

TOFT AND THE CAMBRIDGESHIRE CONSTABULARY

Before the advent of the Cambridgeshire Constabulary in 1851 as the first established police service in the County, policing in Toft was the responsibility of Parish Constables. The Victorian police Headquarters erected somewhat later on Castle Hill, Cambridge, housed the newly formed Constabulary. It remained a police station until the transfer in 1970 to the new headquarters on Parkside. The Cambridgeshire Constabulary was responsible for policing the old administrative County of Cambridgeshire, which included Royston at the time. When Royston ceded to Hertfordshire in 1896 Cambridgeshire Constabulary was unique in being the only Force in England without a town in its area.

circa

1819	Toft Parish Constables: William Basely and John Newman	
1833	Parish Constable with the name of Male	
1852	Pc42 Amos Cooper stationed at Toft	1851 -
	Cambridgeshire	
1855	Pc25 Edward Hayward stationed at Toft	Constabulary formed
1855	Pc14 Charles Thompson stationed at Toft	20 November
1861	Pc William Ablett stationed at Toft	
1862	Pc41 John Hadder stationed at Toft	
1862	Pc Thomas Bridgeman stationed at Toft	
1871	Pc Charles Pindar stationed at Toft	
1873	Pc George Webb stationed at Toft	
1875	Police constable (Caxton Division) stationed at Toft. Insp. Dade i/c Divn.	a private house in School Lane built
1900	Pc Walter Harvey at Toft <i>Inspector Stapleton OIC Caxton Division</i>	
1910	Pc Arthur Payne stationed at Toft - listed as resident School Lane	1901 became police residence
1916	<i>OIC Inspector Alfred Chevill, Caxton Division</i>	(Toft an out-station of Arrington Sub-Division from c1922)
1919	Pc46 Arthur Pool stationed at Toft	
1921	Pc 49 Percy Lane stationed at Toft	
1931	Pc8 James Purkiss stationed at Toft	1951 - the house in School Lane vacated for a new Authority owned house at Long Road/Barton Road, Comberton
1937	Pc 59 Ebben stationed at Toft	
1942	Pc42 Oswald Cowley stationed at Toft	
1943	Pc11 Frederick Studd stationed at Toft	
1947	Pc37 Harry Barrett stationed at Toft resident at the Police House, School Lane	(Comberton is in the Cambridge Division of the Force)
1951	Pc Ebben, previously stationed at Toft, resumed duty from Comberton covering the territories of Comberton, Toft and Hardwick (<i>see CEN 11 October 2006 for story concerning Pc Ebben</i>)	1951 -
	Cambridgeshire	
1958	Pc Ralph replaces Pc Ebben	Constabulary Centenary Parade and Church Service, Great Shelford
1960s	Pc Cook replaces Pc Ralph Pc Foster subsequently replaced Pc Cook Pc Horner last occupant of the Comberton police house	
	<i>[as at 2008 Toft is policed from the Sector Station at Histon]</i>	1990s - Comberton police house sold into private ownership along with most County outstations

From 1851 to about 1922 Toft was apparently an out-station of the Caxton Division of the Force. The Caxton Police Station cum Courthouse was built in 1858 (it is not known where the Divisional Headquarters were prior to this). The Division was under the supervision of an Inspector.

At about 1922 Caxton Division was downgraded to a Section Station, with a Sergeant-in-charge, under the Arrington Sub-Division Inspector i/c. The Caxton Section retained all the outstations (police houses) of the former Division. The date at which the Arrington Sub-Division ceased to operate is not known. The Kelly Directory entries from 1929 to 1937 (no directories available beyond this date) indicate the Toft out-station as being within the Arrington sub-division.

When the author joined the Police Force in 1955 there still a sergeant i/c at Caxton and the Courthouse was still functioning on a regular basis. Caxton was then a Section Station of the Cambridge Division. Information supplied by John Prior, a retired member of Cambridgeshire Constabulary, shows that when he joined the Constabulary in 1950, Cambridgeshire was a two-division force - Cambridge Division at Castle Hill, occupying part of the headquarters building, and the Newmarket Division at All Saints Road in Newmarket. The Chief Constable was Donald Arnold.

The Caxton Police Station was closed around 1956 with the Courthouse remaining in use until 1969, or thereabouts. The Caxton Force personnel transferred to the newly formed Papworth Section, a new purpose-built Station and Authority housing having been built at Ermine Street (South) Papworth Everard. Arthur Hill, Sergeant i/c was formerly at Caxton.

The first indications of a police residence for a constable in Toft date back to the Electoral Roll of 1913, which lists a house in School Lane used for that purpose. The house itself was built in 1901. This house was vacated when a new Authority-owned house was built in Comberton around 1951.

The five small Forces of Cambridgeshire; Cambridge City; Isle of Ely, Huntingdonshire; and Peterborough were amalgamated in 1965 with the title of Mid-Anglia Constabulary. Under this new regime the former Cambridgeshire Constabulary was designated 'B' Division of the Mid-Anglia Constabulary, with its headquarters at Castle Hill Police Station until 1970, whence it was relocated to the Police Station at Parkside, Cambridge. The former Cambridge City Police (now 'A' Division of the Mid-Anglia Constabulary) moved from St Andrew's Street into Parkside and the Newmarket Police Station was closed at the same time. The new Parkside Police Station was formally opened by RAB Butler, Master of Trinity College in October of that year.

Colin Ward *Cambridgeshire Constabulary ret'd.*
source: Cambridgeshire Collection

CAPTIONS

- image 1 Group photograph of Cambridge Constabulary officers c1930.
- image 2 Police Constable Frederick Studd photographed at Comberton telephone kiosk 1947 - looking towards West Street and the junction with South Street and Green End. The telephone

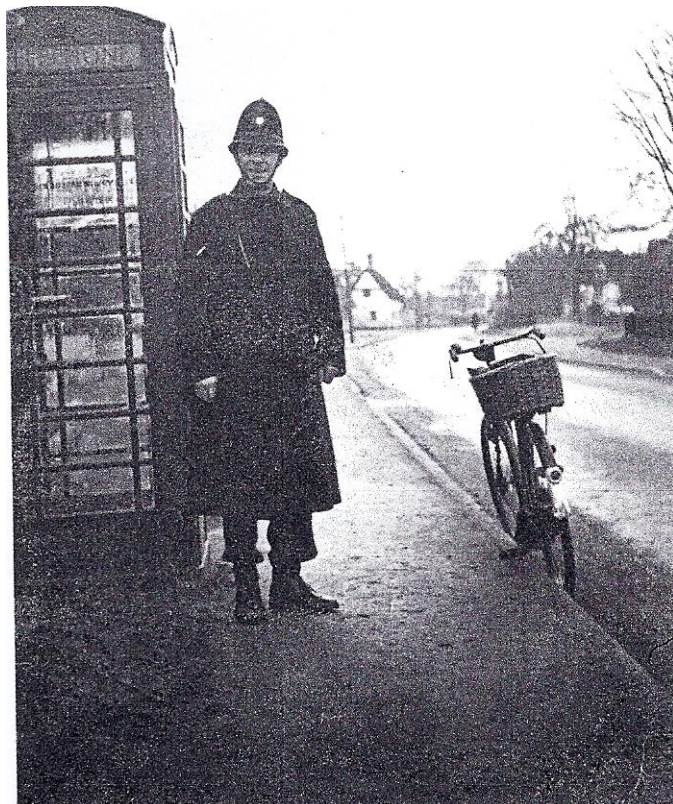
kiosk acted as a 'Conference Point'.

Police officers of the old Cambridgeshire Constabulary, in the main, would have patrolled on foot or pedal cycle, providing the all-important uniformed presence, rendezvousing at Conference Points at nominated locations within their Beat. Conference points were designated public telephone boxes at which constables would, at intervals on their beat, await a call from the Division for contact and reporting, and confer with fellow officers on adjacent Beats

Most Beats in the old Cambridgeshire and Mid-Anglia days had a small contingent of Special Constables, supplementing the tasks of the regular police officers. During the Second World War, Police War Reserves were also employed throughout the county area, which, of course, included Toft.



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