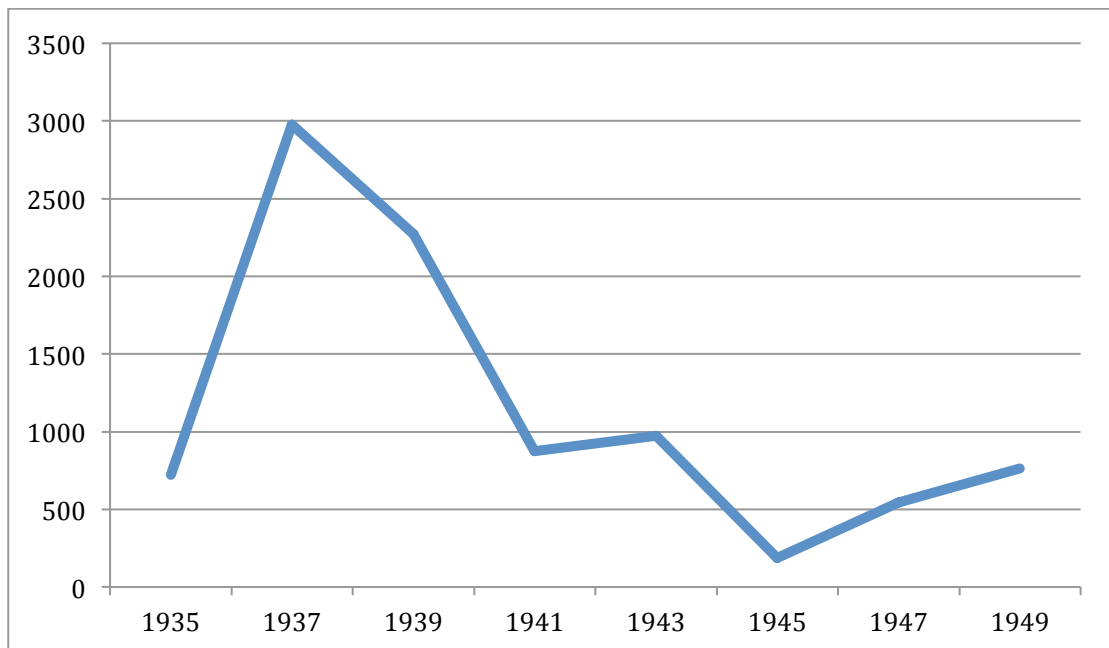
<sup>146</sup> 55 & 56 Vict, cap. 55 (1892).

<sup>147</sup> 24 Geo. 5, cap. 5 (1933).

<sup>148</sup> See Cmd 7505, 14-15. Figures for the rest of the UK are not given in the *Statistical Digest of the War*.



meet its statutory obligations with regard to air-raid precaution and civil defence measures. Thus, it would be reasonable for police officers at a strategic or tactical level to hold the view that there was no point in taking action over minor infringements that entailed building or cleansing maintenance, for example, given it was unlikely that these tasks would be carried out for the duration of the war.



**Figure 6.4 Crimes and offences related to 'Police Acts' made known to the police in Edinburgh, 1935-1949**

[Source: ECA ED006/1/10-12]

### Conclusion

Policing in the late 1930s was much as it had been since the creation of the 'new' police in the nineteenth century. Despite increasing responsibility for a number of functions that had little to do with breaking the law, it remained premised on the policeman patrolling a beat discharging the core role of preventing crime and preserving the peace. The extent to which policing altered as a consequence of the Second World War is the subject of competing interpretation. This chapter has demonstrated that police activity with respect to core functions in Edinburgh during the Second World War represented both continuity and change.

In general terms policing with regard to the protection of property remained unchanged during the war from that of the immediate pre- and post-war eras. Nevertheless, there was an intensification of police activity in relation to



housebreaking. To some extent, this was a consequence of wartime factors, in particular the reduction in the actual strength of regular officers through their release to the armed services and industry. The *Police Review* was in no doubt that the ‘serious increase in crime in many parts of the [UK]’ during the war could be attributed to the reduction in strength of the police forces.<sup>149</sup> Notwithstanding the recruitment of auxiliaries, together with the requirement to undertake additional wartime tasks, this reduction in numbers lessened the amount of time that experienced officers with intimate local knowledge could spend on patrol preventing crime. Thus property was most likely not checked to the same extent it was before and after the war. The perpetrators’ discourse of ‘fair shares’, which arose as a consequence of the mobilisation for total war, was also possibly a contributory factor.

On the other hand, the increased demand on the police in respect of housebreaking was a consequence of the legacy of pre-war social and economic factors, in particular suburbanisation. In that regard, the lack of street lighting, which hindered preventative policing in the immediate pre-war era, was exacerbated by the introduction of the blackout. At the same time, the introduction of police boxes in the 1930s reduced the effectiveness of the police. In short, the opportunities for housebreakers during the war were enhanced. Finally, the strategic decision not to implement an informal warning system for juvenile offenders potentially increased the demand on the police with regard to reoffenders.

Policing with regard to the protection of life also remained largely unchanged during the war. Given the inherently ‘domestic’ nature of the most numerical related crimes and offences it is, however, difficult to infer much from this about the character of policing. Had the classification included a category of street violence, for example, it might have been possible to infer something about preventative policing. Nevertheless, there was an increase in police activity in respect of the three most numerical related crimes and offences. For the most part, this can be attributed to purely wartime factors. The increase in demand with regard to the mistreatment of children, for example, was a consequence of the social dislocation caused by the war, whilst that in relation to assaults was most likely related to the increase in armed

<sup>149</sup> *Police Review*, 9 March 1945, 113.

services personnel. Furthermore, the intensification of the requirement to investigate sudden deaths was partly a consequence of the blackout.

Of the core policing functions the requirement to maintain order and civic regulation changed most noticeably in Edinburgh during the war. Police activity in respect of nearly all the related crimes and offences in these categories decreased sharply by comparison with the immediate pre-war era. In contrast to the other core roles, crimes and offences in relation to the maintenance of order and civic regulation were largely victimless and therefore reliant on proactive police activity. Police officers thus had more latitude for discretion and were more likely to exercise this given the reduction in regular officers, the pressure of war-related duties, and ambivalence to some crimes and offences. In this regard there was an increase in the use of summons and a corresponding decrease in the use of apprehension as a means of dealing with all crimes and offences. At the same time, the decrease in police activity was also largely a consequence of wartime factors. Some offenders undoubtedly escaped detection in the blackout, whilst conscription or essential civilian war work relocated many who would otherwise have been an offender or supplier of related goods and services.



## 7

## Road Traffic policing

The requirement to regulate road traffic became an increasing demand for the police throughout Britain in the early twentieth century as a consequence of the rapid increase in the number of vehicles on the road. The number of private cars registered in Britain rose from around 186,000 to one million in the 1920s and two million by 1939.<sup>1</sup> Part of the explanation relates to the reduction in the cost of motoring. Emsley has argued that the growth of regulation was also part of the expansion of the 'Policeman State'.<sup>2</sup> The Royal Commission on Police Powers and Procedure in England and Wales in 1928 reported that there had been a 'phenomenal growth of work' for the police in relation to road traffic 'which had resulted from the advent of the motor vehicle'.<sup>3</sup> The 1929 Royal Commission on Transport, meanwhile, found that traffic regulation had become a 'difficult and irksome duty'. Furthermore, that increasing numbers of officers were being abstracted for traffic regulation thereby increasing the pressure for the delivery of core policing on those left patrolling beats.<sup>4</sup>

By the interwar period the demand on the police in Edinburgh in relation to the regulation of traffic had increased in line with the general pattern across Britain. As Table 7.1 shows, in the 1920s the number of vehicles registered in Edinburgh almost tripled, whilst the number of driving licences issued more than doubled. The number of both increased further in the 1930s. By 1930 the chief constable, Roderick Ross, reported: 'Vehicular traffic continues to increase at a remarkable rate; in order to cope efficiently with it a large volume of extra work devolves upon the Police, and traffic control has become one of the most important duties which fall to be performed by the Service.'<sup>5</sup> Together with the growing demands related to a range of public services, such as lost and found property and policing the new suburbs, the regulation of traffic

<sup>1</sup> Brenda M. White, "Road Accident Statistics in Peace and War in Britain 1930-1951," in *Road Accidents Great Britain 1991: The Casualty Report* (London: Department of Transport, HMSO, 1992), 33.

<sup>2</sup> Emsley, "Mother, What *Did* Policemen Do When There Weren't Any Motors?," 357, 373.

<sup>3</sup> Cmd 3297, 81.

<sup>4</sup> The Royal Commission also concluded that traffic regulation had not been 'part of the original functions of the police'. Cmd 3365, 21. The regulation of traffic in Scotland had, however, been a requirement for constables long before the development of the 'new' police. See, for example, 12 Geo. 3, cap. 45 (1772).

<sup>5</sup> ECA ED006/1/9, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1930, 20.

created a problem of capacity. Throughout the interwar period Inspectors of Constabulary in England warned that police resources were being overwhelmed.<sup>6</sup> As Laybourn and Taylor concluded:

the demand for free-flowing traffic in town and country and, increasingly, for safety on the roads involved the diversion of police resources into traffic regulation and control at a time when there were increasing demands being made and when resources were constrained by governments facing difficult economic times.<sup>7</sup>

	Number		Index 1921=100	
	Vehicles Registered	Licences Issued	Vehicles Registered	Licences Issued
1921	8280	9191	100	100
1922	10770	11005	130	120
1923	12810	12558	155	137
1924	14285	13829	173	150
1925	14994	16234	181	177
1926	17102	18502	207	201
1927	18237	20180	220	220
1928	20001	21560	242	235
1929	22055	22760	266	248
1930	22601	23893	273	260
1931	24732	24379	299	265
1932	25431	25377	307	276
1933	25547	27112	309	295
1934	27463	29495	332	321
1935	28567	31535	345	343
1936	28692	35640	347	388
1937	30241	39636	365	431
1938	32081	44220	387	481
1939	33581	44654	406	486
1946	27758	43621	335	475
1947	29640	44787	358	487
1948	28086	46524	339	506
1949	30742	51009	371	555

**Table 7.1 Vehicles registered and driving licences issued in Edinburgh, 1921-1939, 1946-1949<sup>8</sup>**

[Source: ECA ED006/1/9-12]

<sup>6</sup> Weinberger, *The Best Police in the World*, 72.

<sup>7</sup> Laybourn and Taylor, *Policing in England and Wales*, 135.

<sup>8</sup> Figures were not given in the chief constable's annual reports to the town council during the Second World War.

In the City of Edinburgh Police this led to the creation of a dedicated traffic department in 1926.<sup>9</sup> Some other Scottish forces, however, did not adopt a system of motor patrols until 1930, which suggests that the problem was greater, or at least perceived earlier, in the capital.<sup>10</sup> Meanwhile, the police in Edinburgh adopted a combination of proactive and reactive strategies and tactics to regulate road traffic. This chapter examines the extent to which the pattern of policing in this regard in the Second World War was different from that which otherwise prevailed in the period 1930-1949. Supplemented by SHD circulars, the chapter draws principally on the chief constable's annual reports to the town council which contain statistics and entries relating to the regulation of traffic.

It is argued here that traffic policing in Edinburgh during the Second World War represented both continuity and change. Put simply, throughout the period under consideration the police continued to enforce the law in relation to the regulation of traffic and responded to road traffic accidents. Nevertheless, the introduction of the blackout led to an increase in the number of fatal road accidents which increased the requirement on the police in terms of investigation as well as necessitating changes to the technology and tactics associated with enforcement. The chapter further demonstrates that, in a parallel to the use of summons noted in chapter six, the shortage of regular officers and the pressure of war-related duties led to an increase in the use of the caution as a means of disposal in relation to road traffic offences. Finally, most police activity in respect of road safety ceased during the war as a consequence of social and economic factors associated with the mobilisation for total war.

### **Policing in relation to enforcement**

The most obvious area of policing in relation to traffic regulation was enforcement of the relevant legislation. In the period under consideration this related principally to the Road Traffic Act 1930 and 1934.<sup>11</sup> The number of crimes and offences relating to these acts was included in the reports by the chief constable to the town council under

<sup>9</sup> ECA ED006/1/9, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1930, 20.

<sup>10</sup> NRS ED43/12, Report of the Scottish Inter-Departmental Committee on Road Safety among School Children, 1936, 14.

<sup>11</sup> 20 & 21 Geo. 5, cap. 43 (1930); 24 & 25 Geo. 5, cap. 50 (1934).

the heading 'Road Acts' in Class VII 'Miscellaneous Offences'.<sup>12</sup> As with other crimes and offences in this classification, they were largely victimless and only became 'known' at the point of detection, largely as a consequence of proactive police activity. As a consequence, the number made known to the police, and cases where one or more person was arrested or cited, are almost identical.

	Crimes and offences related to 'Road Acts'	
	Number made known to the police	As % of all crimes and offences made known to the police
1930	1674	18.5
1931	989	13.8
1932	1283	17.7
1933	1773	23.5
1934	2273	25.6
1935	2579	21.2
1936	8177	38.5
1937	10467	42.3
1938	13336	47.5
1939	8669	38.0
1940	4304	19.5
1941	4456	22.7
1942	6277	30.8
1943	4593	25.4
1944	3146	20.3
1945	1020	9.9
1946	1675	14.6
1947	1749	15.6
1948	1849	15.6
1949	1998	17.6

**Table 7.2 Crimes and offences related to 'Road Acts' in Edinburgh, 1930-1949**

[Source: ECA ED006/1/9-12]

As Table 7.2 shows, there was an increase in police activity from 1931, which was dramatic in the period 1935-1938. By 1938 the number of road traffic crimes and offences made known to the police was 700 per cent greater than that of 1930. At the same time, dealing with road traffic increasingly became part of police work to the

<sup>12</sup> It is likely that officers did not perceive contraventions of the 'Road Acts' to have been divisible into categories of 'serious' or otherwise. Indeed, notwithstanding the exercise of discretion by officers to enforce in particular or general instances, given that crimes and offences related to the regulation of road traffic were specified by statute they were less open to interpretation than those at common law. There was therefore less likelihood that the statistics relating to the 'Road Acts' would have been subject to the same degree of editing in the annual reports by the chief constable to the town council as other categories of crimes and offence clearly were in the period before 1935. This chapter therefore includes figures dating from 1930.

extent that nearly half of all crimes and offences made known to the police were related to 'Road Acts'. Part of the explanation was undoubtedly the response to the demand created by the increase in registered vehicles and driving licences. Whilst the increase was steady in the period under consideration, it was particularly rapid in the period 1935-1939. Given that there were no attested female officers in Edinburgh until the Second World War, those enforcing the legislation in relation to 'Road Acts' were men and, for the most part, constables. Notwithstanding an increase between 1930 and 1938 in the actual strength of the City of Edinburgh Police from 809 to 889, the percentage of actual male regular constables declined from 81 to 79 per cent. Thus the growth in policing demand in Edinburgh in relation to the enforcement of 'Road Acts' in the immediate pre-war period was exponential.

Given the problem of capacity, officers exercised discretion in the enforcement of the legislation in relation to the regulation of road traffic. As the 1929 Royal Commission on Transport concluded:

Probably not one motorist in a thousand observes the general speed limit ... and in many parts of the country no attempt is made to enforce it. Flagrant and universal breaches of the law tend to bring the whole law of the country into contempt and the enforcement of the traffic law becomes increasingly difficult.<sup>13</sup>

Part of the explanation might, however, have been related to the availability of technology and thus the ability to provide incontrovertible evidence. In many cases it was difficult if not impossible to determine precise speeds.<sup>14</sup> What is clear is that Roderick Ross saw the role of the police in Edinburgh in relation to the regulation of road traffic as being principally advisory. In 1930 and 1931, for example, he reported that the 'police were more anxious to help than to prosecute'. In particular, the function of the traffic department was to have a 'moral effect on inconsiderate drivers ... [and] ... check bad driving'. In its first four years of operation, 1926-1930, traffic department officers cautioned a mean of 86.1 per cent of offenders.<sup>15</sup> Table 7.3

<sup>13</sup> Cmd 3365, 3.

<sup>14</sup> Laybourn and Taylor, *Policing in England and Wales*, 159.

<sup>15</sup> ECA ED006/1/9, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1930, 20, 23; 1931, 12.



demonstrates that the mean over the period 1931-1934, before Ross retired, was 85.8, which was consistent with that in the period 1926-1930. Given that the total number of offences made known to the police, and cases where one or more persons was arrested or cited, excludes those offenders cautioned by officers other than those in the traffic department, the number not reported for process was clearly much greater.

	Number			%		
	Cautioned	Reported	Total	Cautioned	Reported	Total
1930	6092	1225	7317	83.3	16.7	100.0
1931	7312	707	8019	91.2	8.8	100.0
1932	7899	969	8868	89.1	10.9	100.0
1933	8614	1220	9834	87.6	12.4	100.0
1934	5418	1537	6955	77.9	22.1	100.0
1935	5166	1436	6602	78.2	21.8	100.0
1936	5528	1437	6965	79.4	20.6	100.0
1937	7968	1372	9340	85.3	14.7	100.0
1938	10060	2061	12121	83.0	17.0	100.0
1939	6022	1187	7209	83.5	16.5	100.0
1940	3204	765	3969	80.7	19.3	100.0
1941	3977	723	4700	84.6	15.4	100.0
1942	6593	786	7379	89.3	10.7	100.0
1943	5151	472	5623	91.6	8.4	100.0
1944	3495	465	3960	88.3	11.7	100.0
1946	6321	1266	7587	83.3	16.7	100.0
1947	4759	1244	6003	79.3	20.7	100.0
1948	5823	1380	7203	80.8	19.2	100.0
1949	5777	1342	7119	81.1	18.9	100.0

**Table 7.3 Disposal of offences by traffic department officers in Edinburgh, 1930-1944, 1946-1949**

*Note: Figures for 1945 were not given in Morren's annual report to the town council.*

[Source: ECA ED006/1/9-12]

At the same time, Ross clearly responded to public pressure in his determination of the role of the police. In 1934, for example, he reported that the police had acted with 'special vigilance' and 'strict attention' to the 'many bitter complaints' by the public regarding indiscriminate parking in the city and speeding vehicles in Queensferry Road.<sup>16</sup> In this sense, police activity was also reactive. Ross's view was not held by all chief police officers however. Sir Philip Game, Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police 1935-45, was quite clear that drivers should be prosecuted rather than warned or advised.<sup>17</sup> The important point here is that in addition to the discretion exercised by

<sup>16</sup> ECA ED006/1/9, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1934, 20-21.

<sup>17</sup> Donaldson, "Policing the War," 216.

rank-and-file officers, the character of policing in relation to the regulation of traffic was determined to a great extent at a strategic level by the chief constable's perception of the role of the police.

In his annual reports to the town council there is nothing to suggest that William Morren, the chief constable throughout the Second World War, held the same view as Ross in relation to enforcing road traffic legislation. Indeed, in the immediate pre-war period Morren vigorously exploited the opportunities afforded by new legislation. For example, in 1938 he reported that a campaign had 'been made possible' by the introduction of the Motor Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1937, which gave the police the power to test the brakes of vehicles.<sup>18</sup> In consequence, officers of the traffic department carried out 2,808 tests that year.<sup>19</sup> Whilst the use of a caution remained the predominant method of disposal in the first two years in which Morren was chief constable, its mean use in the period 1935-36 declined markedly to 78.8 per cent, which suggests that there might have been something of a change in strategy. Morren explained that the rise in enforcement in relation to road traffic policing in 1938 was a consequence of the replacement of the traffic fleet with cars of greater horsepower, which allowed for more intensive 'supervision' to be given to the regulation of traffic.<sup>20</sup> In that sense, the extent of enforcement was also determined by the availability of advances in motor-car technology. Meanwhile, it is likely that public concern also continued to influence enforcement. For example, the publication of the Report of the Scottish Inter-Departmental Committee on Road Safety Among School Children in 1936, which found that the number killed in road accidents under the age of 15 had increased from 436 in 1925 to 699 in 1934, would undoubtedly have put pressure on the police to be proactive.<sup>21</sup>

Part of the 'supervision' Morren referred to was related to speeding. Whilst the recommendations of the 1929 Royal Commission on Transport had led to the abolition in the 1930 Act of speed limits for passenger vehicles on the basis that it was largely

<sup>18</sup> S.R.&O. (No. 229), regulation 95 (1937).

<sup>19</sup> ECA ED006/1/10, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1938, 23.

<sup>20</sup> ECA ED006/1/10, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1938, 18.

<sup>21</sup> NRS ED43/12, Report of the Scottish Inter-Departmental Committee on Road Safety among School Children, 1936, 52.

held in contempt, the 1934 Act reintroduced a limit of 30mph on some roads.<sup>22</sup> Although the Secretary of State for Scotland pointed out that the police measures would vary according to local circumstances, he endorsed the principle that, like in London, the police in Scotland would, at times, utilise unmarked cars crewed by officers in plain clothes to detect contraventions of the speed limit.<sup>23</sup> The police in Edinburgh, and elsewhere in Britain, therefore deployed proactive and covert tactics to enforce the speed limit.

The outbreak of the Second World War, and in particular the introduction of the blackout, however, necessitated changes to the tactics employed in the enforcement of legislation in relation to speeding. As will be noted later in this chapter, there was an increase in the number of road traffic accidents, especially those that were fatal, as a consequence of the blackout. In response, at the beginning of February 1940 central government introduced a 20mph speed limit in built-up areas during the hours of darkness.<sup>24</sup> Although the Secretary of State for Scotland, David Colville, recognised that enforcing this during the blackout presented ‘special problems’, chief constables were urged to ensure police supervision of traffic. In particular, Colville argued that general compliance with the law could not be expected if it became known that those who flouted the legislation in relation to speeding were ‘seldom detected’ during the hours of darkness. Whilst it was envisaged that methods would generally be similar to those employed enforcing other speed limits, tactics had to be adapted to conform to the lighting regulations. In the event that officers were unable to stop a vehicle, for example, they were only permitted to switch on an unmasked fog lamp ‘momentarily’ and infrequently to identify the offender’s number plate. In a similar manner, the speedometer of the police car had to be modified to ensure that it did not dazzle the driver, whilst at the same time ensuring that another officer could see it for corroboration. Furthermore, although motor patrols were still regarded as the ‘normal method’ of enforcement, Colville, drawing on the experience of the Metropolitan Police, also authorised the ‘supplementary measure’ of ‘fixed controls’ where officers were deployed at each end of a measured stretch of road, presumably timing vehicles

<sup>22</sup> 24 & 25 Geo. 5, cap. 50, section 1 (1934).

<sup>23</sup> NRS DD4/403, Press release by the Commissioner Metropolitan Police, March 1935; Press release by the Secretary of State for Scotland, 12 March, 1935.

<sup>24</sup> *Police Review*, 9 February 1940, 58.

over the distance.<sup>25</sup> In this sense, in addition to the operational deployment by the chief constable, police enforcement of the legislation in relation to speeding was dictated by central government on the basis of war conditions and the available technology.

Nevertheless, Table 7.2 demonstrates, in general terms, that there was a decline in police activity in relation to the 'Road Acts' in Edinburgh during the war. The number of crimes and offences made known to the police in 1940, the first full year of war, was 35 per cent less than in 1938, the last full year before the emergency. By 1945, the last year of the war, the number of crimes and offences made known to the police was 92 per cent less than in 1938. The general trend continued in the immediate post-war period. The mean number of crimes and offences made known to the police in the first four full years of peace, 1946-1949, was nearly 80 per cent less than in 1935-1938.

Part of the explanation relates to the reduction in the number of motor vehicles as a consequence of sustained periods of petrol rationing from the start of the war until 1950.<sup>26</sup> Between 1939 and 1942 the five million or so private cars and other vehicles on the roads in Britain were reduced by over a third.<sup>27</sup> In Edinburgh, Morren advised in a Home Intelligence Report in mid-1942 that about two-thirds of cars normally licensed were off the road.<sup>28</sup> By early 1944 the *Police Review* reported that the roads in Britain had been 'cleared of practically all vehicular traffic except military vehicles and those serving essential services'.<sup>29</sup> Although Morren further noted that there had been an increase in traffic on the roads in Edinburgh in the months following the end of the war, Table 7.1 demonstrates that the number of vehicles registered in the first three full post-war years still remained less than in 1937-1939.<sup>30</sup> Thus by comparison with the immediate pre-war period, the reduction in the demand on the police in

<sup>25</sup> NRS HH52/29, Circular 3853, 2 February 1940.

<sup>26</sup> Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity in Britain: Rationing, Controls, and Consumption, 1939-1955* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 193-194., Kynaston, *Austerity Britain*, 511.

<sup>27</sup> Bill Luckin, "War on the Roads: Traffic Accidents and Social Tension in Britain, 1939-45," in *Accidents in History: Injuries, Fatalities and Social Relations*, ed. Roger Cooter and Bill Luckin (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1997), 236., William Plowden, *The Motor Car and Politics in Britain* (London: The Bodley Head, 1973), 301-302.

<sup>28</sup> NRS HH55/34, Home Intelligence Report by City of Edinburgh Police, 17 July 1942.

<sup>29</sup> *Police Review*, 4 February 1944, 49.

<sup>30</sup> NRS HH55/42, Home Intelligence Report by City of Edinburgh Police, 31 December 1945.

relation to enforcement during the war, and in the post-war 'age of austerity', was a consequence of external factors.

Yet notwithstanding the general pattern of a decline in police activity during the war in relation to the 'Road Acts', there was, as tables 7.2 and 7.3 demonstrate, a marked increase in 1942 in the number of offences made known to the police, and cases where one or more persons were arrested or cited, as well as the number of offenders cautioned by traffic department officers. The explanation is undoubtedly related to the establishment in 1941 of an inter-departmental committee under the chairmanship of the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of War Transport to consider road safety in light of the increase in the number of fatal road accidents as a consequence of the blackout. Whilst the Ministry of Information initiated an intensive publicity campaign, the Secretary of State for Scotland, Tom Johnston, pointed out to chief constables in December 1941 that this alone would not produce a reduction in accidents and that enforcement 'must still be a major factor'. Scottish chief constables were therefore asked to 'take all practicable steps to secure that the law is observed ... [and that] ... particular attention may in all circumstances be paid to enforcement of the laws relating to safe driving'.<sup>31</sup>

There were, however, as observed, fewer regular male constables to enforce the legislation in relation to the regulation of traffic. Whilst police auxiliaries had been recruited to fill the void, they were not trained or experienced to the same extent in the highly technical aspects of some of the legislation, especially by comparison with regular traffic department officers. The *Edinburgh Evening News* reported in 1943, for example, that part of the role for the eight members of the Women's Auxiliary Police Corps who had been attested was to deal with motoring offences.<sup>32</sup> Meanwhile, Weinberger has argued that traffic policing changed during the war as a consequence of petrol rationing and the requirement for officers to be on standby for war-related duties.<sup>33</sup> In his annual reports to the town council, Morren pointed, for example, to the large number of exercises that took place throughout the war. In 1940, for instance, some 1,456 exercises were held involving members of the Civil Defence Services,

<sup>31</sup> NRS HH52/30, Circular 4736, 11 December 1941.

<sup>32</sup> *Edinburgh Evening News*, 20 October 1943, 3.

<sup>33</sup> Weinberger, *The Best Police in the World*, 125.

with a further 2,860 involving staff at Reporting Centres.<sup>34</sup> Although the extent of police involvement is not made explicit, officers undoubtedly participated and some, if not many, were diverted from operational policing for that purpose. Probably partly for such reasons the percentage of offences dealt with by a caution increased during the war by comparison with the period immediately after Morren became chief constable. In 1943, for example, some 91.6 per cent of offences dealt with by traffic officers were disposed of by way of a caution. Over the period 1939-1944 a mean 86.6 per cent of offences resulted in a caution, which is consistent with the figure that pertained whilst Ross was chief constable.

In 1947 the Committee on Road Safety, which was appointed in 1943 as a consequence of the 1941 Inter-Departmental Committee, produced its final report.<sup>35</sup> In an echo of Ross' view of the police role in relation to the regulation of traffic in the pre-war period, the report argued that:

most motoring offences are the outcome of ignorance of the principles of road conduct and that advice and assistance rather than prosecution should accordingly be the keynote of Police policy, particularly for those offences under the Road Traffic Acts which are regarded by some as being of a 'technical' character. Any system under which fear becomes the controlling factor in obtaining the required reaction among so large a section of the public who, as individuals, are generally law abiding, is not, we think, likely to produce the most effective results.<sup>36</sup>

The mean percentage of offences dealt with by caution by traffic department officers in Edinburgh in the immediate aftermath of the report, 1948-49, was 81.0, which was clearly less than the figure that pertained during the war. The significant point is that the increased use of cautions as a means of disposal during the war was an expedient, either at a strategic or tactical level, to the problem of capacity. Laybourn found in his study that wartime conditions had 'fostered an attitude of liberality towards the motorist'.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>34</sup> ECA ED006/1/11, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1940, 9.

<sup>35</sup> White, "Road Accident Statistics," 36.

<sup>36</sup> The National Archives (hereafter TNA) MT92/17, Final Report of the Committee on Road Safety, 1947, 42-43.

<sup>37</sup> Laybourn, *The Battle for the Roads*, 90.

Given the brevity of Morren's annual reports to the town council during the war, it is difficult to construct an accurate picture of enforcement in relation to the regulation of road traffic in Edinburgh other than by inference from the statistics and, by implication, from the SHD circulars, which applied to all Scottish forces. In mid-1941, for example, a circular highlighted Treasury concerns at the loss of revenue caused by unlicensed vehicles. Whilst the Secretary of State, Tom Johnston, pointed out that he accepted chief constables had been obliged in some cases to discontinue the 'full system of quarterly checks' and could not be 'expected to divert personnel from more important duties', he hoped that they would be able to resume checks to the 'extent which is possible'.<sup>38</sup> Whether the failure to carry out the checks was the consequence of a strategic decision by chief constables or the exercise of discretion by rank-and-file officers is unknown. In either case, it would, however, be understandable if what was in effect a comparatively trivial responsibility was overlooked given the pressure of war-related duties. Indeed, by May 1943, the SHD advised chief constables that whilst licensing offences 'detected by the police in the course of their normal duties' should continue to be reported, systematic checks were no longer required in the 'present circumstances'.<sup>39</sup>

Morren's reports, however, identify a continuity in the enforcement of the regulations in relation to hackney carriages. The relevant department, which had been a responsibility of the town council since before 1855, was transferred to the police in 1933.<sup>40</sup> Although the strength of the force was, in consequence, increased by one officer, the requirements in relation to examining carriages and drivers contributed to an increased demand on the police in relation to the regulation of traffic in the pre-war period. By 1937 Morren reported that the work entailed was 'considerable'.<sup>41</sup> Taking the two main licences issued in relation to hackney carriages, Table 7.4 demonstrates that police activity in this regard continued to be discharged throughout the war. Indeed, in 1940, for example, Morren recorded that: 'As in former years ... all requirements were satisfactorily complied with'.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>38</sup> NRS HH52/30, Circular 4519, 18 July 1941.

<sup>39</sup> NRS HH52/30, Circular 5377, 29 May 1943.

<sup>40</sup> ECA ED006/1/9, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1933, 27.

<sup>41</sup> ECA ED006/1/10, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1937, 25.

<sup>42</sup> ECA ED006/1/10, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1940, 7.



	Number		Index 1933=100	
	Hackney carriage licences	Hackney carriage drivers' licences	Hackney carriage licences	Hackney carriage drivers' licences
1933	278	378	100	100
1934	276	377	99.3	99.7
1935	271	365	97.5	96.6
1936	284	352	102.2	93.1
1937	306	356	110.1	94.2
1938	282	339	101.4	89.7
1939	259	322	93.2	85.2
1940	238	303	85.6	80.2
1941	227	287	81.7	75.9
1942	317	308	114.0	81.5
1943	298	347	107.2	91.8
1944	247	334	88.8	88.4
1945	285	378	102.5	100.0
1946	377	469	135.6	124.1
1947	410	496	147.5	131.2
1948	434	532	156.1	140.7
1949	450	538	161.9	142.3

**Table 7.4 Motorised hackney carriage licences and motorised hackney carriage drivers' licences issued in Edinburgh, 1933-1949**

[Source: ECA ED006/1/9-12]

The reason for the continued police activity relates to the demand for taxis. Given petrol rationing and the consequent shortage of private motoring, there was a demand for alternative modes of transport. Public transport was, however, not always available due to shortages of staff, spare parts, and petrol.<sup>43</sup> Thus, whilst the town council had in 1942 limited the number of taxis on the roads in Edinburgh at one time to 240, Morren recorded a year later that the number had been increased to 247 'having regard to the public demand for more'.<sup>44</sup> In a similar manner, the increased number of licences issued in the immediate post-war period was a consequence of the demand by the public for more taxis.<sup>45</sup> In this sense police activity can be seen as reactive in relation to the public demand created by the continued shortage of petrol. Notwithstanding the increased demand for taxis, the question arises as to why the police continued to issue licences given the additional demands related to policing the home front. For example, the redeployment of Ministry of Transport examiners to

<sup>43</sup> Calder, *The People's War*, 319.

<sup>44</sup> ECA ED006/1/11, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1942, 8; 1943, 11.

<sup>45</sup> ECA ED006/1/11, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1945, 14.



defence duties led to the suspension of driving tests intermittently during the war.<sup>46</sup> The explanation probably relates to the fact that taxis were employed in conveying the public and there was, therefore, some obligation to ensure that both drivers and vehicles were fit for purpose.

### **Policing in relation to responding to accidents**

As a consequence of the rapid increase in cars on the roads in the early twentieth century there was an increase in the number of road traffic accidents in Britain. As Table 7.5 shows this was especially marked from the late 1920s into the early 1930s. One writer has pointed out that in 1934 there were an unprecedented number of road accidents and that the figure was not exceeded in peacetime until 1964.<sup>47</sup> In Scotland the police had a duty to investigate any accident 'which may have involved some violation of the law'.<sup>48</sup> In addition to enforcement, the increase in the number of cars in the interwar period therefore created an increase in the requirement for the police to respond to road traffic accidents.

Given the inconsistency in the content of the annual reports to the town council by the chief constable in the period 1930-1949, it is, however, difficult to construct an accurate picture of the extent of road traffic accidents in Edinburgh. It is often not clear whether a figure relates to the number of persons killed and injured in accidents or the number of accidents that resulted in death or injury. Furthermore, the number of accidents whereby damage or injury was caused to any vehicle, or animal, and reported to the police under the provisions of the 1930 Act is not recorded.<sup>49</sup> The number of persons killed and injured is therefore an indicative, rather than precise, measure of the number of all road traffic accidents.

<sup>46</sup> cf *The Scotsman*, 1 September 1939, 11; 5 December 1939, 9.

<sup>47</sup> White, "Road Accident Statistics," 33.

<sup>48</sup> Mill, *The Scottish Police*, 56.

<sup>49</sup> 20 & 21 Geo. 5, cap. 43, section 22 (1930).

	Number					%				
	Scotland		England & Wales		Total	Scotland		England & Wales		Total
	Fatal	Non-Fatal	Fatal	Non-Fatal		Fatal	Non-Fatal	Fatal	Non-Fatal	
1913	219	3240	1743	38050	43252	0.5	7.5	4.0	88.0	100.0
1916	285	3890	2393	46090	52658	0.5	7.4	4.5	87.5	100.0
1917	248	3433	2047	38326	44054	0.6	7.8	4.6	87.0	100.0
1918	242	2987	1842	31604	36675	0.7	8.1	5.0	86.2	100.0
1919	249	3957	2239	43305	49750	0.5	8.0	4.5	87.0	100.0
1920	318	4417	2386	49317	56438	0.6	7.8	4.2	87.4	100.0
1921	350	4790	2328	55153	62621	0.6	7.6	3.7	88.1	100.0
1922	327	4987	2441	62504	70259	0.5	7.1	3.5	89.0	100.0
1923	285	5832	2694	74290	83101	0.3	7.0	3.2	89.4	100.0
1924	326	6717	3269	87867	98179	0.3	6.8	3.3	89.5	100.0
1925	436	8798	3535	102704	115473	0.4	7.6	3.1	88.9	100.0
1926	567	10638	4236	108846	124287	0.5	8.6	3.4	87.6	100.0
1927	614	11509	4581	117239	133943	0.5	8.6	3.4	87.5	100.0
1928	625	12405	5358	129199	147587	0.4	8.4	3.6	87.5	100.0
1929	688	12767	5817	132529	151801	0.5	8.4	3.8	87.3	100.0
1930	757	13642	6317	136077	156793	0.5	8.7	4.0	86.6	100.0
1931	644	15321	5855	159257	181077	0.4	8.5	3.2	87.9	100.0
1932	687	15567	5800	161952	184006	0.4	8.5	3.2	88.0	100.0
1933	680	15364	6321	169417	191782	0.4	8.0	3.3	88.3	100.0
1934	699	17387	6456	180168	204710	0.3	8.5	3.2	88.0	100.0
1935	624	16714	5690	172864	195892	0.3	8.5	2.9	88.2	100.0

**Table 7.5 Road traffic accidents in Britain, 1913-1935**

[Source: Statistical Abstract for the United Kingdom, 1930-1931, 1935, and 1937<sup>50</sup>]

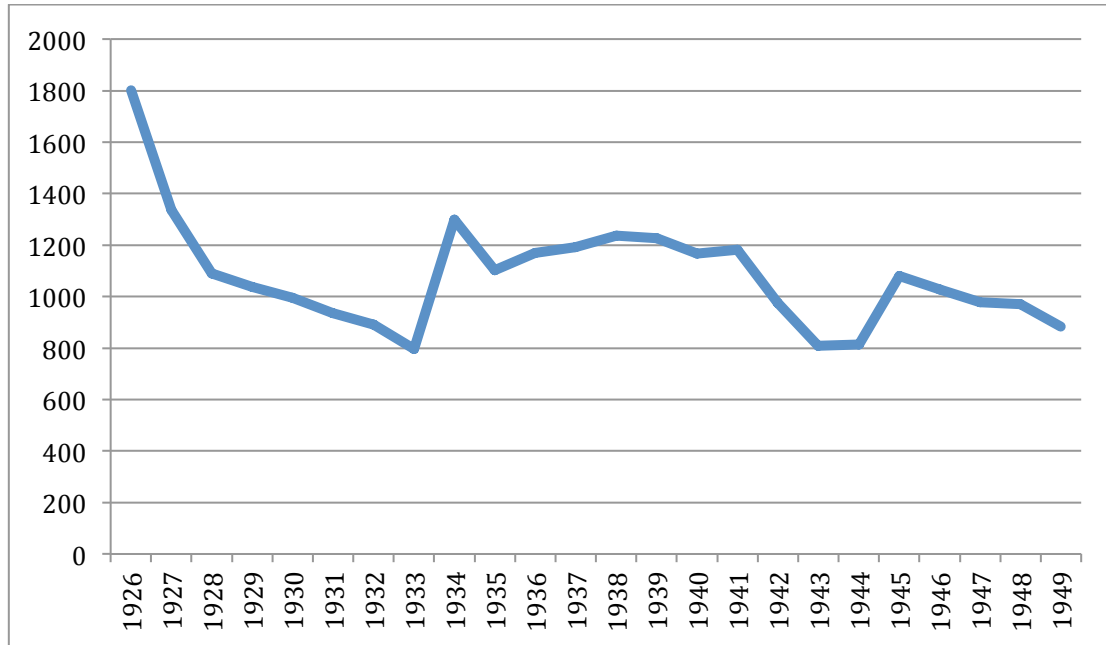
As Figure 7.1 shows, the decline from 1926 in the number of those killed or injured in road traffic accidents in Edinburgh was reversed dramatically in 1934. For Roderick Ross the explanation was related to legislation, in particular the abolition of the speed limit for passenger vehicles in the 1930 Act.<sup>51</sup> Although he reported in the first two years after the abolition that it had not led to the envisaged increase in accidents, by 1933 he concluded that the speed limit should be reintroduced given that 'excessive speed' was a contributory factor in the increased number of injuries sustained. At the same time Ross highlighted the problem that many who held a driving licence were unfit to drive and argued for the introduction of a driving test.<sup>52</sup> Although many countries required that drivers pass a test of proficiency, the 1929 Royal Commission

<sup>50</sup> In Emsley, "Mother, What *Did* Policemen Do When There Weren't Any Motors?," 359.

<sup>51</sup> 20 & 21 Geo. 5, cap. 43, section 10 (1930). Under the First Schedule to the Act there was, with exceptions, no limit to the maximum speed for vehicles constructed solely for the carriage of passengers and their effects.

<sup>52</sup> ECA ED006/1/9, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1931, 13; 1932, 16; 1933, 16-17.

on Transport rejected its introduction. Despite the requirement in the 1930 Act for applicants to make a declaration of any physical disability that would render them a danger, licences continued to be ‘nothing more than a receipt’ for the fee of five shillings.<sup>53</sup>



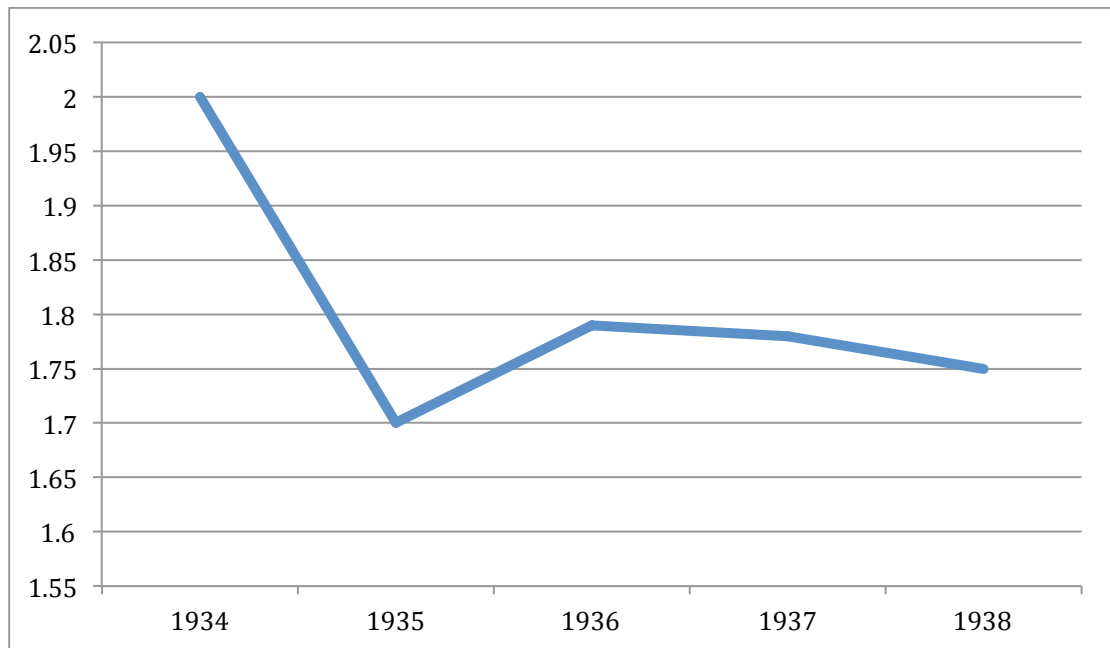
**Figure 7.1 Number of persons killed or injured in road traffic accidents in Edinburgh, 1926-1949**

[Source: ECA ED006/1/9-12]

Figure 7.1 demonstrates that there was a reduction in the number of persons killed or injured in road traffic accidents in Edinburgh in 1935. The explanation undoubtedly relates to the introduction in the 1934 Act of a driving test and a speed limit. As Ross recorded, motorists in Edinburgh largely observed the latter.<sup>54</sup> Thus, in addition to the increased number of vehicles on the road, the character of legislation relating to the regulation of traffic affected the propensity for accidents in the interwar period and hence the level of demand on the police. However, as Figure 7.2 demonstrates, by comparison with 1934, there was a decline in the number of death and injury accidents each regular male constable responded to in the last full five years before the outbreak of war. The continuing increase in the number of cars on the roads, along with the decrease in the percentage of male regular constables, therefore acted as countervailing factors.

<sup>53</sup> Cmd 3297, 28-30., 20 & 21 Geo. 5, cap. 43, sections 4-5 (1930).

<sup>54</sup> ECA ED006/1/10, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1935, 18.



**Figure 7.2** Number of death or injury accidents responded to by each male regular constable in Edinburgh, 1934-1938

[Source: ECA ED006/1/10]

Historians have identified that there was a dramatic rise in the number of fatal road accidents in Britain with the outbreak of war.<sup>55</sup> As Table 7.6 demonstrates, by 1941 the number of fatalities in Britain was some 57 per cent greater than in 1938. Joe Moran has argued in relation to the first four months of war that it 'was more dangerous to be on the roads than in the armed services'.<sup>56</sup> The General Secretary of the 'Safety First' Association identified Edinburgh, along with Glasgow, Dundee, and Aberdeen, as having the largest increase in Britain in the first six months of war by comparison with the corresponding period in 1938.<sup>57</sup> Indeed, although relatively small in real terms, there was a sharp increase in the number killed in Edinburgh in the first years of war by comparison with 1938. Yet any increase in the number of fatalities had the potential to affect the capacity of the police in Scotland exponentially given the protracted and detailed nature of the investigation required to report the circumstances to the procurator fiscal.

<sup>55</sup> See, for example, Calder, *The People's War*, 63., Gardiner, *Wartime*, 61., Hylton, *Their Darkest Hour*, 102.

<sup>56</sup> Joe Moran, "Crossing the Road in Britain, 1931-1976," *The Historical Journal* 49, no. 2 (2006): 483.

<sup>57</sup> *Edinburgh Evening News*, 3 April 1940, 5.

	Road Fatalities			
	Number		Index 1938=100	
	Britain	Edinburgh	Britain	Edinburgh
1938	3046	51	100	100
1939	4497	65	148	127
1940	4714	72	155	141
1941	4781	69	157	135
1942	3650	61	120	120
1943	3058	56	100	110
1944	3314	50	109	98
1945	2602	43	85	84
1946	2489	52	82	102
1947	2380	37	78	73
1948	2368	39	78	76

**Table 7.6 Road fatalities in Britain and Edinburgh, 1938-1948**

[Source: Road Accident Statistics, 1938-54;<sup>58</sup> ECA ED006/1/9-12]

Writers attribute the increase in road accidents during the war to the introduction of the blackout. William Plowden, for example, argued: 'The black-out made the use of roads at night a perilous affair.'<sup>59</sup> Likewise, Luckin identified a 'decisive war-time movement towards more accidents occurring during the hours of darkness'.<sup>60</sup> Motorists and pedestrians in particular struggled to adjust to using the roads in the new conditions of relative gloom. The Ministry of Transport concluded that, by the end of 1940, most of the fatal accidents during the preceding 15 months had 'occurred during the hours of darkness'.<sup>61</sup> The phenomenon was identified in the *Police Review* as the new 'Black Death'.<sup>62</sup> In Edinburgh, Morren clearly blamed the 'alarming rise' in fatal road accidents in 1939 on the blackout. He recorded that in 1939, whilst there had been 25 fatalities up to the end of August, there had been 40 in the first four months of war, with 80 per cent of these occurring when 'black-out conditions were operating'. Of these, 97 per cent were pedestrians, mostly middle-aged or elderly. Morren concluded that 'certain classes of pedestrians' had been 'slow to react' to the 'revolutionary change in everyday conditions'.<sup>63</sup>

Thus, whereas the demand on the police in relation to the enforcement of the 1934 Act was potentially offset by the likely reduction in road traffic accidents, an unintended

<sup>58</sup> In Luckin, "War on the Roads," 238.

<sup>59</sup> Plowden, *The Motor Car and Politics*, 303.

<sup>60</sup> Luckin, "War on the Roads," 238.

<sup>61</sup> *Edinburgh Evening News*, 18 December 1940, 5.

<sup>62</sup> *Police Review*, 17 November 1939, 398.

<sup>63</sup> ECA ED006/1/10, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1939, 5, 18.

consequence of the enforcement of the 'Lighting Restrictions' was an increase in fatal accidents. At the same time the driving test, which had contributed to a reduction in accidents in the immediate pre-war period, was suspended intermittently, whilst the requirement was removed for provisional license holders to be accompanied by a fully licensed driver and to display 'L' plates on the vehicle. Central Government's intention was to enable holders of provisional licences to drive to ease the position where there was a scarcity of available drivers.<sup>64</sup> Joe Moran has argued, however, that its effect was to 'put more incompetent drivers on the road' thereby increasing the potential for accidents to occur.<sup>65</sup>

The introduction by central government of a 20mph speed limit and the extension of daylight hours was, however, an attempt to mitigate the causes of accidents and, notwithstanding the drive for more enforcement in 1941-1942, thereby potentially reduced the requirement on the police. As demonstrated, there was a partial reduction in the number of people killed and injured in road accidents in Edinburgh from 1942 until the end of the war. Yet part of the explanation must relate to a reduction in the number of vehicles on the road. Indeed, the general downward trend, which continued into the immediate post-war years, was reversed in 1945 as a consequence of the restoration of a petrol allowance for ordinary use. Morren reported that this had led to a considerable increase in the number of vehicles on the roads in the city.<sup>66</sup> By a similar token the abolition of the basic petrol ration in 1946 helps explain the reduction in 1947 in the number of fatalities.

Nonetheless, Morren saw the demand on the police in relation to road accidents as being the consequence of the changing perceptions of all road users. In 1942, for example, he argued that given the considerably reduced number of vehicles on the road the reduction in the number of people killed and injured was not as significant as might have been expected: 'It is probable that this is due to a false sense of security acquired by road users generally on the principle that the reduction in vehicles means a greater degree of road safety. From the Statistics this would appear to be a fallacy

<sup>64</sup> NRS HH52/29, Circular 3985, 31 May 1940.

<sup>65</sup> Moran, "Crossing the Road," 483.

<sup>66</sup> ECA ED006/1/11, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1945, 13.

...<sup>67</sup> In a similar vein he argued that the increase in fatalities in 1946 was a consequence of the war: ‘There is little doubt that the intervening war years have had the general effect of nullifying, in the minds of the citizens, that “awareness” of the dangers of the road which had been carefully built up during the years preceding hostilities.’<sup>68</sup>

### **Policing in relation to road safety**

As part of the regulation of traffic in the 1930s and 1940s the police in Edinburgh adopted a strategy to proactively reduce the risk of road accidents. Indeed, the Committee on Road Safety, which began work in 1943, concluded in its final report that the main duties of the police in relation to road traffic and road accidents, which were of ‘importance equal to that of criminal investigation’, included:

- (a) The study of the traffic problem and the development and advancement of the technique of traffic control in all its phases.
- (b) The prevention of offences and the education of road users.
- (c) The enforcement of the law.
- (d) The prevention of road accidents and the systematic investigation and review of their causes.<sup>69</sup>

By 1949 Morren advised the town council that responsibilities in this regard in Edinburgh had ‘increased enormously’ in ‘recent years’ and that whilst ‘all members of the Force ... are continually on the alert to do everything in their power to reduce ... factors to a minimum’, it was only part of the solution to road safety.<sup>70</sup> Indeed, in contrast to enforcement and responding to accidents where responsibility lay primarily with the police, a number of organisations participated in policy communities to use Rhodes’ terms, to promote road safety. Given this, it is impossible at times to ascertain the extent of police involvement. For example, many of the chief constables’ reports to the town council refer to some aspect of road engineering, such as lighting or halt signs, but give no clue as to whether the police were involved. What is clear is

<sup>67</sup> ECA ED006/1/11, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1942, 8.

<sup>68</sup> ECA ED006/1/12, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1946, 29.

<sup>69</sup> TNA MT92/17, Final Report of the Committee on Road Safety, 1947, 40.

<sup>70</sup> ECA ED006/1/11, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1949, 24.

that by comparison with the immediate pre- and post-war periods, police activity in relation to road safety was much reduced as a consequence of the war.

Yet Roderick Ross had been clearly of the view that education was an effective strategy, especially in relation to children, to pursue in respect of road safety. In 1934, for example, he advised that lectures by police officers had been given in 90 schools.<sup>71</sup> Throughout the early 1930s he attributed the reduction in the number of fatal accidents in particular to the dissemination of road safety propaganda.<sup>72</sup> Morren, likewise, pursued a strategy of education. In 1935, for instance, he reported that, in addition to the Women's Guild, lectures had been given to 88 schools, where members of the Scottish Inter-Departmental Committee on Road Safety among School Children had been present.<sup>73</sup> The approval and recommendation by the Committee a year later that lectures by police officers should be extended was therefore based, at least in part, on the practice in Edinburgh.<sup>74</sup>

Indeed, dominant discourses in the 1930s and 1940s in relation to accidents viewed pedestrians rather than drivers as being largely responsible.<sup>75</sup> Damian Collins, Catherine Bean, and Robin Kearns have identified in relation to New Zealand that children especially were socially constructed as 'risky and unpredictable 'objects''.<sup>76</sup> Likewise, the Scottish Inter-Departmental Committee reported in 1936 that: 'the main source of road accidents to children is to be found in the psychology of the child and the fact that his adaptation to traffic conditions cannot be effected without a course of training which involves some restraint and re-orientation of natural instincts'.<sup>77</sup> In a similar manner, Brenda White found that contemporaries during the Second World War blamed the increase in road traffic accidents on pedestrians who were perceived to be 'unable to rid themselves of peacetime psychology', whereas 'no such

<sup>71</sup> ECA ED006/1/10, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1934, 18.

<sup>72</sup> See, for example, ECA ED006/1/9, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1930, 24-25.

<sup>73</sup> ECA ED006/1/10, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1935, 18.

<sup>74</sup> NRS ED43/12, Report of the Scottish Inter-Departmental Committee on Road Safety among School Children, 1936, 42.

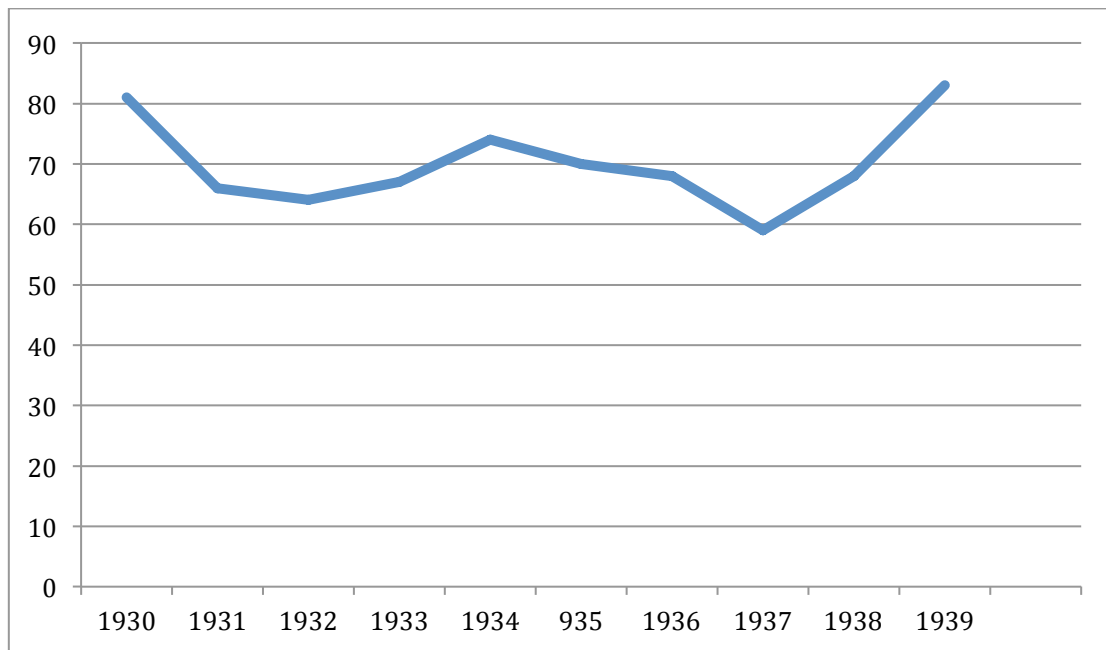
<sup>75</sup> Moran, "Crossing the Road," 478.

<sup>76</sup> Damian Collins, Catherine Bean, and Robin Kearns, "'Mind that Child': Childhood, Traffic and Walking in Automobiled Space," in *Car Troubles: Critical Studies of Automobility and Automobility*, ed. Jim Conley and Arlene Tigar McLaren (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), 127.

<sup>77</sup> NRS ED43/12, Report of the Scottish Inter-Departmental Committee on Road Safety among School Children, 1936, 20.



culpability was attributed to speeding motorists'.<sup>78</sup> In his study of road deaths published in the immediate aftermath of war the former chairman of the Pedestrians' Association, J. S. Dean, argued that notwithstanding that there was less than three million drivers amongst a population of 40 million, 'motor interests' had 'almost complete control of the road safety situation'. The main aim of 'motor interests' was to persuade the public that the accidents were 'always the fault of the non-drivers, especially pedestrians ... to ... secure the removal or the non-enforcement of the existing controls on the drivers and to prevent the introduction of new ones'.<sup>79</sup>



**Figure 7.3 Pedestrians killed as a percentage of all persons killed in road traffic accidents in Edinburgh, 1930-1939**

[Source: ECA ED006/1/9-10]

As Figure 7.3 demonstrates, the majority of those killed in road traffic accidents in Edinburgh in the 1930s were in fact pedestrians. Although this is very different from proving that pedestrians were responsible, Ross was in no doubt that they were to blame. In 1932, for example, he argued: 'A large proportion of the accidents under review must be definitely attributed to the conduct of pedestrians who, failing to take the precautions so vital nowadays for their own safety, stepped off the footway or crossed the carriageway carelessly.' Likewise, in 1933 he reported: 'there is no doubt

<sup>78</sup> White, "Road Accident Statistics," 36.

<sup>79</sup> J. S. Dean, *Murder Most Foul: A Study of the Road Deaths Problem* (London: G. Allen & Unwin, 1947), 13, 42.

that many pedestrians cause accidents by thoughtlessness'. As a consequence, he advocated the introduction of legislation to control pedestrians.<sup>80</sup>

Morren, in contrast, appeared more balanced in his attribution of responsibility in relation to road traffic accidents. In 1947, for example, he argued that 'persistent forms of propaganda must be directed to all members of the community'. At the same time, however, he pointed out that the 'reckless disregard so often shown by children does not always result in serious consequences ... due in no small measure to the presence of mind on the part of motorists'. This suggests that he, like Ross, was of the view that drivers were less blameworthy. As a consequence, he instituted a proactive programme of intervention. Following acts of carelessness by children, officers communicated directly with their parents and issued them with road safety advice.<sup>81</sup> As Mona Gleason suggested, such measures similar were intended to act in *loco parentis* based on the perception of incompetent parenting and the consequent concept of the 'public child'.<sup>82</sup> In this sense, the construction of the road safety problem was largely a reflection of central government policy which, as Luckin has identified, was premised on the 'human model' of blame until the 1950s.<sup>83</sup>

Notwithstanding these educational initiatives, the police road safety education programme ceased entirely during the war. In 1946 Morren advised the town council: 'Prior to the outbreak of war, lectures on road safety were given ... and I am pleased to record that it has now been found possible to reintroduce these talks. This year, 58 lectures were delivered at schools in the City by members of the Traffic Section.'<sup>84</sup> As with other aspects of wartime policing, part of the explanation as to why the education programme was suspended undoubtedly relates to the shortage of regular officers and the pressure of war-related duties. As Brenda White confirmed in relation to the regulation of road traffic across Britain: 'matters were not helped by the reduction in police strength, depleted by active service volunteers and utilised for other vital war duties'.<sup>85</sup> In any event, there was significant disruption to the schools

<sup>80</sup> ECA ED006/1/9, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1932, 16-17; 1933, 17.

<sup>81</sup> ECA ED006/1/11, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1947, 31.

<sup>82</sup> Mona Gleason, "From Disgraceful Carelessness to Intelligent Precaution: Accidents and the Public Child in English Canada, 1900-1950," *Journal of Family History* 30, no. 2 (2005).

<sup>83</sup> Luckin, "War on the Roads," 245-246.

<sup>84</sup> ECA ED006/1/11, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1946, 30.

<sup>85</sup> White, "Road Accident Statistics," 36.

where the lectures were delivered as a consequence of the evacuation scheme. Within a few days of the declaration of war by the UK about 31,000 children had been evacuated from Edinburgh, with a further 3,000 a few weeks later.<sup>86</sup>

As with other forms of preventative policing it is difficult to definitively ascertain whether road safety campaigns reduced the number of road accidents. Table 7.7 demonstrates that there were more fatalities and injuries in non-road traffic accidents, such as those occurring in the workplace which might indicate some effect. However, this does not necessarily prove that education and other road safety programmes were effective. Although Ross was clearly of the view that the police education programme reduced the number of accidents, he argued that road engineering, to which the police also contributed as part of road safety strategy, had also made 'the City roads safer'.<sup>87</sup> In contrast, whilst Morren pointed out that there were fewer people killed and injured in Edinburgh as a result of road accidents than other places in Britain, especially Leeds which had a comparable population (see Table 7.8), he was cautious about attributing the cause to education and road engineering. In 1937, for example, he recorded:

Naturally every endeavour is being made to reduce the risk of accident by means of propaganda and, among other things, improvement of conditions at danger points, such as road junctions ... Unfortunately, however, action of this description, so far as it affects accident prevention, may be said to be somewhat neutralised by the increasing number of motor vehicles which are placed on the road every year.<sup>88</sup>

Thus in the immediate pre-war period there was some question over the degree to which the police road safety strategy was considered successful in reducing the number of accidents.

<sup>86</sup> *The Scotsman*, 5 September 1939, 5; 3 October, 1939, 5.

<sup>87</sup> ECA ED006/1/9, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1930, 25.

<sup>88</sup> ECA ED006/1/10, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1937, 20.

	Road traffic	Other	Total
1934	49	51	100.0
1935	42	58	100.0
1936	42	58	100.0
1937	37	63	100.0
1938	36	64	100.0
1939	36	64	100.0
1940	38	62	100.0
1941	36	64	100.0
1942	29	71	100.0
1943	26	74	100.0
1944	28	72	100.0
1945	30	70	100.0
1946	29	71	100.0
1947	32	68	100.0

**Table 7.7 People killed and injured in road traffic and other accidents in Edinburgh, 1933-1947 (%)**

[Source: ECA ED006/1/9-11]

	Number			
	Edinburgh	Leeds	Glasgow	Scotland
1937	2.58	4.94	3.30	3.91
1938	2.65	5.17	4.03	4.13

**Table 7.8 People killed and injured in road accidents in Edinburgh, Leeds, Glasgow, and Scotland per 1000 population, in 1937 and 1938**

[Source: ECA ED006/1/10]

In tandem with their other duties, part of the contribution of the police related to the collection of data to enable the analysis of the pattern of accidents. As the 1936 Scottish Inter-Departmental Committee on Road Safety among School Children found, chief constables submitted returns and cooperated with Ministry of Transport engineers and Traffic Commissioners to identify the extent to which accidents were a consequence of road conditions.<sup>89</sup> Jennifer Bonham has argued from the perspective of 'automobility' that 'through the first decades of the twentieth century street spaces and travel practices were simultaneously ordered and intervened upon to secure the safe conduct of travel'.<sup>90</sup> Indeed, in the 1930s chief constables in Britain were required to submit at least eight forms to the Ministry of Transport in relation to accidents.<sup>91</sup> In 1949 chief constables were also instructed to forward detailed information regarding all fatal and injury road accidents. That year Morren reported

<sup>89</sup> NRS ED43/12, Report of the Scottish Inter-Departmental Committee on Road Safety among School Children, 1936, 15.

<sup>90</sup> Bonham, "Transport: Disciplining the Body that Travels," 64-65.

<sup>91</sup> White, "Road Accident Statistics," 35.

that the 'compilation and preparation of accident statistics now forms an important part of the duties carried out in the Traffic Department'.<sup>92</sup> During the 1930s and 1940s the requirement for the police in Edinburgh and elsewhere in Britain to respond to the requirements for data relating to road traffic accidents thus became increasingly onerous.

During the Second World War, however, chief constables in Britain were instructed to discontinue the submission of all but the monthly road casualty return. As Brenda White put it, the 'seemingly permanent output of annual and occasional road accident statistics came to an abrupt end immediately war was declared'.<sup>93</sup> Thus, as with education, police involvement in the submission of data for the purposes of road safety largely ceased with the outbreak of war. Whilst this clearly had the effect of relieving hard-pressed police forces, the explanation undoubtedly relates to the diversion to other duties of officials of central government departments.

As part of the road safety strategy the police in Edinburgh also assessed traffic schemes. In practice, the police were 'deeply involved in the new architecture of the roads'.<sup>94</sup> In 1947, for example, Morren reported that divisional officers had 'for some time' had the junction of Willowbrae Road and London Road 'under observation' so that a scheme could be formulated to improve traffic control. The innovation of the temporarily extended tramway island was also 'closely watched'. Similarly, a 'watching brief' was kept on the effectiveness of a traffic scheme in Princes Street in 1949. At the same time, it is clear that some of the police activity in this regard was reactive. In his annual report to the town council in 1946, for example, Morren recorded that many of the improvements in traffic conditions were the result of 'acting on suggestions received from traffic-minded citizens'.<sup>95</sup>

The extent to which the police carried out this role in the remainder of the period under consideration, 1930-1949, is however unclear. In 1935, for example, Morren reported that 'observation was kept for six months' on the experimental scheme of

<sup>92</sup> ECA ED006/1/12, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1949, 25.

<sup>93</sup> White, "Road Accident Statistics," 35.

<sup>94</sup> Laybourn, *The Battle for the Roads*, 139.

<sup>95</sup> ECA ED006/1/11, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1946, 30; 1947, 34; ED006/1/12, 1949, 26.

traffic lanes on Glasgow Road. Similarly, in 1937 he recorded that ‘special observations’ of 39 ‘Halt at Major Road Ahead’ signs in the city had determined that they were a ‘definite asset in the cause of accident prevention’.<sup>96</sup> Yet it is not clear if the police did the observing. Notwithstanding that the entries were in reports by the chief constable to the town council, which might imply that they related to police activity, the existence of policy communities in relation to road safety means that this could equally have been carried out by surveyors.

Nevertheless, as with education and the collection of data, the outbreak of war had an immediate effect on the engineering aspects of road safety. After only a few months of the emergency, Morren reported that efforts to improve road conditions were ‘only completed in a minor degree owing to the general suspension of road traffic schemes due to the outbreak of War’. He recorded for the majority of the remainder of the war that ‘only work of a very minor nature could be carried out’. In the last months of the conflict and the immediate post-war period, improvements were largely confined to removing the blockhouses that had been installed at junctions in case of invasion.<sup>97</sup> Part of explanation for this inactivity undoubtedly relates to conscription and essential war service. As with those involved in civic maintenance, many of those who would otherwise have carried out road improvements had been redeployed. At the same time, those who remained, together with the materials required for road engineering, were diverted to the war effort. The extent to which the police were required to support road engineering in the aftermath of war was likewise limited by the ‘age of austerity’. In 1947, for example, Morren reported that the erection of guardrails and islands in Princes Street had been delayed due to the shortage of materials. In a similar manner, in 1949 he advised that the erection of ‘Keep Left’ signs at a number of junctions in the city had been delayed due to the ‘economic situation’.<sup>98</sup>

<sup>96</sup> ECA ED006/1/10, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1935, 19; 1937, 22.

<sup>97</sup> ECA ED006/1/10, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1939, 18; 1940, 7; ED006/1/11, 1941, 6; 1942, 8; 1943, 11; 18944; 12; 1945, 14.

<sup>98</sup> ECA ED006/1/11, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1947, 32; ED006/1/12, 1949, 26.

### **The chief constable, the police authority, central government, and power-interdependence in practice**

As with other aspects of policing noted especially in chapter three, a web of power-interdependence existed in relation to the regulation of traffic in the 1930 and 1940s. At its most obvious the chief constable was dependent on the town council and police authority in particular for infrastructural resources. For example, in connection with the requirement to enforce the 1930 Act the police authority purchased two cars and six motorcycle combinations for use by the Traffic Department. In his annual report to the town council Ross advised that traffic patrols were a ‘very effective means of preventing careless or reckless driving’ and that the additional vehicles would permit the ‘additional supervision necessary’.<sup>99</sup> At the same time the police authority was dependent on the chief constable for the local delivery of policing in relation to the regulation of traffic.

The extent to which the purchase of these vehicles can be seen as support by the police authority for policing in relation to the regulation of traffic needs to be treated with some caution however. Rather than fund the purchase through local taxation and central government subvention, the police authority drew on the provisions of the 1930 Act. This provided that expenses incurred in respect of vehicles required to enforce the Act could be advanced from the Road Fund. Thus, as with other aspects of policing, the line of police dependency for resources ran through the police authority to central government. At the same time, as will be seen in relation to the example of the establishment of pedestrian crossings, central government was dependant on local authorities.

The evidence suggests some parsimony by the police authority in Edinburgh in the 1930s and 1940s in relation to the regulation of traffic. As noted, by the early twentieth century chief constables, especially in urban forces, were regarded as the autonomous expert on operational policing matters. Indeed, as the Committee on Road Safety reported in the 1940s: ‘The police are necessarily expert in all problems of traffic movement and traffic control’.<sup>100</sup> However, despite repeated pleas by both

<sup>99</sup> ECA ED006/1/9, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1930, 20; 1931, 15.

<sup>100</sup> TNA MT92/18, Summary of Recommendations in the Interim Report, 1944, and Final Report, 1947, of the Committee on Road Safety, para. 39.

Ross and Morren that it hampered efficiency, the police authority in Edinburgh failed throughout the 1930s to provide the supporting capital infrastructure for traffic department vehicles. By 1934 the motorcycle combinations had been replaced by motorcars necessitating additional garage accommodation. Although Ross made representations to alter or purchase several sites he recorded that 'none was approved'. As a consequence, temporary rental premises had to be utilised. Morren recorded in 1938 that the proposal to extend an existing garage for the fleet, which by then comprised 12 motorcars, was 'still undecided'. A succession of temporary rentals therefore had to be used which Morren recorded were 'not satisfactory' as they were 'some considerable distance from the Traffic Department Headquarters' and could 'not receive proper supervision'.<sup>101</sup>

Given the brevity of Morren's annual reports to the town council during the Second World War it is impossible to ascertain the degree to which the police authority in Edinburgh supported the police in terms of the infrastructure relating to the regulation of traffic. There is, however, nothing in the immediate post-war reports to indicate that the situation had altered with regard to the garage accommodation. Simply put, the police authority disregarded the advice of the expert in this regard if it entailed additional local expenditure. The extent to which the police could depend on the police authority for the resources to meet the increasing requirement to regulate traffic in the 1930s and 1940s was, therefore, conditional.

The evidence points to the town council adopting a similar attitude to aspects of road safety such as engineering. Whilst the town council was content in 1930 to erect and modify automatic traffic signals on the basis of a 60 per cent grant from central government, both Ross and Morren struggled throughout the 1930s and 1940s to get councillors to agree to their recommendations to improve road safety and the regulation of traffic by further modifications or installations. By 1934, 38 of the 39 signals in the city operated on the basis of fixed-time, whilst one was vehicle-actuated. Despite Ross's advice to the council that the 'modern vehicle actuated-type' was more efficient at reducing congestion, his representations to convert the others were rejected on the grounds of the 'expense involved'. Morren reported in 1936 that the question

<sup>101</sup> ECA ED006/1/10, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1934, 23-24; 1935, 21; 1936, 23; 1937, 24; 1938, 21-22.



was ‘still receiving the attention of the authorities’. In a similar manner, in 1938 he recorded that the representation he made for automatic traffic signals in Princes Street, which had been ‘delayed indefinitely’ by the Lord Provost’s Committee in February 1937, were still ‘under consideration’.<sup>102</sup>

The town council likewise stymied the establishment of pedestrian crossings in the mid-1930s. Under the 1934 Act the Minister of Transport could make Orders to establish crossings on the basis of proposals made by councils ‘after consultation’ with chief constables.<sup>103</sup> Morren reported later that year that his subsequent recommendations were ‘under consideration’ by the town council. Whilst the scheme to establish 16 crossings was approved by both councillors and minister, none was completed due to a subsequent proposal for an additional 313 crossings that, by 1936, was ‘still receiving attention’. The minister was, however, asked to delay approval of this due to a motion by a councillor to rescind the scheme entirely. In consequence, the council ‘instructed further examination and report on the subject’. In 1938 Morren recorded in relation to pedestrian crossings that the ‘question arose some years ago’ but is ‘still under the consideration of the Magistrates’.<sup>104</sup>

Given that road engineering was largely halted during the Second World War, the question of the extent to which Morren was dependent on the town council to implement his representations is redundant. However, in the third year after the war Morren recorded that a recommendation made in 1936 to install signals at a junction had still not been put into effect despite ‘numerous complaints regarding existing dangers to pedestrians and motorists’, which suggests that the council’s attitude in the late 1940s was much the same as it had been in the 1930s. In the immediate post-war years Morren concluded that ‘many suggestions which have been submitted ... [that]...would have been, and have been proved in other places, beneficial in accident prevention, have not received the necessary support’ of councillors.<sup>105</sup>

<sup>102</sup> ECA ED006/1/9, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1930, 21; ED006/1/10, 1934, 21; 1936, 22; 1938, 20.

<sup>103</sup> 24 & 25 Geo. 5, cap. 50, section 18 (1934).

<sup>104</sup> ECA ED006/1/10, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1934, 20; 1936, 21; 1937, 22; 1938, 21.

<sup>105</sup> ECA ED006/1/10, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1937, 20; ED006/1/11, 1947, 34.

The police authority in Edinburgh, however, acquiesced to most of Morren's representations in other aspects of policing which raises a question as to why the infrastructure and issues relating to the regulation of traffic were different. The answer might be that, on the one hand, councillors, who were responsible to the electorate, were dependent on the chief constable for the local delivery of policing and were, therefore, usually unwilling to contradict his recommendations. Yet, on the other, Christopher Hamlin found that inertia in British local government in the nineteenth century was a consequence of disorderliness, disagreement and 'great fear of doing anything at all, lest it be the wrong thing and commit the town to an enormous waste of money'.<sup>106</sup> The cost of regulating traffic was clearly an issue for local authorities in the context of competing demands. The perception that expenditure on the regulation of traffic provided little local benefit undoubtedly underpinned council decisions in Edinburgh about the extent of its support for police efforts. Indeed, the occasions where Morren's representations were successful in this regard in the post-war period appear to have been those that involved little or no expense. In 1947, for example, the town council approved a joint submission by Morren and the city engineer to create 117 parking places in the city.<sup>107</sup>

### **The chief constable, road safety policy communities, and power-interdependence in practice**

The Committee on Road Safety, which began work in 1943, concluded that one of the main duties of the police in relation to the regulation of traffic was the prevention of road accidents. As part of its strategy in this regard, the police utilised education, contributed to road engineering, and provided statistics. The prevention of road traffic accidents was, however, not solely the responsibility of the police. Central and local government, together with a number of organisations participated in policy communities to promote road safety. Much activity took place under the auspices of the 'Safety First' campaign, which had been established by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents in Britain in the 1920s, premised on a joint agency approach to reduce all types of accidents. Ross subsequently recorded that a 'united effort' was required to effect a reduction in road traffic accidents. Likewise, in the immediate

<sup>106</sup> Christopher Hamlin, "Muddling in Bumbledom: On the Enormity of Large Sanitary Improvements in four British Towns, 1855-1855," *Victorian Studies* 32 (1988): 66.

<sup>107</sup> ECA ED006/1/11, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1945, 14; 1946, 32; 1947, 36.

pre-war years Morren reported that the force was ‘working in conjunction’ with the Edinburgh Safety First Council: ‘continually studying road accidents causation and remedial measures’.<sup>108</sup> At the launch of the campaign in Edinburgh in 1926, Ross, however, pointed out: ‘the principles of safety should be first taught in the home. Where parents realised the importance of instructing their children in “Safety First” the number of road accidents in the near future would be quickly reduced to a minimum’.<sup>109</sup> Thus, as with police education-based road safety programmes, the ‘Safety First’ campaign was informed by a dominant discourse of culpability that largely excluded drivers and was intended to mitigate implied parental neglect.

Whereas, as we have seen, police activity with regard to road safety largely ceased during the war, SHD circulars indicate that aspects of related activity by the other organisations continued, most notably in response to the increasing incidence of fatal accidents that was a consequence of the blackout. On the last day of 1941, for example, a circular advised chief constables of a UK-wide education campaign conducted by central government, the Board of Education, the Ministry of Information, and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents.<sup>110</sup> The contribution by the police in Edinburgh to the increase in accidents, meanwhile, was limited to enforcement. By Christmas 1942, however, the SHD advised that ‘in present conditions’ the campaign would in the main ‘have’ to be focussed on accidents to children and in the blackout.<sup>111</sup> Thus, as with the police, the war necessitated some contraction of activity by the other organisations involved in the road safety ‘policy community’.

The pattern of power-interdependence between the police and others in relation to road safety was, however, re-established in the post-war years. The restoration of the petrol allowance for ordinary motoring purposes immediately after the end of the war led to an increase in the number of vehicles on the road and a consequent increase in the number of road traffic accidents. Whilst this placed a reactive demand on the police, the proposal by the Committee on Road Safety in 1944 that Local Safety

<sup>108</sup> ECA ED006/1/9, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1933, 18; ED006/1/10, 1937, 21.

<sup>109</sup> *The Scotsman*, 9 January 1926, 9.

<sup>110</sup> NRS HH52/30, Circular 4758, 31 December 1941.

<sup>111</sup> NRS HH52/33, Circular 5232, 25 December 1942.

Organisations be created increased the requirement for the police to be proactive. Local authorities were invited to establish, in effect, policy communities involving ‘as a minimum’ local government, the police, the local education authority, and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents to ‘prepare and conduct local road safety schemes’ that would be eligible for grants from the Road Fund.<sup>112</sup> In the sense that central government was dependent on the participants to deliver the strategy, whilst the participants were dependent on central government for funding, there was an interdependency of power. By early 1946 Morren reported that the ‘matter is at present well in hand in Edinburgh’ with a proposed campaign aimed at children in particular.<sup>113</sup> As with other aspects of the regulation of traffic, the town council was supportive when the representation arose at a national level and the expense was largely defrayed by central government.

The extent of power-interdependence in the immediate post-war period among road safety policy communities is demonstrated in the ‘Safety First’ quiz and programme of road safety demonstrations. As Morren reported, whilst a police officer compiled the questions and presided, the event was held ‘in conjunction’ with the council’s Entertainment Scheme and the ‘joint efforts’ of the Parks Sub-Committee for Attractions and Entertainments, and the Edinburgh Accident Prevention Council. Similarly, in 1948, a ‘Safety First’ competition was ‘specially arranged’ by a police officer in conjunction with Gaumont Picture Corporation Ltd in co-operation with the Edinburgh Accident Prevention Council, where episodes of the ‘Dick Barton’ serial film were shown containing infringements of the Highway Code, which children were invited to identify. By 1949 Morren reported that the efforts of the police, Ministry of Transport, Local Authority, and road safety organisations were ‘co-ordinated’.<sup>114</sup>

Given the variables in the incidence of road traffic accidents it is difficult, if not impossible, to ascertain whether the road safety policy communities in Edinburgh were successful. There is, however, evidence that they struggled to engage members of the public. Following the participation by the police in the road safety exhibition

<sup>112</sup> TNA MT92/18, Summary of Recommendations in the Interim Report, 1944, and Final Report, 1947, of the Committee on Road Safety, para. 15.

<sup>113</sup> ECA ED006/1/11, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1945, 13.

<sup>114</sup> ECA ED006/1/11, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1946, 31; ED006/1/12, 1948, 28-29; 1949, 24.

held in the Waverley Market in 1947, under the auspices of the Edinburgh Accident Prevention Council and sponsored by the town council, Morren recorded his extreme disappointment at the 'lack of enthusiasm shown by the general public as evidence by the poor attendances'. The 'results obtained', he argued, 'could not be said to justify the tremendous amount of work entailed'.<sup>115</sup> Part of the explanation might be related to the dominance until the 1950s of the 'human model' in discourses around culpability for road traffic accidents.

## Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated that policing in relation to the regulation of traffic in the 1930s and 1940s in Edinburgh was dictated by, most especially, the number of vehicles on the road. The rapid increase in the number of vehicles in the interwar period in particular created a problem of capacity in relation to enforcement, responding to accidents, and the promotion of road safety. Likewise, the reduction in the number of vehicles due to the shortage of petrol during the Second World War reduced the level of demand on the police. Legislation further determined policing. Thus the police reacted to external social, economic, and political developments. In this regard, notwithstanding the reduction in the number of vehicles on the road during the war, the introduction of the blackout led to an increase in the number of fatal road traffic accidents which precipitated an increase in police activity, particularly in 1942.

In the meantime, policing in relation to the regulation of traffic in the period under consideration was also determined by the available technology, in particular the equipment and vehicles required to enforce the law in relation to speeding. The blackout also necessitated modifications to both the technology and associated tactics during the war. The character of policing was further influenced at the operational level by the exercise of discretion by rank and file officers and, strategically, by the chief constable's perception of the role of the police. Thus, by comparison with the immediate pre- and post war periods, there was an increase in the use of the caution as a means of disposal in dealing with road traffic offences in Edinburgh during the war in response to the shortage of regular officers and the pressure of duties associated with the home front. Likewise, police activity with regard to education, engineering,

<sup>115</sup> ECA ED006/1/11, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1947, 34-35.

and data collection virtually ceased during the war as a consequence of the evacuation programme and the diversion of the men and materials that would otherwise be involved in facets of road safety.

A web of power-interdependence existed in Edinburgh between the police, town council, and central government in relation to policing with regard to the regulation of traffic. Whilst the extent to which the town council supported Morren in relation to the regulation of traffic during the war is unknown, the evidence from the pre- and post-war period points to the fact that councillors were reluctant to disburse public funds on the basis that the regulation of traffic was considered unavailing. In any event, in contrast to enforcement and responding to accidents, which were primarily a police responsibility, activity in relation to road safety was largely proactive and promoted through policy communities. The evidence suggests, however, that these policy communities failed to engage members of the public. As with other aspects of operational policing in Edinburgh, this chapter supports the hypothesis that there was a paradigm shift during the Second World War in relation to the regulation of traffic, whilst at the same time there was continuity in pre- and post-war roles.



## 8

### Conclusion

This thesis has demonstrated that the organisational and operational aspects of policing the City of Edinburgh during the Second World War were characterised by continuity and change. Although most of the regular male police officers who served in the City of Edinburgh Police during the Second World War continued to be drawn from manual sectors of the economy, there was a change in the pattern of recruitment from 1910-1939 when the majority were recruited. The proportion of those from predominantly rural areas and those employed as agricultural labourers and farm servants decreased, whilst there was an increase in the number drawn from Edinburgh and those employed as clerks. Furthermore, by comparison with the pre-war period, those recruited during the emergency were generally older as a consequence of conscription of younger men into the armed services and essential civilian work. In addition, those who would otherwise have been superannuated were prevented from retiring, whilst younger regular male police officers were, as in the Great War, released to the armed services and industry in response to demands related to the prosecution of the war. The regular officers serving during the Second World War were therefore older than otherwise would have been the case. Although there was no consequent obvious change in the pattern or incidence of sickness, there was an increase in those leaving the force on the grounds of ill-health. Furthermore, although police auxiliaries were recruited they did not, for the most part, have the same degree of local knowledge or experience, particularly in relation to the more technical aspects of policing such as the regulation of road traffic.

Notwithstanding the complex dynamics of policing, these factors, coupled with the requirement to undertake additional duties associated with the home front, diminished operational capacity and effectiveness. As a consequence, there was a change in the pattern of discretion exercised by police officers at both the strategic and tactical level. Part of this related to dealing with offenders. In respect of all offences there was, by comparison with the interwar period, a decrease in the number of persons proceeded against at the instance of the police, whilst there was an increase in the use of



summons rather than apprehension. Part also related to the extent to which aspects of core roles and the regulation of traffic were discharged.

In contrast to personnel matters, and despite the centralised direction of the war effort there was little or no change in the dynamics of the governance of the police in Edinburgh during the Second World War. As in the interwar period, a complex and overlapping pattern of power and authority existed at all levels. Notwithstanding the introduction of the Defence Regulations, which gave the Secretary of State for Scotland the power to directly control the police in operational matters, the power of the central state remained limited in effect and there is no evidence that the police authority was marginalised. The interplay between central government, local government, and the chief constable during the Second World War was thus characterised by power-interdependence. Those concerned with the governance of the police deferred to each other for matters within their respective purviews in much the same way as they had done in the pre-war period. Power continued to be negotiated. Part of the explanation as to why the Defence Regulations were limited in practice relates to the political pluralism of the two Secretaries of State for Scotland who were in office for most of the war: David Colville and Tom Johnston. It was also a consequence of the conflicting principles that underpinned the desire for the 'new' police and the largely piecemeal way in which the forces were created. As a consequence, the system of police governance evolved gradually in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries creating a legacy of confusion over roles and responsibilities in practice that persists in the twenty-first century.

The complex and overlapping pattern of power and authority was also present within the local government aspect of police governance. Again, part of the explanation relates to a legacy of confusion over roles and responsibilities. As a consequence, the town council, its Lord Provost's Committee, and its Watching Sub-Committee variously acted as the police authority. The interplay between the town council and its network of committees was likewise characterised by power-interdependence as councillors negotiated political deals through an established quid-pro-quo. Although co-option and political partisanship, which arose during the war, created fractures, the Lord Provost was in a pivotal position to exercise power and influence across council policy communities to maintain stability and continuity in outcomes. Neither Colville

nor Johnston demonstrated a willingness to force an issue in the face of opposition from a large urban council that was determined to resist. The assumption that the Defence Regulations generally supplanted the system of police governance thus needs to be treated with caution.

In terms of its ability to represent rank-and-file officers, there was little or no change to the Scottish Police Federation. As a consequence of the legacy of its creation it remained ineffective. Most of the issues it was concerned with during the war had been unresolved for decades. It was created in the general context of 'reactive underestimation' and the fear of a Bolshevik uprising but the specific catalyst was the police strike in London in 1918. It was conceded by central government as the least-worst option by comparison with a union. Yet those concerned with the governance of the police had no desire to cede power. That the Federation proved ineffective was no coincidence: it was set up to fail. Its structure was highly fragmented to divide the membership and its role severely circumscribed. Rather than a means of collective bargaining it was merely a mechanism for bringing to the notice of the chief constable, police authorities, and the Secretary for Scotland matters affecting welfare and efficiency.

As a consequence of the fragmented structure, the rank-specific Boards in Edinburgh were power-dependent on the Joint Branch Board at the local level which, in turn, was power-dependent on the Joint Central Committee at the national level. The interplay between these two policy communities was, from the outset, characterised by factional struggles over the power of the Federation in Edinburgh relative to that of Glasgow. The potential for the Federation to fracture at a number of levels was perhaps an intention of its creators. In turn, the Joint Central Committee remained power dependent on the Secretary of State for Scotland who, in practice, ignored, out of hand, representations by the Federation. These structural fault lines, combined with members' apathy at the ineffectiveness of the Federation, limited what it could achieve.

The suspension of the rest day and payment for overtime as part of the mobilisation for the home front created an unprecedented level of dissatisfaction with the machinery of representation. Whilst this led to a revival of the tactic of mass

meetings, disagreement arose between the policy communities in Edinburgh and at the national level, as well as between the Federation in Scotland and England, as to how best to overcome the limitations of the 1919 Act. Given the context of the war and the additional requirements on the police there was, however, clearly even less of an incentive for central government to concede the creation of an effective means of representation for rank-and-file officers. The Federation remained essentially impotent until in the cycle of 'reactive underestimation' the Oaksey Committee laid the foundation in 1949 for a form of collective bargaining.

With the exception of personnel matters there was, therefore, little in the way of dramatic change to the organisational aspects of the police in Edinburgh during the war by comparison with the remainder of the period under consideration. Likewise, many of the operational tasks that the police in Edinburgh were required to undertake as part of the home front were a continuation, and perhaps intensification, of existing functions. During the interwar period the police maintained surveillance on communists, anarchists, and Scottish nationalists because of their revolutionary and secessionist strategic aims. Surveillance during the war was, however, additionally premised on the more immediate concern that they were perceived to be undermining the war effort, in particular hindering conscription and inciting industrial unrest. In contrast, both during the emergency and before, police surveillance of the Protestant Action Society was related to its anti-Catholic purpose, significantly its propensity to foment sectarian disorder. This had the potential to undermine the perception, if not the reality, of social solidarity on the home front. By a similar token, police activity with regard to aliens, military law, the evasion of duty, and identity fraud represented an intensification of pre-existing functions intended to support conscription in particular.

Yet at the same time, the police were required to undertake completely new duties. The enforcement of the 'Lighting Restrictions' and other 'War Legislation' arose solely as a consequence of the emergency. Likewise, the requirement to investigate cases of suspected sabotage was a response to the pervasive but unfounded fear of fifth columnists. Much of the wartime policing was thus a consequence of objectives or stimuli that arose at the national level. On the other hand, local policing remained subject to the discretion exercised by police officers. Whilst it was clearly a national

priority to support the economic mobilisation for total war, the involvement of the police in determining the cause of strikes, for example, was the consequence of the personal preoccupation of the chief constable and embroiled them in what had in peacetime been a civil matter.

Much of core policing in Edinburgh, however, continued in the same way as it had done during the interwar period. In general terms, policing with regard to the protection of property remained unchanged. There was, however, an increase in police work with regard to housebreaking. This was a consequence of factors associated with the prosecution of the war. The release of younger regular officers to the armed services, together with the pressure of war-related duties, reduced the availability of officers for beat patrol, whilst the auxiliaries who had been recruited did not, for the most part, have the same experience or local knowledge. The evidence suggests that, as a consequence, as a result of discretion exercised at the strategic or tactical level, the police did not undertake preventative policing in relation to property to the same extent that they did in the pre- and post-war periods. At the same time, the introduction of the blackout increased the opportunities for housebreakers, particularly given the legacy of suburbanisation.

Meanwhile, in relation to the most serious crimes and offences associated with the protection of life there was no increased demand on the police during the war. Indeed, there is no evidence to suggest that Edinburgh was a more dangerous place in terms of personal safety due to the reduction in preventative policing and as a result of war conditions. Although there was an increase in police activity with regard to some categories of crime and offence in the classification of the protection of life in Edinburgh they were not a consequence of the character of policing. The increase in police activity in relation to the cruel and unnatural treatment of children, for example, was undoubtedly a response to the social dislocation associated with the war.

The reduction in police capacity was, however, most apparent in relation to crimes and offences associated with the maintenance of order and civic regulation. Police activity declined markedly by comparison with the pre-war era. The explanation undoubtedly relates to the fact that these crimes and offences were largely victimless. In contrast to the crimes and offences related to the protection of life and property, those associated

with the maintenance of order and civic regulation generally did not arise from a complaint by a member of the public; rather, they only became known at the point of detection and as a consequence of proactive police activity. If an officer exercised discretion by choosing to ignore some incidents it was unlikely to have any repercussions. Furthermore, both the public and police officers were apathetic to some crimes and offences associated with the maintenance of order such as street betting. Some offenders also undoubtedly escaped detection as a consequence of the blackout. Many of those who would otherwise have committed offences against public order had, moreover, been relocated through conscription. Given that related crimes and offences were often minor it would be understandable if officers ignored anything but situations that were likely to be the most dangerous to the public.

In a similar manner, there was a decline in police activity in relation to road traffic regulation during the war due to the reduction in the number of vehicles on the road as a consequence of the shortage of petrol. Nonetheless, the introduction of the blackout led to an increase in the number of fatal road traffic accidents which placed demands on the police. At the same time, the blackout necessitated changes to the technology and tactics associated with enforcement. Yet discretion was a significant element here too. It was determined by the chief constables' view as to whether the police should focus on prosecution or providing advice. This was influenced during the war by the problem of capacity. The shortage of regular experienced officers and the pressure of war-related duties led to the suspension for the duration of police activity in respect of the data collection, road engineering, and educational aspects of road safety. At a tactical level, there was an increase in the extent to which officers used cautions to dispose of offences.

Police officers, civil servants, and historians writing largely in relation to the experience in England and Wales have offered different interpretations of the extent to which operational policing in the Second World War was, in wholly broad terms, a paradigm shift from that of the interwar period. To repeat: this thesis has demonstrated that the organisational and operational aspects of policing in Edinburgh were characterised by a nuanced pattern of both continuity and change. It has been shown that, as these writers have variously argued, in some respects police duties were 'extensions' of existing functions; in still other cases, police duties changed

‘considerably’ and ‘completely’ from that of the interwar period; whilst other aspects ‘disappeared’ for the duration. It has further been demonstrated that these features were influenced by the macro-structural context of the war in addition to the local exercise of discretion by police officers and a particular configuration of political, social, economic, and religious factors. Given the probable diversity of wartime experience, further studies of policing in other parts of Scotland may help to distinguish the wartime policing of Edinburgh.

At this point it might be beneficial to relate this study to the wider history of the wartime home front. In his analysis of the social effects of war Marwick employed a four-tier conceptual model to disaggregate the complicated interrelationship into a ‘meaningful and manageable number of components’. In particular, the ‘participation’ effects of different groups in society, especially those who were, like women, comparatively underprivileged; the ‘destructive’ and ‘disruptive’ effects such as those associated with the blackout and mobilisation; the ‘test’ effects in terms of the ‘stress’, ‘strain’, or ‘challenge’ faced by institutions such as the police; and, the ‘psychological’ effects.<sup>1</sup> The first three of these dimensions provide a rough framework to consider, briefly, some aspects of the contribution of this thesis to the historiography of the home front and the hypothesis of the ‘people’s war’.

With regard to the theme of ‘participation’, this thesis has identified that auxiliary police officers were recruited in Edinburgh during the war to assist with operational demands and to replace the regular officers who had been released to the armed services and industry. Whilst nothing is known of the auxiliary police officers as individuals, the members of the First Police Reserve, Police War Reserve, Special Constabulary, and Women’s Auxiliary Police Corps together comprised about one-third of the actual strength of the police force. Thus, despite not necessarily being as experienced or knowledgeable as regular officers, the auxiliaries made a significant contribution to policing the home front. In this respect, they can be said to have contributed to the notion of a ‘people’s war’. In this regard, having overcome two decades of opposition, the employment of women with police powers is especially noteworthy. Indeed, whereas most auxiliary police units were disbanded at or around

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<sup>1</sup> Marwick, *War and Social Change in the Twentieth Century*, 11-13.

the end of the emergency, the wartime expedient of women with police powers from 1943 established the precedent for their continued employment in the post-war period.<sup>2</sup>

Yet, in the context of debates about the ‘people’s war’, this thesis has identified more evidence of ‘destructive’ and ‘disruptive’ effects which challenge the notion of social solidarity. With regard to organisational aspects, for instance, although the police authority was able to maintain continuity in outcomes notwithstanding the introduction of the Defence Regulations, the town council was riven by fractures over, for example, the disposition of political offices. Whilst this represented a continuity from the immediate pre-war period it, together with the system of co-option, divided councillors on party political lines during the war notwithstanding the existence of a political truce. In a similar vein, the continuation in office of the Joint Central Committee of the Scottish Police Federation at the outbreak of war led to its censure and the consequent exclusion of the Federation representatives in Edinburgh from the national structures. At the same time, there was a continuation of pre-war factional rifts over the relative power of the Federation in Glasgow in the central committees. Meanwhile, the war intensified the feeling of dissatisfaction within the Federation membership throughout the UK at the ineffectiveness of the representative machinery. Yet the Federation in Edinburgh and the Joint Central Committee could not even achieve a consensus about how best to try to overcome the restrictions of the 1919 Act. All this hardly points to the existence of social cohesion.

Indeed, ‘destructive’ and ‘disruptive’ aspects were also evident from the wartime operational policing demands in Edinburgh. It is clear, for example, that housebreakers readily exploited the blackout and some were likely to have perceived their activity as a justifiable response to the mobilisation for the war. Furthermore, the declaration of war by Italy in June 1940 was accompanied by a shameful outbreak of riotous xenophobia in Edinburgh notwithstanding that some Italians had been resident in the city for decades and were in fact British subjects. In this regard, the Protestant Action Society might have been particularly complicit. In any event, the Society’s

<sup>2</sup> Prior to the disbandment of the Women’s Auxiliary Police Corps in March 1946, the ‘authorised’ establishment of female regular police officers was increased from two constables to one sergeant and 11 constables. By 1947, the ‘actual’ establishment was one sergeant and eight constables. ECA, ED006/1/11, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1946, 5; 1947, 5.



explicit sectarian purpose and consequent agitation was at odds with social solidarity. Thus if the 'people's war' was said to have 'transcended the divisions of class, sect, self-interest and libertarian individualism that normally constitute the highly pluralistic and fragmented structure of British society' the experience of Edinburgh points to some lack of solidarity.<sup>3</sup> In this sense, this thesis supports the revisionist perspective.

Finally, in examining the 'test' effects of the war, it has been shown that, apart from personnel, there was little or no change to the organisational aspects of the police in Edinburgh. Yet, of itself, the release of younger regular officers to meet the necessity caused by the war emergency in other institutions, the retention of older regular officers, and the loss of a considerable number who left on ill-health, did have an effect on the force. At the same time, the police were required to absorb the demands associated with policing the home front. Although some of these duties were merely an intensification of existing functions, others were entirely new. The effect of all of this was, notwithstanding the recruitment of auxiliary officers, to greatly diminish the operational capacity and effectiveness of the force.

In response to this 'test' there was a change in the pattern of discretion exercised by police officers at both strategic and tactical levels. Fewer people were proceeded against at the instigation of the police during the war than in the pre-war period, whilst there was an increase in the use of summons, rather than apprehension, as well as cautions for road traffic offences. Meanwhile, aspects of policing in relation to public order, civic regulation, and road traffic regulation were either less effectively discharged or suspended for the duration. The continuing 'test' of war led to other modifications to the peacetime pattern of policing. Property was, apparently, not protected to the same extent that it had been in the inter-war period which undoubtedly contributed to the increase in housebreaking. Given the limited capacity and the additional pressures it would have been understandable for the police to have reduced or ceased activity in relation to some victimless offences or other non-critical areas of operational policing. Yet the apparent abandonment of one of their core duties and main principles on which the 'new' police were founded is hard to explain. In this sense the force could be said to have proved inadequate to the 'test'.

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<sup>3</sup> Harris, "War and Social History," 317.



The 'test' of the emergency also led to some significant changes in the immediate aftermath. In particular, there was a continued shortage of police personnel. Whilst many of the officers who had been released to the armed services and industry during the war returned, the auxiliary units were disbanded. At the same time, the power forcibly to retain officers was rescinded and those who would have been superannuated left the force whilst there were a considerable number of ordinary resignations. In this regard, the fact that police pay, in the cycle of 'reactive underestimation', had failed to keep pace with the cost of living undoubtedly became even more of an issue for officers who were considering their future having endured the experience of the increased strictness of discipline and the additional pressures of operational policing during the war.

## **Appendix 1**

### **The Police War Instructions: contents of the preface and sections**

#### Preface

General Plan of the Instructions  
Code Word for telegrams (“EMPOL”)  
Arrangements for urgent messages  
All-night telegraph facilities  
Communication with the Home Office  
Communication with naval, military and air force authorities  
Defence Regulations

#### Section 1.      Precautionary Period: Outbreak of War

Summary of main action  
Significance of Precautionary Period  
Action when Precautionary Period is instituted  
Cancellation of Precautionary Period  
Defence Proclamation and Poster  
Outbreak of War  
List of Foreign Powers

#### Section 2.      Organisation of police forces for war duties

Summary of main action  
Summary of police war duties  
Strengthening of police forces  
Mutual aid arrangements  
Military aid  
Arming of police for certain duties  
Air raid protection for police personnel and buildings  
Police vehicles  
Police wireless  
(Appendix). Regular members of police forces with  
mobilisation obligations: mobilisation arrangements

#### Section 3.      Mobilisation of the Defence Force and related measures

Summary of main action  
Mobilisation  
Billeting  
Impressment  
Service transport  
Defence works  
Action when mobilisation is ordered  
(Appendix). Drivers’ identification cards

Section 4. Enemy Merchant Ships

Summary of main action  
 Pre-arranged schemes  
 Foreign ships in harbour  
 Crews and passengers of enemy ships  
 Examination service  
 “Droit de Prince”  
 (Appendix). List of Customs Ports in England and Wales

Section 5. Aircraft

Summary of main action  
 General  
 Action during Precautionary Period  
     Preliminary police action  
     Restrictions on civil flying  
     Detention of potential enemy aircraft  
     Requisitioning of aerodrome and aircraft  
 Action of outbreak of war  
     Seizure of enemy aircraft  
 Prohibition or restriction of civil flying  
 Grounded aircraft  
 Grounded balloons  
 (Appendix). Uniforms and badges of rank of German Air Force  
     List of Infantry Training Centres: England and Wales

Section 6. Control of Aliens and Passenger Traffic

Summary of main action  
 Introduction  
 Embarkation  
 Illicit landing and embarkation  
 Movements  
 Registration  
 Hotels, etc.  
 Prohibited articles  
 Employment  
 Protected areas  
 Minor points  
 Internment  
 Arrest of certain aliens  
 “Standing Off” certain alien employees  
 Aliens taken from aircraft making forced landings or crashing  
 Aliens taken from ships or aircraft in port  
 Action when amending Order in Council is made  
 (Appendix). Draft amending Aliens Order in Council  
     Travel permit for enemy aliens  
     Registration form for use in Hotels, etc. (Form AR-E)  
     List of Internment Camps

Section 7. Intelligence and Control of Communications

Summary of main action

Intelligence

Co-operation with M.I.5

Subversive organisations

Reports of important occurrences

Restrictions on suspected persons

Control of Communications, etc.

Censorship

Use of wireless

Illicit signalling and use of pigeons

(Appendix). List of General Post Office Engineers, etc.

Section 8. Protection of Vulnerable Points: Control of Explosives, Firearms and Ammunition

Summary of main action

General

Police lists of vulnerable points

(a) Places of national importance

(b) Local lists

Protective schemes

Internal precautions

Action when protection is required

Explosives, firearms and ammunition

(Appendix). Instructions for interviewing persons in charge of premises

Form for report on premises

Section 9. Prohibited and Protected Places and Areas

Summary of main action

Introduction

Protected Places

Protected Areas

Controlled Areas

Restrictions on photography, etc.

## Section 10. Civil Defence Measures

General

Regional Organisation

Police duties

Air Defence Intelligence Scheme and Air Raid Warning System; Lighting Restrictions; control of traffic

Evacuation

Closing of schools

Closing of places of entertainment, and prohibition of meetings

Unemployed persons

Public shelters

Burials

Unexploded bombs

Aircraft crashing of making forced landings

(Appendix). Civil Defence Regions

LOWIN telegrams: action by local authorities and police

## Section 11. Air Intelligence Scheme and Air Raid Warning System

General Note

Air Defence Intelligence Scheme

Observer Corps Organisation

Responsibility of Police

Control of Observer personnel

Calling out of Observer Corps

Position of Observer Corps during War

Test Call-out of Observer personnel

Police or private reports of hostile aircraft

Air Raid Warning System

General note

Warning districts

Types of Warnings and Messages

Form of Warnings and Messages

Preparation of Air Raid Warning Lists

Public warning signals

(Appendix). Terms of Service of Observer personnel

Present extent of Observer Organisation

Categories of recipients of Warning Messages

Draft memorandum for issue to recipients

Notice to be displayed near telephones of recipients

Draft note for issue to factories with sirens, etc.

Air Raid Warning Notice

## Section 12. Lighting Restrictions

General note

Scheme of Restrictions in details

Private houses, shops etc.

Advertisement lighting

Street lighting

Road vehicles

Lights for repair, etc.

Livestock

Factories and workshops

Industrial flare

External industrial lights

Railways

Docks

Navigation and shipping

Government premises

Exemptions

Preparatory work

Imposition of restrictions

## Section 13. Control of traffic

General

Evacuation of civil population; Government Evacuation Scheme;

Unorganised evacuation

Removal of supplies from docks

Service vehicles

Vehicles and persons belonging to essential services

Organisation of war transport

Air raid damage to roads

Road works

Regulation of traffic at night

Junctions controlled by traffic signals

Places not normally provided with traffic signals

Aids to movement

Reporting of road accidents

Traffic during air raids

[Source: Dixon, "The Emergency Work of the Police Forces" 227-230]

## **Appendix 2**

### **Content of Special Branch Reports**

1. Arrests, searches, prosecutions, detentions and restrictions of movements of special importance.
2. Cases of special importance in which the offender has not been traced or arrested.
3. Objects of special interest (including arms and explosives) discovered on the search of the person or premises of suspects or otherwise.
4. Organisations of a hostile, subversive or doubtful character.
5. Publications of a hostile or subversive or doubtful character.
6. Attempts to tamper with or create disaffection among members of HM forces or police or Civil Defence Services.
7. Illicit signalling.
8. Unusual or suspicious markings.
9. False messages.
10. Thefts of explosives.
11. Leakage of secret information which might assist the enemy.
12. Notes on current enquiries.
13. Sabotage.

[Source: NRS HH55/50/1- 61/1]

### Appendix 3 Content of Intelligence Reports

#### Daily:

1. Public order and morale.
2. Movements of police under Mutual Aid Scheme.
3. Requests for military aid.
4. Police casualties and damage to police buildings by enemy action.
5. General.

[Source: NRS HH48/66/1, Circular 3732, 9 October 1939]

#### Fortnightly:

- (a) The conduct of the public during air raids.
- (b) Reactions to war conditions generally, e.g. evacuation, food control, lighting restrictions, limitation of entertainment, drunkenness etc.
- (c) The effects of enemy propaganda, particularly of broadcasts in English.
- (d) Attitude towards censorship and publicity generally.
- (e) Reaction towards subversive or pacifist propaganda.
- (f) Industrial conditions, particularly signs of unrest.

[Source: NRS HH48/66/1, Circular 3747, 19 October 1939]

#### Quarterly:

- (a) Subversive propaganda.
- (b) Industrial conditions, particularly signs of unrest.
- (c) The absorption of demobilised personnel into civilian conditions, and its effect on standards of conduct.
- (d) Incidence of drunkenness, and Sunday drinking.
- (e) Road Traffic matters.
- (f) Food and other rationing controls.
- (g) Behaviour and employment of POWs.
- (h) Any other matter which has excited strong public interest, or any local development which appears to have significance from the national point of view.

[Source: NRS HH48/66/3, Circular 5960, 28 March 1945]



**Appendix 4**  
**Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment:**  
**classification of crimes and offences**

Crimes and Offences		
Class I.	<b>Crimes against the Person</b>	Murder Attempt to Murder Culpable Homicide Assaults Cruel Treatment of Children Sexual and Unnatural Crimes Bigamy Others
Class II.	<b>Crimes against Property with Violence</b>	Theft by Housebreaking, and Housebreaking with intent to Steal Theft by Opening Lockfast Places Others
Class III.	<b>Crimes against Property without Violence</b>	Theft Reset Falsehood, Fraud and Wilful Imposition Others
Class IV.	<b>Malicious Injuries to Property</b>	Malicious Mischief Others
Class V.	<b>Forgery and Crimes against Currency</b>	
Class VI.	<b>Other Crimes not included above</b>	Crimes against Public Justice Indecent Exposure Others
Class VII.	<b>Miscellaneous Offences</b>	Aliens Acts, Offences against Betting, Gaming and Lotteries Breach of the Peace Animals Acts, Offences against Intoxicating Liquor Laws, Offences against Labour Laws (Factory, Mines, etc Acts) Naval, Military and Air Force Laws Police Acts, Bye-Laws and Regulations Prostitution Roads Acts etc. Offences against Vagrancy and Trespass Acts War Legislation* Wireless Telegraphy Act Others

\*Including the 'Lighting Restrictions'.

[Source: ECA ED6/1/11, Report on the State of Crime and the Police Establishment, 1944, 26]

## Appendix 5 Discipline Code

In terms of the Police (Scotland) Regulations made by the Secretary of State under the Police Act, 1919, any member of a police force commits an offence against discipline if he is guilty of-

- (1) *Discreditable Conduct*, that is to say, if he acts in a disorderly manner or any manner prejudicial to discipline or likely to bring discredit on the reputation of the force or of the Police Service.
- (2) *Insubordinate or oppressive conduct*, that is to say, if he –
  - (a) is insubordinate by word, act or demeanour, or
  - (b) is guilty of oppressive or tyrannical conduct towards an inferior in rank, or
  - (c) uses obscene, abusive or insulting language to any other member of the force, or
  - (d) wilfully or negligently makes any false complaint or statement against any member of the force, or
  - (e) assaults any other member of the force, or
  - (f) overholds any complaint or report against any member of the force.
- (3) *Disobedience to Orders*, that is to say, if he disobeys, or without good and sufficient cause omits or neglects to carry out any lawful order, written or otherwise.
- (4) *Neglect of Duty*, that is to say, if he -
  - (a) neglects, or without good and sufficient cause omits promptly and diligently to attend to or carry out anything which is his duty as a constable, or
  - (b) idles or gossips while on duty, or
  - (c) fails to work his beat in accordance with orders, or leaves his beat, point, or other place of duty to which he has been ordered, without due permission or sufficient cause, or
  - (d) by carelessness or neglect permits a prisoner to escape, or
  - (e) fails, when knowing where any offender is to be found, to report the same, or to make due exertions for making him amenable to justice, or
  - (f) fails to report any matter which is his duty to report, or
  - (g) fails to report anything which he knows concerning a criminal charge, or fails to disclose any evidence which he, or any person within his knowledge, can give for or against any prisoner or defendant to a criminal charge, or
  - (h) omits to make any necessary entry in any official document or book.

- (5) *Falsehood or Prevarication*, that is to say, if he –
- (a) knowingly makes or signs any false statement in any official document or book, or
  - (b) wilfully or negligently makes any false, misleading or inaccurate statement, or
  - (c) without good and sufficient cause destroys or mutilates any official document or record, or alters or erases any entry therein.
- (6) *Breach of Confidence*, that is to say, if he –
- (a) divulges any matter which is in his duty to keep secret, or
  - (b) gives notice, directly or indirectly, to any person against whom any warrant or summons has been or is about to be issued, except in the lawful execution of such warrant or service of such summons, or
  - (c) without proper authority communicates to the public press, or to any unauthorised person, any matter connected with the force, or
  - (d) without proper authority shows to any person outside the force any book or written or printed document the property of the Police Authority, or
  - (e) makes any anonymous communication to the Police Authority or the Chief Constable or any superior officer, or
  - (f) canvasses any member of the Police Authority with regard to any matter concerning the force, or
  - (g) signs or circulates any petition or statement with regard to any matter concerning the force, except through the proper channel of correspondence to the Chief Constable or the Police Authority, or in accordance with the constitution of the Police Federation, or
  - (h) calls or attends any unauthorised meeting to discuss any matter concerning the force.
- (7) *Corrupt Practice*, that is to say, if he –
- (a) receives any bribe, or
  - (b) fails to account for or to make a prompt and true return of any money or property received by him in his official capacity, or
  - (c) directly or indirectly solicits or receives any gratuity, present, subscription or testimonial without the consent of the Chief Constable or the Police Authority, or
  - (d) places himself under pecuniary obligation to any publican, beer-retailer, spirit grocer, or any person who holds a licence concerning the granting or renewal of which the police may have to report or give evidence, or
  - (e) improperly uses his character and position as a member of the force for his private advantage, or
  - (f) in his capacity as a member of the force, writes, signs or gives, without the sanction of the Chief Constable, any testimonial of character or other recommendation with the object of supporting an application for the grant of a licence of any kind, or
  - (g) without the sanction of the Chief Constable, supports an application for the grant of a licence of any kind.

- (8) *Unlawful or unnecessary exercise of authority*, that is to say, if he –
- (a) without good and sufficient cause makes any unlawful or unnecessary arrest, or
  - (b) uses any unnecessary violence to any prisoner or other person with whom he may brought into contact in the execution of his duty, or
  - (c) is uncivil to any member of the public.
- (9) *Malingering*, that is to say, if he feigns or exaggerates any sickness or injury with  
 a view to evading duty, or, while absent from duty on account of sickness or injury, is guilty of any act or conduct calculated to retard his return to duty.
- (10) *Absence without leave or being late for duty*, that is to say, if he without reasonable excuse is absent without leave from, or is late for, parade, Court, or any other duty,
- (11) *Uncleanliness*, that is to say, if, while on duty or while off duty in uniform in a public place, he is improperly dressed or is dirty or untidy in his person, clothing, or accoutrements.
- (12) *Damage to clothing or other articles supplied*, that is to say, if he -
- (a) wilfully or by carelessness causes any waste, loss or damage to any article of clothing or accoutrement, or to any book, document or other property of the Police Authority, served out to him or used by him or entrusted to his care, or
  - (b) fails to report any loss or damage as above, however caused.
- (13) *Drunkennness*, that is to say, if he, while on or off duty, is unfit for duty through drink.
- (14) *Drinking on duty or soliciting drink*, that is to say, if he -
- (a) without the consent of his superior officer, drinks, or receives from any other person, any intoxicating liquor while he is on duty, or
  - (b) demands, or endeavours to persuade any other person to give him, or to purchase or obtain for him, any intoxicating liquor while he is on duty.
- (15) *Entering licensed premises, &c., while on duty*, that is to say, if he enters, while on duty, any premises licensed under the Liquor Licensing Laws, or any other premises where liquors are store or distributed, when his presence there is not required in the execution of his duty.
- (16) If he lends money to any superior or borrows from or accepts any present From any inferior in rank.

(17) Any member of a police force also commits an offence against discipline, and shall be liable to punishment as provided in these Regulations, if he guilty of an offence which is punishable on conviction, whether summarily or on indictment, or if he connives at or is knowingly an accessory to any offence against discipline under this Code.

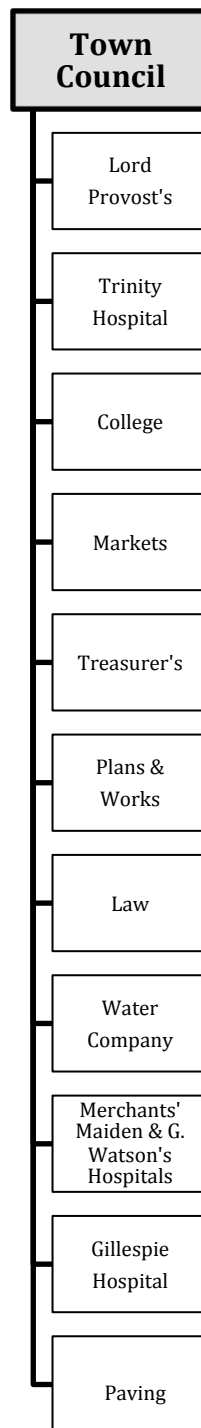
[Source: *Police Manual for Scotland* (Glasgow: McCorquodale & Co. Ltd, 1931), 383-389]

### Appendix 6 Proportion of Pension Paid on Retirement

Completed years of approved service	Scale 1	Scale 2	Scale 3	Scale 4	Scale 5	Scale 6
	On retirement with 25 years' approved service or over	On retirement with 10 years' approved service or over with medical certificate	On total disablement from non-accidental injury received in execution of duty	On total disablement from accidental injury received in execution of duty	On partial disablement from non-accidental injury	On partial disablement from accidental injury
	60ths.	60ths.	60ths	60ths.	60ths.	60ths.
<b>1 or less</b>	-	-	45	30	20	10
<b>2</b>	-	-	45	30	20	10
<b>3</b>	-	-	45	30	20	10
<b>4</b>	-	-	45	30	20	10
<b>5</b>	-	-	45	30	20	10
<b>6</b>	-	-	45	30	20	10
<b>7</b>	-	-	45	30	20	10
<b>8</b>	-	-	45	30	20	10
<b>9</b>	-	-	45	30	20	10
<b>10</b>	-	10	45	30	20	10
<b>11</b>	-	11	48	32	21	11
<b>12</b>	-	12	48	32	22	12
<b>13</b>	-	13	48	32	23	13
<b>14</b>	-	14	48	32	24	14
<b>15</b>	-	15	48	32	25	15
<b>16</b>	-	16	51	34	26	16
<b>17</b>	-	17	51	34	27	17
<b>18</b>	-	18	51	34	28	18
<b>19</b>	-	19	51	34	29	19
<b>20</b>	-	20	51	34	30	20
<b>21</b>	-	22	54	36	32	22
<b>22</b>	-	24	54	36	34	24
<b>23</b>	-	26	54	36	36	26
<b>24</b>	-	28	54	36	38	28
<b>25</b>	30	30	54	36	40	30
<b>26</b>	32	32	57	38	40	32
<b>27</b>	34	34	57	38	40	34
<b>28</b>	36	36	57	38	40	36
<b>29</b>	38	38	57	38	40	38
<b>30 or over</b>	40	40	60	40	40	40

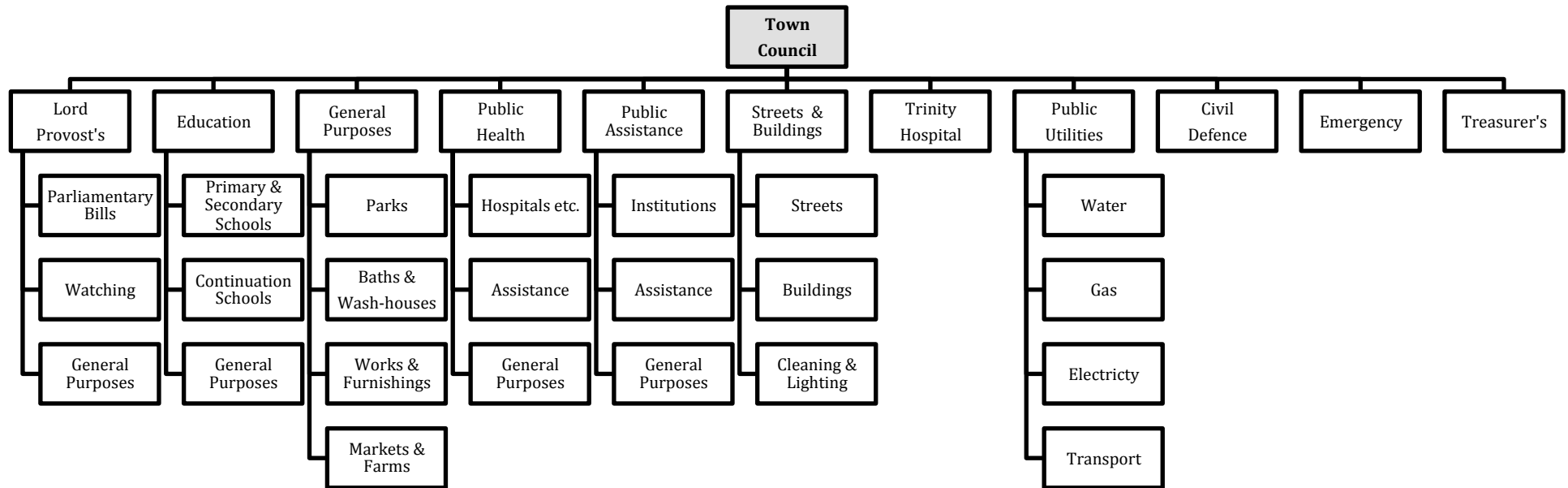
[Source: Police Pensions Act 1921, First Schedule]

## Appendix 7 Edinburgh Town Council Business Areas, 1855-1856



[Source: *Post-Office Edinburgh and Leith Directory*, 1856-1857]

### Appendix 8 Edinburgh Town Council Standing/Sub-Committees in the Second World War



[Source: ECA SL1/1/389-395, Minutes of the Town Council, 1938-1945]



**Appendix 9**  
**Scottish Police Federation Central Conferences**  
**Standing Orders**

- (1) All notices of motion and amendments to be given in writing.
- (2) No motion or amendment shall be spoken upon except by the mover until it has been seconded and read to the meeting.
- (3) No motion or amendment after being seconded shall be withdrawn without the consent of the meeting.
- (4) Whenever an amendment is under consideration no second amendment shall be moved until after the first has been disposed of.
- (5) A member shall not move or second more than one amendment to any motion.
- (6) If an amendment be carried it displaces the original motion and becomes a substantive motion, whereupon a further amendment may be moved.
- (7) If an amendment be negatived, another amendment to the motion then under consideration may be moved.
- (8) The mover of an original motion shall not introduce any new matter.
- (9) The mover of an original motion, but not of an amendment, shall have a right to reply at the close of the debate upon such motion, but if the previous question of "to proceed to the next business" be moved and seconded it shall immediately be put to the meeting, and if carried, the discussion upon the particular question shall close without any reply being made thereon by the mover of the original motion.
- (10) After replying, the motion shall be put from the Chair without further debate.
- (11) The mover of an original motion shall not speak for more than five minutes, except by permission of the chairman, and the seconder and each succeeding speaker for three minutes.
- (12) A member shall not speak more than once on the same question unless it be to a point of order or in explanation.
- (13) When a member speaks he shall confine his observations to the question under consideration and shall address the Chair.
- (14) All members, with the exception of the one addressing the meeting shall be seated, and when the chairman rises no one shall remain standing, nor shall anyone rise until the chair be resumed.
- (15) No member shall leave the meeting without the permission of the chairman.
- (16) In the event of any member not obeying the call of the chairman, it shall be within the power of the chairman to order such member to retire from the meeting.
- (17) Standing Orders shall not be suspended unless three-fourths of the members present at the meeting when such suspension is proposed shall vote in favour of the motion.

[Source: *Police Review*, 5 December 1919, 523; 2 January 1920, 2]

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 NRS HH55/193, 196, 215, Police Auxiliaries  
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