

Chapter Two

VALLEY POLICING: THE PRE-MODERN ERA

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In countless towns and cities across North America in the late 1800s and early twentieth-century, the nature of the police changed "from an informal, even casual bureaucracy to a formal rule-governed, militaristic organization" (Monkkonen 1981: 31). This was not a facile transition. Political and social conflicts marked the evolution of this institution. The need for a disciplined and professional law-enforcement agency created additional strains not easily redressed. While such can be seen in the development of policing in the region's larger centers, such as Halifax and Saint John (McGahan 1988, Wallace, Higgins and McGahan 1991), small town police departments faced similar pressures. Although not of the same scale, the challenges of establishing an acceptable level of policing and of public order among the smaller centers of the region were equally of concern to the citizenry.

The first policemen, or "Guardians", hired in the newly incorporated small towns were, by the 1960s, operating under conditions that had changed only marginally over the century. Only in the larger towns did the structure of the police department begin to replicate, on a smaller scale, the structure and organization found in urban policing. In the following discussion, we outline the origins of small town policing in the small communities of the Annapolis Valley, including the ill-fated Nova Scotia Police (1930-32), examine the conditions of work, and identify the main forces that gradually forced the modern and professional standards on small town policing in the region.

"Guardians" of the Smaller Centers: Origins

Municipalities in Canada were responsible for their own order maintenance. In such small towns as Wolfville, Berwick, Middleton, and Digby, the development of policing was closely linked to the process of incorporation. Kentville's first Police Chief, Robert Barry, was appointed following incorporation in 1887, with a salary of thirty dollars a month plus a uniform. Early policing in Kentville, however, was shaped predominantly by Rupert Davis, who was appointed Chief of Police in 1894 and served for 37 years. According to town historian, Mabel Davis, six feet tall and weighing 200 pounds, Davis was "a man of splendid physique", which was appropriate for a typical "order-maintenance" style of police work. In the early part of the twentieth century, Kentville was characterised as "a raucous and disorderly community" referred to as "The Devil's Half Acre". Fourteen drinking establishments were located within the town (Davis 1986: 77). Typically, "rowdyism", vandalism and liquor related offences were frequent police problems. The day-to-day policing in small towns was an informal business. The vast majority of offences involved crimes against property; crimes against the person were much less common. Mabel Davis described Chief Davis' policing style

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as "fearless" combined "with diplomacy and sympathy for thoughtless offenders" (Davis 1986: 77). Like a typical English bobby, Chief Davis did not carry a firearm and often used a bicycle around town.

The force remained a one-man operation until 15 September 1926 when Town Council hired John Brown to work as a constable under then-Chief Davis. Brown held this rank for five years until Davis's retirement on 1 January 1931, when Brown was made Chief. At the same time the Town hired Davis to look after the parking meters. In an era when pensions were scanty, at best, retirement often meant poverty. Brown remained Chief for thirty-five years, into the era of early modernisation. His initial salary was \$1,200 per year.

The demand for peace and order in communities that were seen by many prominent citizens as wracked by rowdyism and disorder drove other towns, such as Wolfville, to become incorporated. The creation of Police Committees and the hiring of a policeman generally accompanied incorporation. By the 1890s, Wolfville had become a thriving town of more than a thousand residents. Subordination to the municipality of the county increasingly did not appear appropriate. After a vigorous debate over whether increased taxation would occur, the community incorporated in 1893 (*The Acadian* 24 February 1893).

The quest for incorporation was partially fuelled by a desire for social harmony, by the need to enforce the "every day laws of common decency." Periodic outcries against the perceived "lawlessness" on public streets were linked to a call for both a policeman and a lockup. That youths were the perpetrators of this "disorder" did not soften this demand (*The Acadian* 17 February 1888; 18 September 1891).

The arrival of Robert Barry in 1887 as Kentville's first policeman, as with that "notable shiretown's" incorporation, reminded Wolfville's residents of that which they still lacked. During the winter of 1887, the Municipal council received a petition seeking to have Wolfville set off as a police district with authority granted to assess residents for an amount sufficient to defray expenses. Reflecting the undercurrent of penuriousness, evident in many such communities at the time, those "counting the cost" urged Council not to proceed with this change, ignoring the claim that with continued rowdyism "The state of affairs in Wolfville the past six months has been a disgrace" (*The Acadian* 13 January 1888). The legal right of the Municipal Council to authorize expenditures for policing in Wolfville was also challenged. The appearance in that community of a branch of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty (S.P.C.) added to the confusion by supposedly "claiming for itself through its secretary, power and authority that the parent society never dreamed of possessing. If this society has the right to deal with all matters affecting the public peace in as full and effectual manner as is set forth in the official announcement of its organization there will be but little need of a police constable in this town" (*The Acadian* 17 February 1888). The inadequacy of this Society as an agent of social control was soon evident.

Complaints about rowdyism waxed and waned in subsequent years. Undoubtedly, these occasioned exaggerations of the levels of disorder. The call for a policeman in the community wove itself within the quest for incorporation: "if you cannot get a policeman without incorporation, why, then, get incorporated..."

Incorporated or not, there must be some way of keeping 'bedlam' from letting loose its furies into your midst" (*The Acadian* 18 September 1891). Ten months after incorporation, Town Council received an unsolicited application for the position of policeman - "if one is appointed for the current year" - from P.L. Bishop of Halifax (*The Acadian* 8 December 1893). However, it was not until the following March that the recently formed Police Committee was authorized to advertise for applicants (Wolfville Town Council Minutes, 27 March 1894). In June, James N. Toye, of Hantsport, was appointed policeman, at a salary of \$400 per annum. The Committee was also requested to proceed with arrangement for construction of a lockup in the town hall (*The Acadian* 15 June 1894). This was three years after Digby likewise had appointed its first policeman.

The quest for municipal independence similarly marked Middleton. Since 1880, that community had been one of fifteen wards within the Municipality of Annapolis County, governed by a County Council. This arrangement persisted for the next twenty years. Agitation among Middleton residents for incorporation peaked in 1906, when the ratepayers voted 104 to 41 in favour of giving the community the status of a municipality. Premier Murray ruled against the petition, "on the grounds that the 500 acres [of Middleton's town site] was not arranged in the compact area intended by the Towns Act." The community reacted angrily, organized a protest parade, and burned Murray in effigy. However, their ambition was not to be thwarted. In the spring of 1909 another plebiscite was held again the results were overwhelmingly in favour of incorporation. Middleton officially became a town in June, with the first meeting of the Town Council held in July, 1909 (Middleton 1984: 45ff). At that first meeting, among the committees established was the Police, License and Temperance Committee, consisting of the mayor and two councilors. Their responsibility was to make recommendations to Town Council in those three areas. After the Town bylaws were passed in September, a part-time policeman was appointed (Middleton Town Council Minutes, 1909). In 1914, at a public meeting of the residents of Middleton, Councillor Charlton opposed a resolution to hire a night policeman because this work should be voluntary. For his part, he said, he was willing to serve one night a week. The Mayor, Solicitor, Town Clerk, as many as 30 others agreed to do likewise (Middleton Town Council Minutes, 3 September 1914). The experiment apparently fizzled, however, because the practice does not appear to be repeated in subsequent years.

Unlike in many of the other smaller centers, it was not until thirty years later that Middleton had a full-time "guardian." Town Council first considered requesting that the Nova Scotia Police establish a detachment in Middleton; then, later, they approached the RCMP. When the Town Solicitor learned that it cost \$2,000 per year to maintain each member of the force, and the RCMP was currently short-handed, the question was settled in favour of a full-time municipal officer (Middleton Town Council Minutes 7 October 1935). In 1937 Earl Acker was appointed the first full-time Chief of Police. When Acker was granted a leave of absence to join the armed forces at the outbreak of World War Two, he was replaced as Chief by Camber Forbes, who followed by a succession of chief constables until Stanley Holt was hired in 1955. The Town was still operating with a

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one-member police force. Middleton Council did not authorize the hiring of a part-time constable until 1965, ten years before Holt was obliged to retire.

Stanley Holt came to Nova Scotia from England in 1926, initially finding work on a farm in Mount Denson (Interview with Stanley and Margaret Holt, 5 July 1989). Before World War Two, he had done some part-time police work in Middleton, had written the R.C.M.P. exams, passed them, and was on the waiting list to go to Depot. When the war began he joined the army serving for the next six years in the Provost Corps, attaining the rank of Sergeant. He was accepted into the Military Police because, he said, of his size and his previous police experience. After the war, Holt worked for a time in Halifax at the Boys School, then went to Aylesford, working as a Plant Supervisor for the United Fruit Company. The *Middleton Mirror* reported that Holt had also served as Chief of Police in Aylesford (6 April 1977: 1). In 1955, Holt said he was approached by Harry Ritcie, the chairman of the Middleton Police Committee and a member of Town Council who asked whether he would be interested in being Police Chief. "We talked all one afternoon," Holt recalled.

According to Holt, at that time "the town's people had [the Police Chief] by the end of his nose. Guys would hit his hat off and he wouldn't do anything." When he worked part-time before the war as a police officer, Holt said, he had only a hat and an armband, and no weapons other than a leather billy. Later, he had a "big .38 special" which was his own. Holt said that he also had a .22 rifle he acquired from the widow of a suicide victim who had asked him to take it away. There was very little need of firearms on the job, he said. It was not very busy in Middleton and the Chief was prohibited from carrying firearms except in emergencies.

The men Holt had helping him during this period worked as part-time policemen, principally on Friday nights. These men were untrained and often unprofessional, he said. One "was nick-named the "friendly elephant". Another would "fall asleep" on the job. They weren't capable of doing the paper work, he said, so all the writing had to be done during the day. There was no secretary. In Holt's view, many of these men were not good policemen. One, he said, hung around with undesirable people in Wilmot. Another was incapable of making routine decisions.

Margaret Holt [wife to Stan] recalled the following anecdote: A Constable

"was on duty one night and away from the station. A guy drove his station wagon into a ditch. I called [the Constable]. He went over and saw it and then came over here. He said: 'What do I do?' I told him to take the driver to the hospital. He came back again and said that he wouldn't go, so I told him to bring him to the house. When he got here I told him: 'You're going to the hospital. Don't argue.' So [the constable] took him. Then he asked: 'What do I do with the car?' I had to tell him to leave it in my driveway. He didn't know anything!"

During the time Holt was Chief in Middleton, from 1955 to 1975, there was no murder. The majority of police work in the town involved enforcing the traffic and liquor acts, vandalism, dog complaints and petty theft. Holt recalls several suicides as being the most

memorable cases he investigated, often assisting or being assisted by the R.C.M.P.

Margaret Holt had played a considerable police role for the Town of Middleton although she was unpaid and unrecognized. Both of the Holts said that they dealt with a number of young people in distress. According to Margaret: "We had quite a few runaway children over the years. A couple of them ended up in Truro, at the girls' school. There were girls in trouble. One of them was just 13. She was running the road at night." In her view, Stan understood adolescents: "He was never hard on them. The first time they got into trouble, he'd tell them like it was. He'd tell them that he didn't want them over here racing their cars. He always gave them a chance. He knew what it was like to be a kid."

Margaret Holt acted as the unofficial dispatcher for the Middleton Police. At first, police calls would come through to the Holt household in the day when the Chief was unavailable, or sometimes at night. When Middleton purchased the first police car, a remote radio was installed with a radio at the Holt residence. This was used in the day time. The hospital took the calls in the night. Margaret explained that she "operated the phone out of the house". "At that time", she added, "the R.C.M.P. women used to do it, too. Their wives would work, take calls, for no pay. That stopped about the time we started here [1955]. I would spend my time hunting him [Stan] up and relaying messages."

The police station consisted of an office and two cells on the ground floor of the Town Office, where the station is currently located, although with enlarged quarters. Holt recalled that the cells were not overly busy, although he "had people in the cells once in a while." Margaret said she sat with a girl once who spent the night in the cells.

Although concern with public drunkenness surfaces periodically in Town meetings (Middleton Town Committee Minutes, 6 May 1912), in the early years of his tenure as Chief, Holt said, there was little drinking and fighting compared with other towns the size of Middleton. The most serious complaints occurred during Hallowe'en night. "It was a disaster. Young people would come over from Nictaux. They raised Cain. Now, Hallowe'en has cooled down." Otherwise, he said: "There wasn't much drinking. There weren't any bars in the town. When I got here there were five bootleggers. I closed them up good." In some of these raids, Holt and the R.C.M.P. co-operated.

Holt maintained a police log but otherwise kept few files and did only minimal paper work. He says that he does not know what happened to the log. He did, however, keep files on those he described as troublesome "young people". Under the circumstances of his forced resignation in 1975, Holt said that when he left he took all his files on the young people with him: "I said that I could find out their own information the same way I did."

The neighbouring town of Berwick did not incorporate until 1923. In September, as Wolfville had experienced before the turn of the century, a delegation - this time from the local Social Services Council - petitioned Berwick's Town Council for the appointment of an Inspector under the Canada Temperance Act (Berwick Town Council Minute Book, 19 September 1923). The Council represented the different churches in the community, and was an influential supporter of the continuation of that quest for purity which had marked Kings County and elsewhere in Nova Scotia since the late nineteenth century. It was argued that reliance could not be placed on the county

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Inspector, as he had no jurisdiction in Berwick. Both the Mayor and Council reacted favourably to the petition. Their solution echoed what Kentville and Wolfville had done earlier: it was decided that the Town's policeman, when appointed, would have as part of his duties that of Temperance Inspector.

A.M. Thomas was approached for the position of "guardian," but refused to accept it at \$150 per year. Council reconsidered and he was appointed Police Officer, Temperance Inspector, and Truant Officer, with an annual salary of \$200. The need for a local policeman was not contested. "If we ever needed a policeman," one councilor remarked, "it was at this time of the year". Thomas was reappointed yearly until his death in 1927. By 1929, however, Councillor Parker claimed that Berwick no longer needed "a policeman" (Berwick Town Council Minute Book, 19 September 1923; 5 November 1929).

Duties and Conditions of Work

The size of these police forces remained quite small in the years after they had been established, commonly consisting of no more than one or two full-time constables, joined at times by part-time or "special" police, who assisted in the collecting of fines, and the issuing of writs and other functions. Immediately after Middleton's incorporation five "specials" were appointed. This was an unusually large number. In most years only two or three were hired. These appointments also occurred in response to the need for extra policing on special holidays and on the occasion of visits from notable personages.

The small town policeman, even more so than his counterpart in Halifax or Saint John, assumed a number of responsibilities beyond law enforcement. In September, 1894, the duties of pound keeper were transferred to Wolfville's lone "guardian". The following year he was appointed Scott Act Inspector, with a concomitant \$50 increase in his salary. In addition, he was expected to visit each residence and report all cases of defective sewerage to the Health Inspector and to investigate other "nuisances" that threatened the community's health. Wolfville's policeman also served as janitor of the school of the Town Hall, Fire Station, and lockup. The appointment of Charles Quipp as Wolfville's policeman, after Toye's resignation, indeed, was contingent on his acceptability to the School Board as janitor. When Acker was appointed Chief of Police in Middleton, he continued to have "multiple responsibilities" (MTCM 5 April 1937). These additional jobs served him in good stead. His period as Police Chief got off to a rocky start when on two occasions, he was found to be drunk and in uniform. His offer to resign, however, was not accepted, in part because "the police duties were a small part of the duties [he] performed" (MTCM 26 October 1938).

That the town "Guardian" was charged with these more mundane responsibilities partly reflected the lower level of crime than what was found in Halifax, Moncton, Charlottetown, or Saint John, and may have made the position less attractive to its occupants. "The duties of a policeman in a small town," one local resident observed at the time, "are numerous and not always of a more agreeable nature, and it is not to be expected that any man could give unbounded satisfaction" (*The Acadian* 22 July 1898).

At the turn-of-the century, the multiple tasks assigned to Woodstock's policeman included: Chief of Police, Town Marshal, Poor Commissioner, Collector of Taxes, Street Commissioner, and, in some years, Scott Act Inspector. In the absence of a range of salaried public officials, the constable served a variety of functions for the municipality. Even "law and order" in a small community encompassed a broad range of duties - a wide definition of the police function. Illustrative of this, in the fall of 1908 as a response to the problem of truancy, Digby's Council instructed the policeman to visit the local school each morning "to ascertain the names of non-attending pupils and enquire into the cause of their absence." He also functioned, to a degree, as a "moral gatekeeper": directed to enforce the bylaw prohibiting the posting of indecent, obscene and libelous literature or to curtail the use of profane language in public areas (*The Digby Weekly Courier*, 6 November 1908). Reflecting the fundamental conservatism which marked local culture, town authorities, including their policeman, were guardians of the community's moral standards, especially with respect to the leisure-time activities to which residents were exposed.

That such towns possessed only one full-time peace officer meant his activities and performance were readily assessed by residents. Being laden with a variety of functions heightened both his visibility and vulnerability to constant scrutiny in the community. Dressed in a town-bought uniform, his public role was difficult to escape. That visibility was underscored in the action which Wolfville's Police Committee took in early March, 1897. They posted at the Town Hall the policeman's daily schedule: "By consulting it ratepayers will be able to ascertain the policeman's whereabouts at any time" (*The Acadian* 6 March 1897). He could thus easily be the target of dissatisfaction with his performance. Such occurred in the case of Wolfville's Constable Toye. In March 1898 the chairman of the Police Committee reported to Council "that the police service was not what it should be, and suggested the matter be fully investigated" (*The Acadian* 11 March 1898). Four months later Toye submitted his resignation, to take effect the first of October. Council would not see him depart without some mark of appreciation, though with limited largesse. They agreed to present to him the "clothes belonging to the town that he now wears, but he is to return the brass buttons and badges when he leaves office." Charles Quipp, of Bridgetown, was appointed as his successor. Perhaps to make his stay in the community a more satisfactory one, Council agreed to renovate part of the town building to serve as a residence for the policeman. Yet Quip's tenure was not as lengthy as that of Toye; he resigned as of April 30, 1899. His replacement, William Salton, also lasted only about a year. This turnover of "guardians" contrasted with policing in the County's shiretown. Whereas Wolfville had three different policemen during the seven years immediately following incorporation, Kentville had only three police officers during its forty years as a municipality. This was somewhat of an anomaly, for Kentville was a more raucous and disorderly community.

According to Holt:

being a policeman in a small town, like Middleton, is one of the hardest jobs. On large forces of several hundred people, the man on the beat is the first on the scene of an incident, from then on a specialist can be called in. In the

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case of a crime, there are the various department experts such as photographers, fingerprint experts, detectives and such who immediately become involved.

But in the small town force of four people, such as in this town, the man on the beat has to know something about all of these specialities. Eventually, aid can be brought in, but the initial investigating and protection of the evidence must be made by one man (*Middleton Mirror*, 6 April 1977: 1).

Insofar as the policeman was subject to the scrutiny of a Town Council committee, he was especially vulnerable to the dynamics of the local political institution. Frequently, his was a yearly appointment, subject to election by Council. The latter was not always a relatively straightforward matter. In 1900, for example, after the death of Woodstock's then Chief, A.G. McFarlane, James Harvey was elected as his successor, but only after the Mayor had cast the deciding vote.

Town fathers tended to demonstrate some degree of penuriousness in authorizing public expenditures, especially those relating to policing. In the early summer of 1917, Digby's Council expressed unusual scrutiny over the modest resources committed to the Chief. They resolved "that in the event of the policeman resigning or leaving the service of the town the salary due him for the last month of his services be withheld until all property in his possession belonging to the town, including uniform has been handed in to the Town Clerk" (*The Digby Weekly Courier*, 29 June 1917).

When Boyd Bishop was suddenly dismissed as Digby's Chief of Police in December, 1921, the residents attributed such action to an "autocratic" Council (*Digby Weekly Courier*, 23 December 1921). Their appointment of Cornelius Hatfield, former Chief of Mahone Bay, as Bishop's replacement did not meet with unanimous approval. Two weeks later the community was rocked by an erroneous rumour that Digby's Mayor had been assassinated and that Halifax had been appealed to for police protection. Hatfield's tenure proved to be short-lived. In March, 1922, R.C. Ellis replaced him as Chief and Scott Act Inspector. Unconvinced that they were obtaining the most suitable candidates for this position, the Council at the same time agreed that any such appointment would "be more month to month, and not by the year" (*Digby Weekly Courier*, 3 March 1922). This heightened the insecurity of the "guardian's" status, as revealed in February, 1924, when the Mayor suggested that rather than reappoint Ellis, tenders be advertised for his position (*Digby Weekly Courier*, 22 February 1924). The "turmoil" in Digby's police circles continued and, although of a lesser scale, could still present the same level of acrimony as the repeated investigations of Saint John's police department revealed. In May, 1924, Town Council resolved to look outside the community for a suitable candidate. The Police Committee subsequently recommended one such applicant - I.W.F. Adams of Bridgewater. Second on their list was a local man, B.V. Bent. The Mayor lobbied for the former: "Local talent has been tried out for a good many year," he observed, "and some had proved good officials." But, he contended, what was needed at this time was an "experienced man." Others balked, nonetheless, at rejecting Bent. By a slim three-to-two majority the Digby resident became the

community's next policeman. This was not the only time the issue of whether to hire a local candidate as a municipal official had been raised. Three years earlier Council had received a petition signed by a number of Digby's residents protesting against the appointment of an "outsider" to the recently vacated position of Town Clerk (*Digby Weekly Courier*, 4 March 1921).

Yet, the Town's difficulties in retaining its "guardian" continued. In February, 1926, The Mayor voiced displeasure again with the work of the Chief, but did not wish to blame Bent personally. This, he reminded Council had been a long-standing problem: "Regarding the police it always was a very unfortunate condition. Digby always had trouble, even in the old days, and this was due to the small salary paid. It is very hard to get the right man. Different men had been tried but they all seem to fall by the wayside. In my opinion the man that we want won't accept such a position" (*Digby Weekly Courier*, 12 February 1926). Allowed to address the Council, Bent stated that during his tenure as Chief he had "endeavoured to serve the town to the best of his ability." He wished to stay on as Chief, but if his request for a \$90 per month salary could not be granted, he announced he would submit his resignation. His audience was not sympathetic. Another was appointed as his successor. These events were not unique to Digby; though of much smaller size, the meager policing services of the region's towns did not immediately attain any greater stability than did those in the larger centers.

Throughout the era of the one-member police force, salaries were low but working hours were long. According to Margaret: "Stan worked 28 hours out of each 24." Holt complained that he would stay up to two or four in the morning. Then some Councillor would go to Council and "say that the police car was in my yard and its nine A.M. He didn't understand the police." Chiefs in small departments also found it difficult to take vacations. Night constables tended to be inexperienced because of the high turn-over rate and were poorly trained. Holt felt "it would be unthinkable to leave the town with just one policeman to work all day and all night." In 1972, Town Council hired a second full-time constable in Middleton and, in May of the following year, Holt was able to begin a three-week holiday in Britain (McGahan 1989 #12: 12, 15).

Policing a small town in the early to mid-twentieth century meant knowing many people, especially those to whom you could turn for information. At that time, police information was basic. As a veteran police officer said in an interview, "There was no filing system in the [Kentville] office. Brown knew people. He had a computer in his head for information."

With his bicycle and informal policing style, Chief Brown represented a model of small town policing in the one-member era. The esteem with which members of the Town elite had for Brown—and, more importantly, what traits they valued in their "Guardian"—are evident following his retirement on 1 March 1967 (*Kentville Advertiser*, 19 May 1966: 1). Besides having "an abundance of common sense", police officers required "the ability to have good public relations, [should] always be polite and practice preventive police work with a constant sense of responsibility to the public" (*Middleton Mirror*, 6 April 1977: 1). In December of the previous year, the Town of Kentville had given a testimonial dinner for the retiring Chief. He was "kind and courteous", "an able

law officer and a humanitarian" who had consistently exercised good judgment. The Town Council presented Brown with a parchment upon which was printed, in part, the following: "During all of your many years of service with the Town you have served conscientiously, faithfully and well. It is well recognised that the duties of a police officer require many qualities, honesty, tact, good judgment and firmness tempered with kindness." In his performance of these duties, Brown had been a great credit to the Town, to himself, and to his position as Police Chief. In the words of Commissioner Woodman, the citizens of the town had, that evening, "shown John Brown how much you have appreciated his standing at the School Street intersection, stopping automobiles to allow your children to cross the street in safety. . . . You have said thank you because there is not a major unsolved crime in Kentville" (*Kentville Advertiser*, 7 December 1966: 1). "[U]nder his regime," Woodman editorialized in the local paper, "respect for law and order has been easily maintained" (*Kentville Advertiser*, 24 November 1966: 5).

The formal acknowledgement of his value to the community was, most likely appreciated. But retirement for town officials, including police chiefs, usually meant poverty. Persistent low wages seldom allowed a police chief to save money and the Town did not have a superannuation scheme. At least Brown could look forward to a federal pension. The era was quickly approaching, however, when respect for the towns "Guardians" would have to be reflected in their pay cheques and conditions of work.

Offences and Offenders

The small-town "guardian" encountered many of the same challenges to public order found by his counterparts in Halifax and Saint John, although again not in the same magnitude. Relying on Wolfville's *Police Report and Record*, for the period 1904 - 1921, as an example, what we have found in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Maritime communities with respect to the most prevalent type of offence (McGahan 1988; McGahan ??) is repeated here in Wolfville. Drunkenness persisted in this town as the major problem with which the police had to contend. Similarly, the highest proportion of offenders was in their twenties. More than half of those arrested or charged in Wolfville were residents of the town. That a large minority were outsiders suggests that the community was not isolated. Vagrancy was not as prevalent as in other communities. Nonetheless, the few vagrants that did appear were dealt with in a manner similar to what occurred in Charlottetown and elsewhere. To illustrate, in January 1915, one Thomas White was charged with vagrancy in Wolfville. Playing guilty to begging, he was subsequently discharged with the following notation: "Understood he leaves town on freight and does not return. Ticket to be furnished on Mayor's order." Many of Wolfville's offences involved, in addition, violations of town by-laws (such as racing on Main St.). Several other patterns are of interest:

1. As in the other Maritime communities we have examined, teenagers were more apt to be charged with property crime (theft, vandalism, etc.) in comparison to other age groups. Arrests for drunkenness were more common among the latter.

2. As was the case for Halifax, residents were more likely to be charged with crimes against the person (assault, robbery, etc.) than were non-residents. This may have reflected the tendency for these offences, especially assaults, to have occurred among those linked within the same social networks. Residents were more apt to have such locally-based networks.

3. Arrests for drunkenness were less likely to involve those living in Wolfville. More than a third of those charged with drunkenness were non-residents; this was a much larger proportion than was the case for crimes against the person. Whether that the police were less tolerant of outsiders being drunk on public streets or whether that Wolfville, as had Charlottetown and Digby in earlier years, attracted those from the countryside seeking liquor, accounted for this pattern is uncertain.

Examining similar data for Berwick, during the period 1923 - 1940, reveals again the most common offence was public drunkenness and drunk and disorderly behaviour (Police Office Record Book, Berwick Town Hall Records, 1923-1940). Petty crime and violation of Town by-laws predominated among the offences listed in the *Police Office Record Book* through the 1900s and 1900s. The often physical nature of order maintenance meant that towns hired officers who were large and intimidating. One NCO interviewed said that, "The old school was that you hired muscle and brawn." Former-Chief Crowell of Kenville put this more colourfully: "In those days it didn't matter if the guy could spell 'truck' as long as he could lift one." One constable he recalled was "six foot three, 285, no fat, a fisherman." Another Constable hired at the time "was about the same size." So was Fred Young, who had been hired in Kentville as a constable in 1966, during the tenure of Chief Archibald Strong. Young said he "did farm work as a youngster" then left school early, going to work at Fred Robinson's, a GM dealership. He worked "in the parts department selling car parts and getting \$25 a week. I saw an ad in the paper asking for town policemen. John Brown was just going out as Chief and Archie Strong was coming in. The salary went up to as much as \$25 a week."

Necessarily, these locally-grown police recruits were untrained and usually not well-educated. The best source for trained officers came from hiring recent retirees from the armed forces, especially those who had worked—as Chief Holt had during the war—in the military police. Towns put a priority on policemen being large because, as a senior Kentville officer said, the police "used to be the bouncers for the taverns in town." They also worked alone, "so the bigger you were, you could get by with a lot of bull shit. A constable who was only five-foot ten or so would have had a hard time." One senior officer recalled another Constable who had worked about eight years before he had been hired who was only five-foot seven. He retired in 1967 or 1968, the officer said, and

didn't stay in police work. He was well liked but he detested violence. At that time it was a pretty dangerous town. The physical part of the job was more important than the brains. If you were working with [him] and there was a fight you wouldn't get much help. For example, a fight started at the Old English Tavern and [he] took the long way to get there. We were glad he retired. He was going to get hurt. He gave a lot of breaks before

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he would charge anyone for anything. The tavern owners were pissed off at this. He would only talk. It made it harder for the rest of us. We had to do his work for him. You had to bust heads first, then they respected you.

When he first worked as a police officer, the senior officer said, Kentville had only one liquor establishments. He worked there on Saturdays as a bouncer. "We would break up fights, and put people out. I was at home in Kentville. I talked my way out of fights. These are all my own teeth." Soon, however, many more taverns opened over a short period of time.

These guys here don't realize what it was like. You worked alone. The town was very rough. Kentville was packed on a Friday and Saturday night. There were no malls. On a Saturday night you couldn't walk on the sidewalk. People in this area don't drink the way they do in England; they go in to get drunk. That was the problem. The waiters never cut a guy off. There were no liquor inspectors. The waiters were underpaid so they would let someone drink until they fell out of their chair. Then the police had to be called to take them out. They were thrown in the car then taken to the county jail and locked up. If they were put in on Friday they would be kept until Monday. The day shift on Sunday had to look after them.

In those days, the officer said, Justices of the Peace could do anything but, "Police officers had a lot of influence over the sentence. If I said that someone was a good guy then he would get off with a light sentence. If I didn't like him then he would get [jail time]. Otherwise it would have been a \$50 dollar fine. It all depended on the say so of the police." Going to jail, in his view, was punishing. He said that some prisoners were beaten with a rubber hose. Offenders would have to do the full time, with no time off. "Now it is a very different system," he said. "Back in those days you would do the full five or six months. You didn't get too many repeaters. They wouldn't want to come back. Now repeaters want to come back in the winter. They got it pretty easy now. If they were good they got a mattress or a blanket. If not, they got a steel bed. If they were screwing up the heat would be turned down or off."

As is common among police officers, Holt recounted several anecdotes that involved the use of force. In his words:

I got into a few scraps. One was over in Reagh's warehouse. McCloud and another fellow were just out of jail and they were hunting after a witness. They chased him into Reagh's warehouse. When I got there, McCloud said that he was going to fight me, and I hit him. There was another young fellow in the restaurant. It is Eisner's now, but it was Brown's then. He was drinking. He wanted to fight. I hit him once and laid him up on the floor. There were a bunch of young fellows in there. I told them to take the fellow and throw him in the police car. They did. I put him in the cells. He was out cold in the cell. I saw Dr. Munroe and stopped him. He looked at him and said 'He'll come to'. [Margaret added:] "You just don't know how hard you hit those two."

The climate of criminal justice at the time may be indicated by a remark allegedly made by a Crown Prosecutor in Bridgetown to a Middleton constable. Frustrated by the decision of the Crown Prosecutor, Donald Hatherly, not to prosecute summary offences, the constable had asked him about prosecuting a charge of assault on a peace officer. The prosecutor replied, according to the constable, "that he should take the offender back of a building and beat hell out of him" (Middleton Police Department Report, 31 October 1973). If this is not taken at face value, it at least indicates the opinion of the Crown about the professionalism of small town policing.

The police laid relatively few Criminal Code charges in the small Valley towns. Most violations involved provincial statutes such as those regulating liquor and traffic. At the same time, police discretion was exercised in an informal way. Chief "Lefty" Graves in Kentville, for example, had a reputation as being "big on PR", a constable who was interviewed said. "Lefty was very friendly with the public. . . . He always told us to use our discretion, use your judgment. Don't charge everybody." On the other hand, it was common to arrest drunk and disorderly people. One senior officer still fondly remembers when the town bought its first police van because it was so much easier to push people into the back of a paddy wagon than into the back seat of a car. In 1968, 537 persons were locked up by the Kentville Police Department. According to Graves who made monthly reports to the newspaper, "By far the greatest portion of these were persons from out-of-town who committed crimes in town" (*Kentville Advertiser*, 16 January 1968:1).

Many small towns had reputations as "speed-traps" and, it was often alleged, police tended to target out-of-town people for minor ("chicken-shit") traffic violations. This added to town coffers and did not antagonize local residents who were more likely to receive a warning. A similar problem arose over parking fines in Berwick. Parking was a perennial concern in the town. In a letter to the editor of the *Berwick Register*, Stuart E. Johnstone, expressed his concern about the way Berwick Police handled parking. While he was not a resident, Johnstone did business in the community and patronized the merchants. He continued, "A short while ago, on two separate occasions, a number of irate motorists were . . . given tickets by town police for violations with regard to winter parking laws. . . . [I]n some instances the complaints were grossly exaggerated. Yet it happened and those who were fined were anything but happy, even threatening to stay away from the town." The town, he said, could not afford bad publicity because "town business would suffer." Although he believed that the charges were dropped, "[p]eople are easily hurt and the first person blamed is the police." However, Johnstone concluded, the source of the difficulty was not with the police force. "I have heard that some councillors advocate pressing for more fines and thereby getting more revenue. I trust that most councillors do not support this attitude. Prevention of crime is correct but not solely for the purpose of raising the town's revenue. . . . Some, they say, are afraid to come to town for fear of being picked up for some minor infraction" (*Berwick Register*, 6 February 1969).

In defence of the Department, Chief Edward Backman claimed that Berwick "is very orderly and there is very little of this random parking." The tickets were issued under a Town By-Law which the police are expected to enforce. Even then, he claimed, "we are

not as strict as we could be." There was ample parking, but some "people are too lazy to walk. . . . If the door were big enough they would take the car right inside. We have no night shift and we are not going to wait until three or four o'clock in the morning to put a ticket on a car. . . ." Many tickets, he said, come from a direct complaint about parking on private property or in front of a driveway (*Berwick Register* 6 February 1969).

MORAL GUARDIANS

As we have observed in the larger centers, a major preoccupation of both local officials and many of the "respectable citizenry" in these small towns was the need to control the illegal liquor trade. Enforcement of the Scott Act was sporadic and not satisfactory to those who wished to see temperance principles implemented. The rowdyism brought on by liquor in Kentville, Bridgetown, and elsewhere, was a striking reminder of the failure of prohibition. The liquor trade marked not just the town of Digby but also the surrounding County. In his annual report for 1910 to the Municipality of Digby, The Canada Temperance Act [Scott Act] Inspector, reported that ten "informations" had been laid, eight violators convicted, eight fines collected, and one offender committed to jail for a fine not paid—all for unlawfully selling liquor in a County where there was not open saloon and where the sale of liquor for beverage purposes was absolutely prohibited (*Digby Weekly Courier*, 28 January; 9 December 1910).

Such groups as the Sons of Temperance worked actively in Digby to curb traffic in the "vile liquor." By 1920, however, it became increasingly evident that the Scott Act was ineffective. All parts of the Province but the Counties of Digby and Guysborough by this time were governed by the Nova Scotia Temperance Act [N.S.T.A.], viewed as a more stringent prohibition measure. The latter permitted an inspector or police officer to search without a warrant any premises where he believed liquor was kept for sale or disposal. Under the Scott Act, a warrant was first required and could only be executed between 6 a.m. and 9 p.m. The N.S.T.A. also imposed a mandatory jail sentence after conviction for a first offence, and prohibited the sale of beer with a lighter percentage of alcohol (*Digby Weekly Courier*, 17, 24 December 1920; 7 January 1921). Complaints of drunks reeling on the streets of Digby's south end and accosting ladies underscored the need for a change. Finally, in November, 1922, Digby deserted the Scott Act and embraced the N.S.T.A. - a "suspension" which was to continue "so long as the provincial laws relating to the sale and traffic in intoxicating liquors continue as restrictive as the Canada Temperance Act such law being, in the opinion of the Governor-Council, substantially not less restrictive at the present time" (*Digby Weekly Courier*, 17 November 1922). The success of prohibition, nevertheless, still hinged on effective enforcement. The local branch of the Social Service council reminded residents both here and elsewhere in the Province (McGahan 1988: 87-97). The call for the citizenry themselves to bring to the attention of authorities those who flagrantly violated the law was not scrupulously heeded. "Blind pigs" operated on the outskirts of the Town, much to the chagrin of Digby's policeman whose jurisdiction did not extend beyond the community's limits. Nightly traffic called attention to these "dens," and to

the other means by which the liquor trade was conducted (*Digby Weekly Courier* 29 August 1929).

In similar fashion, authorities in Kings County continued through the 1900s to struggle with enforcing the N.S.T.A., but without success in eliminating the illicit liquor traffic. Periodic raids identified individual offenders, but did little to establish permanently that "purity" temperance advocates so compellingly sought in communities such as Wolfville or Kentville. It was pointed out that there was need of greater cooperation between the County Municipality and Town Councils. A committee was formed to act with the towns to organize some joint action in the temperance effort. At the April 1926 Session, however, one councilor reported that the Towns were not favorable to this. Berwick's mayor argued that a joint service was not practicable. His counterpart in Kentville, taking umbrage at the assumption that his community was the centre of the liquor trade, stated "that not all the liquor around here was sold in the Town of Kentville, for he knew of a liquor dive outside the Town in the Municipality, bigger than any in the town" (Kings County Council Minutes, April Term, 1926). Chief Davis was the Temperance Act Inspector for Kentville. Mabel Davis claims that, while he made Kentville drier than any town of similar size, the only place to buy liquor was outside the town limits. The prosecutions for liquor violations suggest he was less successful than may have appeared. What is more, a rumour persists in the town that Davis's strict enforcement in Kentville was part of a scheme to control the liquor supply and that the Chief was involved in a "house" in the neighbouring community known as "Yo Ho" which, in sociological terms, served as a "deviance service centre" for Kentville. It is an early indication that corruption in the Kentville Police Department may have a lengthy history.

By 1929, the failure of prohibition to achieve its objectives was apparent. Digby's Town Clerk, among others, argued that the temperance legislation "hadn't worked." In the province-wide plebiscite Digby joined with other parts of Nova Scotia in rejecting the continuation of the N.S.T.A. By a majority of more than 1100, the community voted in favour of Government Control of the sale of liquor. Annapolis and Kings Counties, in contrast, favoured the status quo. Kentville voted "dry" by a margin of 279. In the words of *The Kentville Advertiser*, "Wolfville was the crowning glory of the prohibition forces", voting 459 to 273 in favour of the dry legislation. Nevertheless, the voices of their electorates were muted by the mass of Nova Scotians, especially those in Halifax, Cape Breton, Digby, and Pictou, determined to end the existing temperance legislation (*Kentville Advertiser*, 31 October 1929). Seeking to mollify the outcome of the plebiscite, local prohibition forces expressed strong opposition to the location of any Government Control liquor store in Kentville. Their resistance to change, however, was not successful, as both a new form of liquor legislation and of policing emerged in the Province.

A Provincial Police Force

In the early part of the 20th century, policing in Nova Scotia was local and there were few police resources. Such policing may have been sufficient for order maintenance

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in small communities, but 20th century social conditions would make this type of policing obsolete. While enacting criminal law was a federal responsibility, enforcing the *Criminal Code* devolved to the provinces. Outside the incorporated towns and cities, which formed their own municipal police forces, the provinces in Canada generally enacted legislation to form provincial police forces, although between 1905 and 1917, the provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta contracted with the Royal North West/Royal Canadian Mounted Police to perform provincial policing. In 1920, there were 25 R.C.M.P. members in Halifax whose duties were to enforce federal statutes and protect the naval facilities. According to C. D. La Nauze (1982: 11n), the force led a "somewhat placid existence in the Maritimes" until 1932. During these twelve years it was "rarely disturbed by provincial police duties, although there were no regular provincial police in the province" (1982:13).

As early as 1921, rural Nova Scotia felt threatened by a small band of automobile bandits who operated in Pictou, Colchester and Cumberland Counties (*Halifax Herald*, 16 July 1921: 1-2; 20 July 1921: 1; 22 July 1921: 1). This case is interesting because of the involvement of the RCMP in the investigation and arrest, and also because of the role of the press in helping to create public apprehension.

Over several weeks, numerous breaks into country stores were attributed to this band of mobile thieves, as well as a major fire in the village of Millsville which was caused by burglars (*Halifax Herald*, 29 July 1921, pp. 1-2). The gang travelled "from place to place in automobiles", and "has caused something akin to panic to spread throughout the countryside (*Halifax Herald*, 29 July 1921, pp. 1-2)." Chief Fraser, of the Truro Municipal force, lacked the resources to pursue the matter alone. The Province asked for the assistance of the R.C.M.P. and Sergeant F. Lucas, of Saint John, N.B., was assigned the case (La Nauze 1982:13). By the second of August, five men had been apprehended and charged. The *Halifax Herald* then announced that the R. C. M. P. had been investigating the case and that the men had been arrested by five members of the federal force and Chief Fraser (*Halifax Herald*, 2 August 1921, p. 1). According to the *Herald*, "the lion's share of the credit for the capture" must go "to Sergeant Detective Lucas and his men.... Working for days and nights Detective Lucas with the men of the Mounties finally succeeded in rounding up their quarry." Seeking not to ignore the local force, The *Herald* added, "Chief Fraser, of Truro, was with the men of the Mounted Police when the arrests were made and Inspector Lucas speaks in high terms of the assistance rendered by local police" (*Halifax Herald*, 3 August 1921, p. 1).

As this example shows, in the age of the automobile, criminals were not confined to single jurisdictions. Legislation authorizing the appointment of provincial police officers was passed as early as 1910 (Toner and Perrier 1982: 33), but it was not until 1930, in the context of a revised Nova Scotia Liquor Control Act, that a provincial force, the Nova Scotia Police, was formed (: 35). It was not only concern with crime and alcohol which was behind this new police force. During the 1920s in Cape Breton, Provincial Constables were appointed on several occasions to help suppress the industrial actions of the United Mine Workers. Local police often sympathize with workers in such community-based disputes. A provincial police force could be expected to be less sympathetic and a more reliable tool for the maintenance of order and the suppression of industrial disputes.

Described as "a momentous session of the Legislature of this province," the March, 1930 assembly saw the Rhodes Government implement a measure for the Government sale of liquor. Linked to this was the establishment of a Provincial Police Force, "for the protection of property and civil rights" (*The Halifax Herald*, 6 March 1930). The need for a new system of policing in Nova Scotia reflected, in part, dissatisfaction with the manner in which prohibition had been enforced.

The new force was organized under the leadership of Frederick Arthur Blake, who had been "loaned" by the RCMP in Ottawa to serve as the first Commissioner and subsequently returned as a commissioned officer to the R.C.M.P. in 1932 (Toner and Perrier, 1982: 37). Initial training for the provincial police was organized by another former R.C.M.P. constable, L. H. Nicholson, later Commissioner of the federal force. The drill instructors were ex-British army NCOs (38-39). Organized into seven districts, the Nova Scotia Police was to comprise almost 100 officers distributed seven districts, including those at Kentville and Yarmouth. The smallest was "D" District, headquartered in Kentville, with three members and a stenographer. Each district was administered by a sergeant and was in time itself divided into detachments. The Kentville district included detachments at Windsor, with two members and Bridgetown with one member (Toner and Perrier 1982: 44-45). Digby's detachment fell within Yarmouth's jurisdiction.

The task facing Blake in organizing the force was a difficult one. There were numerous details that required attention, such as the clothing and side arms that should be issued. Both Blake and Premier Rhodes wanted the rate of pay to be similar to that of the Provincial Police Force in New Brunswick, established three years earlier.

In late July, 1930, the new "guardians" made their first appearance at Kentville. Assisting in directing traffic at a heavily-attended political meeting and not yet issued their new uniforms, the men wore black and white arm bands (*The Halifax Herald*, 23 July 1930).

In collaboration with the Attorney General, Blake drafted the regulations governing the new force. Their duties encompassed enforcement of the Criminal Code, of provincial statutes, and of the newly-established Liquor Control Act. The Commissioner emphasized they were not to be "liquor sleuths alone, but [were to] maintain order in a dozen different ways" (*Halifax Herald*, 22 May 1930).

The most time-consuming task facing Blake was recruiting suitable officers. Because the force's headquarters were based in Halifax, of the first 40 recruits, 24 or more than half were residents of Halifax City or County. The Commissioner was sensitive to the need to recruit across the Province and devoted considerable effort to encouraging applications from other parts of Nova Scotia. By mid-September, 1930, some 2,500 men had applied for positions on the force, which was not to exceed 100 officers (*Halifax Herald*, 10 September 1930). The successful candidates underwent training in Halifax for a two month period. Many of these were former municipal police officers. The creation of local detachments enhanced the ability to respond to calls-for-service from the citizenry. It also, in some cases, made town fathers rethink whether their own municipal "guardians" might be reduced in number on the assumption that they would have less work themselves to do. Middleton's Council had supported the

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idea of securing a detachment for their community, but this was subsequently not pursued.

The task of organizing the Provincial Police Force proved an onerous one, such that it demanded an extension of Blake's leave from the RCMP, which was due to end in October 1930.¹ Nonetheless, the Commissioner was encouraged by the work of his new recruits. The October 1930 convictions secured by the Nova Scotia Police were greater in number than any monthly record of their older counterpart in New Brunswick (*Halifax Herald*, 21 November 1930).

With the arrival of this new force, the quest for order in Kings County was renewed. Particular attention was given to violations of the Liquor Control Act. The pursuit of bootleggers and of those in possession of illegal liquor in the County was not as intense as that in Halifax. But the intractableness of this trade persisted.

In presenting his annual report on the activities of the Nova Scotia Police Force during 1931, the Attorney General stressed the Province's comparative freedom from serious crime. He argued that this demonstrated how much the enforcement of law and order had been advanced since the organization of the force. That the Provincial constables traveled over 1,000,000 miles was underscored to demonstrate how widespread their activities had been throughout Nova Scotia (*Halifax Herald*, 21 January 1932). This did not appease critics who pointed to the continuation of bootlegging and smuggling. The quest for purity seemed as unfilled now as it had been when the NSTA was in effect. Increasingly, the call was for the return of the "Mounties."

In late January, 1932, word was received that the Customs Preventive Service was to be placed under the control of the RCMP, in order to deal more effectively with smuggling and the illicit liquor traffic. At the same time Premier Harrington had been involved in discussions with the Federal Government to replace the Nova Scotia Police Force with the RCMP. This may, in part, have reflected the belief at the time that such a takeover would be financially advantageous. Toner and Perrier suggest that the economic situation of the province compelled Premier Harrington to turn to the R.C.M.P. for provincial policing. Following the visit of Commissioner MacBrien of the RCMP in early March legislation was introduced empowering the Provincial Government to enter into such an agreement. The reality of this change was heightened with Blake's transfer to the RCMP detachment in Fredericton. Most members of the Nova Scotia Police were absorbed by the federal force, with most of these retaining their rank (Toner and Perrier 1982: 43). Detachments continued to be operated out of Kentville, Bridgetown and Windsor. Of these, the first two towns continued to maintain municipal police forces. Total strength of the RCMP in the Maritimes was to be over 300, with about 175 assigned to Nova Scotia - including many of those transferred from the Nova Scotia Police and the Preventive Service. April 1, 1932 saw the end of the Province Force and the formal arrival of the RCMP.

As had their Provincial predecessors, the RCMP quickly found themselves confronting the routine range of domestic disputes, disorder, property crime, and liquor violations in Kings County as elsewhere. And in these diverse encounters, they too

¹ Blake to Commissioner, RCMP, 22 August 1930, Rhodes Papers MG 2 Vol. 650, Public Archives of Nova Scotia.

sought assistance from the small-town "guardians." Whether or not the "Mounties" engagement in the quest for order represented a significant advancement over the level of effectiveness of the Nova Scotia Police, much of the routine of petty crime persisted.

Chief Holt of Middleton maintained a close relationship with R.C.M.P. members posted at Bridgetown, a two-man detachment that was the closest west of Kentville. In 1955, Holt said, the RCMP would come to town frequently, both on business and socially. The Federal force assisted Middleton in investigating the occasional break-in. The relationship between the R.C.M.P. and Holt was underscored by a "citizen's complaint that he was spending too much time with them" (Middleton Town Council Minutes, 4 February 1964). Margaret commented:

I'd like to have a dollar for every free meal they [RCMP] got in this house. We had pretty good relations with the RCMP. They would help him [Stan] out at any time at night. We'd go to Wilmot and get some steak over the butcher shop there. They'd all come back here and eat. I would swear that they could smell my home made bread as soon as they came into town. One time I had just cleaned and polished my floors, and they came in with their big boots and spurs on. I took some lipstick and wrote a message about wiping their boots on the hallway wall. They wiped their boots clean after that. By the time Stan resigned, they had 4 or 6 men in the Bridgetown detachment.

Continued Evolution

The Provincial Force and the RCMP represented supplementary policing services for many of the smaller centers in Nova Scotia that we have examined. The war years had an immediate impact on more than only the economy of the Valley. As with other communities across the country, the proximate presence of troops in training affected the peace and order of the citizenry. Camp Aldershot, a training base for the Canadian Army, was located one mile from Kentville. Nova Scotia and New Brunswick infantry, and some from Quebec, trained for overseas service. The troops were not kept in total isolation; interaction with the surrounding community did occur. In the spring and summer the soldiers regularly contested baseball teams from both Kentville and Middleton.

Another less desirable contact also occurred. In the Yoho district adjoining the Camp, soldiers frequented several homes for the purpose of purchasing liquor illegally and consorting with "loose and idle women, most of whom were diseased venereally." Although the authorities had placed the district off-limits, this did not curb repeated visitations.² Complaints were lodged that the military police did not receive sufficient cooperation from the local detachment of the RCMP and the Kentville police in dealing with this problem.³ In addition, violations of the Liquor Control Act represented one of

² Capt. R. C. Reese to the District Office Commanding, Military District No. 6, Halifax. 31 May 1940, Records of the Attorney General's Office, "Wartime Matters", RG 10-F-Vol. 1 #4, Public Archives of Nova Scotia.

³ Capt. Murdock to the District Office Commanding, Military District No. 6, Halifax. 29 May 1940, Records of the

the most common types of offences involving soldiers. In the quest for order the respective jurisdictions of RCMP, of municipal police and of military authorities were not always clearly defined or integrated. In the 1960s, one senior officer said, the Military Police worked closely with the Kentville Police Department: "Kentville was a big army town. Two MPs were stationed right in our police station."

In the post-war years, Digby's police force first increased to two men. Police departments were still called on in the 1960s to perform numerous tasks that, under professional policing, would be defined as not police business. As was true for his counterpart in Middleton, the Chief's duties included that of Traffic Authority for the town. The tendency we have observed elsewhere in the Valley for police personnel in these small communities to be assigned additional responsibilities was evident in the case of the constable, E.C. Ineson, who joined the force in 1947. His salary of \$1500 was calculated as \$1200 for police duty and \$300 as driver for the Town's fire truck (Digby Town Council Minutes, 4 August 1947). Policing in the small community of Digby included, as it had in earlier years, a variety of mundane tasks - raising and lowering the flag each day near the downtown monument, driving the Town's car for the Mayor and the Digby Princess in the annual tuna parade.

Actual criminal code violations made up a small minority of police work in small towns. By comparison to what departments in larger centers experienced, Digby's "guardians" did not encounter a significant degree of crime. Nor did those in Wolfville. That community's *Police Complaint Book* for the period 1960 - 1964 summarizes the daily calls for service and the problems encountered. It represents a very useful portrait of small-town policing in the Valley, and perhaps a more comprehensive reflection of police activities than is found in earlier data. The highest proportion of calls, almost a third, dealt with theft - chiefly petty theft (theft from auto, from clothesline, of milk money, etc.). One fifth of all calls involved damage to property or vandalism. In contrast, responses to disturbances, assault, or domestic disputes were relatively uncommon in Wolfville. One marked difference from earlier decades was the infrequency of drunkenness or illegal possession of liquor.

Sometimes, the police directly called on the assistance of the public. In August, 1969, Chief Edward Backman in Berwick arrested a thief "red-handed." About midnight on a Monday night, Backman received a phone call from a Berwick resident saying that a forced entry was being made on Livingston's Grocery Store, Main St. Berwick. "Upon arrival, Chief Backman found that a rear window was broken and summoned Stephen Illsley, a nearby neighbour, for assistance in watching the window. Mr. Backman then notified the store proprietors and entered the store, apprehending the intruder", who was then charged with break and entry (*Berwick Register*, 21 August 1969: 1).

Reviewing the types of incidents day-to-day suggests that Wolfville's police activities approximated Wilson's "service style" of organization, with elements also perhaps of the "watchman" style (Wilson 1970). This contrasted with the Halifax Police Department's police more "legalistic" style. The frequency with which Wolfville's police checked and wound up the clocks of the various parking meters as part of their routine

is noteworthy. The relative absence of crimes in progress, for example, as well as the absence of a specialized traffic department, provided more time and opportunity for such an activity.

The small force of "guardians" in each of these towns was faced with many similar problems and issues through the 1970s and 1980s. The increased work load and greater requirement for 24-hour protection underscored the need for an increase in the size of each department. Mindful of constraints on their municipal budgets, the repeated appeals by the Chief for additional constables were not readily heeded. Part-time assistance and auxiliary officers were provided, especially during the summer months, but this arrangement was not always satisfactory.

Similarly, the need for improvement in the level of technology and equipment in support of policing was recognized, but could only be addressed gradually - again because of financial constraints. Each department over time acquired radar equipment, standardized revolvers, improved communication systems, and, if feasible, more than one patrol car. Their facilities were not necessarily enhanced to the same extent. In 1987, Middleton was forced to close its lockup because of the cost involved in complying with an edict from the Attorney-General's office to renovate the local cells such that they complied with Provincial fire and safety standards.

Small Town Policing to the Era of Modernization

These measures came about through the establishment of provincial standards of policing that were determined by the creation of the Nova Scotia Police Commission. In 1974, the Government passed a Police Act into law making the modernization of policing—particularly in the small towns—a principal objective. As noted in the past, however, the transition from the older service/watchmen style to a new legalistic framework for policing was not smooth. Much of the character of the various police departments in the province was determined by the characteristics of the Chief and his interaction with the Mayor and Town Council. In the Valley throughout the 1970s and into the 1980s, the relationship between Chiefs and local officials continued to be fractious. This was fueled by the failure of the Nova Scotia Government to legislate in the Police Act the principle that police chiefs should be fired only for just cause. Until amendments in 1985, chiefs in the province were still hired at the pleasure of the town. This clause, which was increasingly anomalous in the modern era, was first successfully challenged in the courts.

In the early years, Chiefs of Police were generally local men hired because of their political connections. As policing advanced through the 1960s, there was a tendency to hire Chiefs who were not always local, although prior to 1980, the field was small and Chiefs were hired from elsewhere in Nova Scotia. Upward mobility for Chiefs came about by moving from smaller to larger centers. Archibald Strong became Chief of Police in Berwick in 1958 after a career which included being Chief in Clark's Harbour. Alternatively, becoming a Chief in a small town was a form of mobility for a lower-ranking officer from a larger force. When Strong resigned in 1966 to join the Kentville Police Force (where he replaced retiring Chief John Brown), John H. Hallett, a twelve-

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year veteran of the Glace Bay Police Department, became Chief. Three years later, Edward Backman replaced Hallett in Berwick. His tenure was marked by the struggle to modernize the force in the face of a reluctant Town Council. By 1979 under Backman, the Berwick Police Department had grown to a Chief and three constables. In that year the Nova Scotia Police Commission did an assessment of the Berwick department in response to a request from the Municipal Board of Police Commissioners.

There was considerable strain between the Chief and the municipal council at the time. All facets of the department's operation were reviewed. The Nova Scotia Police Commission (NSPC) was initially concerned with the absence of communication between the Chief and Commission, recommending that "in the spirit of improving the Berwick Police Department", the Chief and Police Commission have "frank discussions" in which each side should be prepared to listen to the opinions of the other. The Police Commission was to deal with the administrative direction of the police department while the Chief was to handle the day-to-day operation of the department (NSPC: 1980). In small towns, the fundamental principle of police independence from municipal control was a difficult concept for many towns to swallow.

Despite this intervention from Halifax, disagreements continued. In November 1980, Backman resigned as Chief primarily over the decision by Council to reduce the size of the police force. Mayor Hayden wanted to cut \$12,000 from the police budget and, in November 1980, the town laid-off a constable "in a move to reduce costs". Concern was expressed at this time that such cuts would diminish the department's ability to police the town adequately. Chief Backman noted that "drastically reduced police coverage will result." According to Joe Ross, Executive Director of Police Association of Nova Scotia, "Small town politics and anti-union sentiments" were behind the resignation (*Berwick Register*, 18 June 1980; October 22, 1980; 5 November 1980). Berwick Police Commission then took a step in the direction of modernization when Town Council announced that, as of 1 January 1981, Richard Tennant would be the new Chief of Police in Berwick. Tennant was from Kemptville, Ontario, where he was ending a twelve-year police career with patrol and detective experience (*Halifax Chronicle Herald*, 11 December 1980). Tennant began his first meeting with the Police Commission in January auspiciously by raising the issue of hiring back the third policeman who had recently been dismissed.

In Middleton, Stanley Holt had been appointed Chief of Police in 1955. At first there was only a one-man department although Holt pressed Council for increased staff, minimally a night man. Responding to problems posed by the Chief's annual vacation and the lack of protection at night, Council authorized hiring a part-time Constable in 1965. In 1968 this position was made full-time. Robert Wallace was appointed Constable in that year as the era of the one-member force came to an end. Chief Holt reported that, "There has been very little activity around town late at night since the night patrol has been on. We have also received compliments on the quiet town and the lack of tire squealing at night" (Middleton Police Department Report, 30 November 1968). The majority of police work in the town involved enforcing the traffic and liquor acts, as well as investigating complaints, petty thefts, and responding to dog complaints. In the beginning, Chief Holt

used his own car for police work for about five years and was then given a police vehicle. The Council gave him \$15 a month for a petrol allowance.

Between 1968 and Chief Holt's retirement in 1975, personnel matters were in the forefront of policing in Middleton. Full-time constables were not always sufficiently professional. One officer was released in 1969 and his replacement was dismissed in the following year (Middleton Town Council Minutes, 28 May 1969). They were followed by a succession of constables. Chief Holt pressed for an additional constable, citing increases in criminal activity and arguing that changes in the Criminal Code increased the "paper work" involved in investigation and court preparation. These changes underscored the need for well-trained police officers. Professionalization of policing, then, was necessitated by wider political forces. In 1972 a second full-time constable was hired, although even this was not regarded as sufficient and Holt argued for a third officer before the Police Committee (Middleton Police Department Report, 31 July 1972). 1975 was a particularly turbulent year. Three constables resigned. A Deputy Chief, Don Woods, was hired from Kentville. He became the new Chief that year when Holt was forced to resign by the Town. Holt went to Greenwood where he became a Commissionaire. He said, "They gave me a better send-off after nine years there than they gave me here [Middleton]." However, Holt's influence over the Middleton Police Department was not over. After his retirement, Holt became the first Chairman of the Middleton Police Commission. The modernization of policing would take place under Holt's successor, Robert Boutilier.

One other significant personnel change of note occurred in 1975: the department hired a paid secretary/dispatcher. Margaret Holt had played a considerable police role for the Town of Middleton although she was unpaid and unrecognized. As we have seen, she acted as the unofficial dispatcher for the Middleton Police. By the mid-1970s, however, the informal arrangement which had existed for many years in Middleton whereby the Chief's wife functioned as dispatcher could no longer continue. In 1975, Holt withdrew her un-paid services as department dispatcher during the time when the Town Council was forcing her husband to retire as police chief. The Town explained the situation as follows: "Mrs. Holt [the Chief's wife] feels that she cannot go on spending time answering the police phone and dispatching messages to the patrol car, etc. She has to drop everything she is doing and run to the phone. This she has done for twenty years and been right in the middle of the Police Dept. work all the time" (Middleton Police Department Report, 31 May 1975). A full-time dispatcher was hired, who also performed secretarial duties for the force. The Town created a full-time position, combining duties as police dispatcher and secretary with part-time work for the Town Office (Middleton Town Council Minutes, 3 June 1975).

Kentville had left the era of the one-man police force behind in 1926 when Town Council hired John Brown to work as a constable under then-Chief Rupert Davis. By the time Archibald Strong (formerly Chief in Berwick), became Chief in 1966, the Kentville police department had a complement of four. One of these was Alfred "Lefty" Graves who became Deputy Chief. Graves was the local favourite, but Strong was recommended by the Attorney General's Department. He did not last long. Chiefs were still hired "at the pleasure of Council" and Strong was soon replaced by his Deputy, who headed a six-man force in 1968. Under Graves, considerable staff turn-over continued. Part of this was due

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to the expansion of city policing occurring simultaneously. For constables, mobility and career development required then, as now, moving from small town to big city police departments.

Little changed in the nature of police work in the town during the tenure of Chief Graves. At that time, a senior officer reported, the Mayor played a prominent role in the day-to-day affairs of the Department. According to this member, "The Mayor would come over to the police department, go over the occurrences, read everything about what went on, etc. He was the Chief Stipendiary Magistrate and had a lot of power in the town." Public order offences constituted the main enforcement work of the Police, who acted as night watchmen, tavern bouncers, jail guards and traffic controllers. Nevertheless the landscape for policing was soon to be altered. Professional standards were increasingly demanded by police authorities and concerned citizens. The relationship between Town Councils and Police Departments were to undergo close scrutiny. The Nova Scotia Police Act was passed and Kentville established a Board of Police Commissioners. Graves was found to be inadequate to the task of modern management, but the efforts of the Town to fire him helped the police in their efforts to be autonomous from Councils.

On 22 March 1978, after thirteen years on the Kentville force and ten as Chief, Town Council fired "Lefty" Graves. The decision of Council, which was based on a recommendation from the Police Commission, was unanimous. While Council assured those present at the meeting that the decision was reached "only after deep soul-searching by the board and council", no reasons for the dismissal were given, aside from the prepared statement by Councilor Gordon Lowe, which stated the board had "concluded that Chief Graves was not capable of discharging the duties of chief in an efficient manner". The case was appealed by lawyer Newton to the Department of Labour Standards Board (Halifax *Chronicle Herald*, 24 March 1978: 17). In the hearing, the Town argued that, "According to the Police Act, the chief of police serves at the pleasure of council and may be terminated at the pleasure of council without having just cause." On the other hand, the Labour Standards Act requires an employer "to show just cause for firing an employee with over ten years experience". The Police Act included a provision that, should it conflict with any other statute, the Police Act would superseded the other legislation. The Director of Labour Standards ruled in Graves' favour and "ordered the Council to reinstate Mr. Graves as chief of police at the same rate of pay . . . effective immediately". In a Town Council meeting, which was "overflowing" with citizens, the town decided to appeal this ruling (Halifax *Chronicle Herald*, 11 May 1978: 25).

In the end, the Provincial Supreme Court ruled against the town. Graves, the three-member court ruled unanimously, was a town employee and, under the Labour Standards Code, the town could not dismiss him. The court ruled against the clause in the Police Act that declared that the Chief served at the pleasure of the Council (*Chronicle Herald*, 4 January 1979: 17). While waiting for the Supreme Court to hear its appeal, the Town advertised for a new Police Chief. Fred Young, who was Acting Chief, was passed over in favour of hiring Allan McRae from Wawa, Ontario, effective 1 August 1978. After the Court's decision, McRae was retained as Chief and, a senior member

reported, Graves agreed to a cash settlement for wrongful dismissal. He was a Chief in Ontario and a 28-year police veteran. As in Berwick, Kentville turned to an experienced officer from Ontario to modernize its force. The stability of the Kentville force up until this time was dependent on the relationship between the Chief and the Town Council. In some cases, for example with Strong, the Chief's tenure was brief. While Graves was Chief for over ten years, he did not outlast conflict with municipal authorities. Following the Supreme Court decision on the Graves case, the Chief's position became more secure, although this did not invariably result in stability. Allan MacRea also would be removed from office, but only as the culmination of a controversial public inquiry.

Two major changes occurred during the 1970s that had a direct impact on policing in these small towns - unionization and the creation of local Boards of Police Commissioners. Middleton's first collective agreement with its constables was signed in 1974, Berwick's in 1978. Unionization promoted a more formal relationship between local police and community. Negotiations with respect to subsequent agreements were not always harmonious, and at times proved costly to the municipality. Digby's constables expressed a desire to unionize several years before their counterparts did in Middleton. In Digby, however, no agreement was reached. Instead, Town Council decided to disband the local force and contract for policing services with the RCMP. Other segments of this research project, especially those involving field work among contemporary detachments in the Valley, have examined the nature of this service more thoroughly.

A second important change in the political context affecting small-town policing was the establishment of local Boards of Police Commissioners. With changes in the Nova Scotia Police Act in 1974, each community was charged with the establishment of a Police Commission, the by-law for which required the approval of both the Chairman of the Nova Scotia Police Commission and the Minister of Municipal Affairs. This new body differed from the traditional Police Committee in that it was not composed entirely of members of Town Council. Instead it included, among others, local residents and an appointee of the Attorney General. The Commission was given "jurisdiction without interference by the Council over all matters relating to the enforcement of all criminal laws, federal statutes, provincial statutes, and town by-laws and ordinances." Although it sought to operate independently of Town Council, the Commission did require the latter's approval for the yearly budget it recommended for the police force. Despite formal changes in the administration of small-town policing, as the brief summary above suggests, jurisdictional conflicts continued to occur between the Chief, Mayor, Town Council, and the Police Board. As with the earlier efforts at reform of policing in such centers as Saint John and Halifax, structural changes did not in themselves ensure a more harmonious or efficient provision of service to the community.